

Intelligent Furniture – Agreement 2196-LLP-1-2009-1-IT-LEONARDO-LMP

## Intelligent Furniture project

### Training Package 3: IMAGE, BRANDING AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

### How to use technologies, new approaches and heritage in order to create Image, Branding and Marketing

Version 5 - 27.01.2011

P.M.I. - Servindustria - AIDIMA - Confcommercio

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## 1. General Description of the Training Package

Enterprises should learn to concentrate on Imaging for the own enterprise and products fostering on Cultural Heritage of Furniture in strong connection to some important innovative items:

- innovative materials and processes
- environment, health, safety and well-being
- new marketing strategies
- New Design and Design for all

Often Enterprises do not know to have strong heritage-traditional items. On the base of this important starting point, Innovation, sustainability and use of new materials/processes/approaches CAN be used in order to create a new Image of the enterprise/products, and/or a special brand might be developed on the background of the specific cultural heritage of the local European Furniture Sector. New technologies and new approaches are a strong opportunity to re-invent products and to characterize the company brand, through an intelligent integration between innovation and heritage.

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## 2. Objective / Aims

Mainly the project aims at:

- Training entrepreneurs about market opportunities coming from new technologies, new approaches to environment- and wellbeing-oriented design
- Helping SMEs (entrepreneurs, managers, employees, designers) to develop marketing strategies based on environment- and customer-oriented policies
- Accompanying SMEs in pilot project works, in order to help them discover, face and manage difficulties connected to the new approach

Secondary aims are

- creation of awareness about the presence of traditions and cultural heritage in the own furniture production and the opportunities offered by the specific characteristics connected to the local furniture heritage;
- using cultural heritage and traditional identity of firms and products which can lead to contemporary image and innovative product design.

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### 3. Working methods and implementation

#### 3.1 Working methods

The lessons approach will be concrete and practical, strongly oriented to goals achievement (focus groups, role playing, case studies, workshops).

Especially,

- Training Modules (TMs) will be introduced by preliminary seminars aimed at presenting the subjects of the Training Modules (2 hours each seminary)
- the Training Modules (4 hours each TM) will start at the confirmation of at least 6 participants
- the order of the Modules is not consequential
- for furniture sector Project Works (PWs) are fundamental training tools because the practical and experimental approach has proved to be a very effective training style in generating actual applications
- the Project Works (about 16 hours each PW) will introduce new operative knowledge to increase the competitiveness of the sector.

#### 3.2 Working methods (*optional*)

Each Training Module will be conducted according to the following procedural scheme:

- Introductory movie/picture show, in order to create the sensitivity of participants on the proposed theme(s)
- Theoretical background: the technological and/or methodological basis is briefly exposed in a very accessible language, making wide use of visual schemes (without formulas, chemical reactions, theorems and other misleading items), just to create and share the necessary background and lexical knowledge.
- Common analysis of practical examples: a wider range of practical examples are shown, making use of physical objects when possible, or pictures, video-clips, etc.; the goal is to underline results more than technology, application to the design process more than the technology mechanism or software tools.
- Brainstorming on local suitability: common discussion is stimulated to make expectations rise up, as well as concerns on applicability, orienting the discussion towards local application aspects (companies, cluster, industrial area). Forms will be prepared to collect and structure the results of the discussion.
- Territory-based SWOT Analysis: a systematic analysis of Strength and Weakness, Opportunities and Threats will be carried out as a group common job, taking into account the specific regional products and company systems. Results will be collected in structured Forms.
- Synthesis and Project -Work planning: a global review of the results obtained in the team work will be drafted and shared, focusing onto:
  - opportunities that are easier to catch

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- expected criticalities and possible counter-actions
  - experimental possibilities, esp. on small scale/time

As a result, Project Works will be planned with objective, actors (companies / people), materials / products, expected results. A coarse planning is likely to be produced at this stage, to be fine tuned in the immediate future through its discussion inside each company.

Different themes included in each TM will developed sequentially or in parallel inside the TM session: it is up to the teacher's sensibility, provided that the training material is draught in such a way to allow this choice.

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## 4. Target Group

Maximum members of participants: 10-15 people for the training modules, company staff for the workshops

Minimum skills to have access to the course for participants: entrepreneurs; company staff, with preference for marketing and technical people; young designers

Participants groups are suggested to be:

- blended multi-companies groups for seminars
- blended in-company groups for workshops

Single participants are accepted for training modules, working-teams should preferably take parts to workshops.

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## 5. Modules and lessons

### 5.1 Module 1: Traditions and Cultural Heritage for Brand Identity, Contemporary Design and Product Development

**Keywords:**

Brand identity, image, branding, cultural heritage, territory, craftsmanship, innovation, communication, experience, product, product development

**Participants:**

Entrepreneurs, designer, product specialists, marketing personnel

**Duration:**

Each class is 4 hours long and consists of:

- Introduction (15 mins)
- Theoretical background (60 mins)
- Analysis of practical examples / Case history (60 mins)
- Brainstorming on local suitability (45 to 60 min)
- Synthesis and Project Work Planning (45 mins)

The 5 themes (see later) can be treated by the teacher in parallel or in sequence, according to his/her sensitivity and to the "class" orientation. Parallel treating is suggested for more efficient time management, but is not to be considered a fixed requirement.

**Objectives/description including competences:**

The five themes in which the module consists are not intended to be “spot events”, but are meant to be steps of a training process that will increase in the participant the awareness of the importance of cultural heritage as resource to take inspiration for the developing the brand identity and product.

Cultural heritage will be declined as territorial culture, where factories got their roots, but also as production culture, based on the local know-how of traditional handcraft, that have to be considered a starting point in developing new projects.

These opportunities will be studied as a resource for single factories, and on a system scale too, a context where shared projects build stronger and more cohesive image of the territory.

Due to the participants target (owners, managers of small and medium enterprises, designers), the lessons approach will be concrete, practical and experimental, i.e. strongly oriented to goals achievement. For this reason, during each lecture, case studies and best practices will be illustrated to the class; furthermore, meetings will be the basis for the workshop activities that will run in factories.

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### **Theme 1.1: Cultural and Territorial Heritage**

Building the awareness of the big opportunity given by the local area toward the definition of brand identity

Contents:

- Definition of cultural heritage (Ref. General Conference UNESCO, Paris 2003)
- Meaning of Territorial Heritage, and local resource improvement
- Developing the territory by designing the system

Practical training/working methods:

A PPT presentation will guide the training session, from essential theoretical background to examples discussion and brainstorming.

Image sequences, videos and case histories will stimulate team discussion on rethinking the idea of local area.

### **Theme 1.2: Tradition and Innovation**

A growing awareness by companies of the narrative potential of its production capabilities, especially on new international scenarios

The lecture aims to highlight the process that turns tradition into a fertile substrate to grow strong brand identity, well rooted in the territory, which consolidate uniqueness to certain craft traditions and specific processing

Contents:

- Tradition/Innovation paradigma
- Tradition as inspiration for brand identity
- Traditions as inspiration for product identity

Practical training/working methods:

A PPT presentation will guide the training session, from essential theoretical background to examples discussion and brainstorming.

Image sequences, videos and case histories will stimulate team discussion on rethinking the tradition/innovation paradigma.

### **Theme 1.3: New Role of Crafts**

Focusing on the craft and manufacturing skills of companies as fundamental and unique character in the development of new products.

The craft tradition, the specific skills developed over the years in companies or in a certain manufacturing cluster, must be the basis for a quantum leap in design and production. Product innovation can start by the reinterpretation of local traditions, avoiding formal repetition and false history

Contents:

- Traditions as inspiration for product development
- New relations between craftsman and designers

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Practical training/working methods:

A PPT presentation will guide the training session, from essential theoretical background to examples discussion and brainstorming.

Image sequences, videos and case histories will stimulate team discussion on rethinking the tradition/innovation paradigm, focusing on product development.

#### **Theme 1.4: Experience Design**

Introduce participants to the new practices that involve the world of design, identifying what types of experience can better exploit their product

The experience design is an emerging field of study and research, closely linked to design, to marketing and to the ergonomics aspects of usability. The first step in the learning process of experiential design, will be the gain of awareness about buyers and users of products and services being designed, focusing on usage experience rather than on the product itself

Contents:

- The experience domain
- Design for experiencing
- The participatory attitude

Practical training/working methods:

A PPT presentation will guide the training session, from essential theoretical background to examples discussion and brainstorming.

Image sequences, videos and case histories will stimulate team discussion to rise up objections, proposal, criticism, opportunities to be exploited or at least investigated.

#### **Theme 1.5: Branding and Storytelling**

Provide companies with the basic knowledge to understand the relevance of the branding in the development of international markets

Basics of Branding and Storytelling as a tool for brand development and brand communication. The two concepts will be considered in the perspective of Territorial heritage and Tradition & Innovation, both concepts will be analyzed in the first two meetings.

Contents:

- Logo - Image - Identity
- From identity to equity
- How to define your brand
- Brand strategy

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Practical training/working methods:

A PPT presentation will guide the training session, from essential theoretical background to examples discussion and brainstorming.

Image sequences, videos and case histories will stimulate team discussion to rise up objections, proposal, criticism, opportunities to be exploited or at least investigated.

The audience must be involved at any time of presentation through open debate.

A final moment of the meeting must be reserved for debate fueled by some media products by teaching.

The use of sheets for data collection is useful for several reasons:

- Active involvement
- Increased attention and awareness of participant through the projection of his own personal experience as part of the issue.
- Collecting data on individual participants, which serve to highlight gaps, deficiencies and needs of the group and individuals.

The collected material, properly elaborated, will be useful for structuring the individual workshops.

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## 5.2 Module 2: Innovative materials and processes

### Keywords:

Nanotechnology, surface, liquid repellence, odour absorbance and/or release, leather, fabrics, wood materials, waxes, oils, shape, composites, material efficiency, shaping materials

### Participants:

Furniture concept designers and marketers, material specialists, process specialists

### Duration:

Each class is 4 hours long and consists of:

- Introduction (15 mins)
- Theoretical background (30 mins)
- Analysis of practical examples / Case history (45 to 60 mins)
- Brainstorming on local suitability (45 to 60 min)
- SWOT Analysis (45 mins)
- Synthesis and Project Work Planning (45 mins)

The 3 themes (see later) can be treated by the teacher in parallel or in sequence, according to his/her sensitivity and to the "class" orientation. Parallel treating is suggested for more efficient time management and greater effectiveness in local SWOT analysis, but is not to be considered a fixed requirement.

### Objectives/description including competences:

Reinforcement and development of product/enterprise image by the introduction of new materials and processes, functional improvement, increase in product style or user-friendship content

### Theme 2.1: Nanotech and functional improvement

Evaluate how nanotechnology can improve functions and behaviour of furniture surfaces

### Contents:

- Importance of surfaces in furniture concept:
- furniture surfaces and humans senses: aspect, touch, smell, wetting, dirtying
- functional concept of furniture in marketing, design and promotion
- nanotechnology: present and expected evolutions, criticalities and opportunities
- similarities and singularities between textiles and other furniture surfaces

Starting from some case study and virtual examples (video clips, images) and available physical objects, after briefly illustrating the technological background, brainstorming will be stimulated among participants, in order to focus the possible interests and criticalities, to analyse them in a local cluster context and rise up possible future developments in project works.

Technological implication will be shared, but attention will be drawn onto product

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development strategies rather than on technology development, coherently with the TP subject.

**Practical training/working methods:**

A PPT presentation will give the fill-rouge for the training session.

Brainstorming is the key tool for stimulating participant reactions and creativity.

Videoclips, image sequences and physical objects (see below) will be shown to participants in order to stimulate discussion and rise up objections, proposal, criticism, opportunities to be exploited or at least investigated.

Objects and practical tools: nano-treated and untreated conventional materials (fabrics, leather) will be made available to participants to practically experiment some effects of nanotechnology.

Forms for SWOT analysis and potentiality assessment will be provided as a synthesizing tool, so that the results of the discussions are gathered in a structured way to make it easier to evaluate and share them within the group at the moment, and with other subjects later.

**Theme 2.2: Paint-free wood finishing**

Evaluate alternative wood finishes for product image re-design

Contents:

- Wood painting: features, benefits and limits
- Wood natural look and touch: a value to re-discover
- Natural substances and chemical integrators to preserve wood and wood aspect/touch
- Waxes, vegetal oils, colour and grain enhancers, liquid repellents

Starting from some case study and virtual examples (video clips, images) and available physical objects, after briefly illustrating the technology and application background, brainstorming will be stimulated among participants, in order to focus the possible interests and criticalities, the effects on the product and company image and market positioning, to analyse the emerged ideas in a local cluster context and to rise up possible future developments in project works and company developments.

Physical and psychological aspects connected with a more direct relation to wood, no more mediated by paint or other coverings, will be investigated too, as a design development item.

Technological aspects will be faced too, even if they are expected to be less important than in Theme 2.1 and 3.2 (see later).

Again, results of the discussions will be gather in a structured way (forms, graphs) to make them easier to evaluate and share within the group and with other subjects.

**Practical training/working methods:**

A PPT presentation will give the fill-rouge for the training session.

Brainstorming is the key tool for stimulating participant reactions and creativity.

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Videoclips, image sequences and physical objects (see below) will be shown to participants in order to stimulate discussion and rise up objections, proposal, criticism, opportunities to be exploited or at least investigated.

Objects and practical tools: wood surfaces with different finishes (polymer coating and natural finishes) will be made available to participants to practically experiment and compare the relevant organoleptic effects.

Forms for SWOT analysis and potentiality assessment will be provided as a synthesizing tool; the team work results gathered in a structured way will be easier to evaluate and share at the moment within the group and with other subjects later.

### **Theme 2.3: Composite materials for furniture frames**

Investigate design opportunities offered by composite materials

Contents:

- Traditional seat- and table-frames: materials and shapes
- Composite materials: high material efficiency and revolutionary shape perspectives
- Composites: material and shape born together: a new approach to design
- Older composites: plywood, glass fibres
- Newer composites: carbon fibres, kevlar, etc.
- Composite element connection: need of new solutions
- Composite design: simulation techniques to evaluate feasibility

While themes 2.1 and 2.2 are mainly concerning surfaces and organoleptic features, Theme 3.3 has more to do with shapes and mechanical functions, and therefore more close to traditional style and design.

After centuries of furniture made of traditional materials, mainly wood at the beginning, more recently wood-derived materials (e.g. MDF, particle boards) and plastics, progressively simpler composite materials have come into use too, like plywood, plymetal and GFRP (glass-fiber reinforced plastic), mainly for accessories or parts of furniture.

More advanced composites, developed in high-tech sectors, are gradually available and competitive, offering interesting aesthetical and functional opportunities to designers looking for new paths of product development.

Some examples will be used as "testimonials" and starting point for the common discussion, mainly focusing on rising ideas and opportunities in the directions of new style solutions, image revitalization, as well as on implications on coherence with company and cluster cultural heritage, marketing directions, customers' expectations.

In parallel, criticalities from the technical, marketing and organizational points of view will be considered in the stimulated discussion, and synthesized as team work results.

#### **Practical training/working methods:**

A PPT presentation will guide the training session, from essential technology background to examples discussion, from brainstorming to local SWOT analysis.

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Image sequences and virtual examples will be treated as case studies to tackle with, and to stimulate brainstorming, rise up objections, proposals, criticism, opportunities to be exploited or at least investigated.

Objects and practical tools: =

Forms for SWOT analysis and potentiality assessment will be provided as a synthesizing tool; the team work results gathered in a structured way will be easier to evaluate and share at the moment within the group and with other subjects later.

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### 5.3 Module 3: Environment, health and safety

#### Keywords:

Environment, quality, durability, design for recycling, health, safety, materials, toxicology, skin contact, comfort, upholstery materials, covering materials, design for comfort, EU Environment Policy, Life Cycle Management and labelling, Green Procurement

#### Participants:

Entrepreneurs, designers, product specialists, market personnel.

#### Duration:

Each class is 4 hours long and consists of:

- Introduction (15 mins)
- Theoretical background (30 mins)
- Analysis of practical examples / Case history (45 to 60 mins)
- Brainstorming on local suitability (45 to 60 mins)
- SWOT Analysis (45 mins)
- Synthesis and Project Work Planning (45 mins)

The themes 3.1 and 3.2 (see later) have evident common points and parallelism, as well as 3.3 and 3.4; therefore the suggestion is to treat them in 2 following "demi-class" (with no requirement about the relative order), in order to favourite a global view of interconnected items. However it is up to the teacher to decide in details the order of themes and to manage parallelism among implications, also taking into account the class sensibility for the various subjects.

#### Objectives/description including competences:

Reinforcement of the product image by the adoption of healthy and sustainable solutions (recycled materials, design-for-recycling, low-energy processing, ecc.), eco-certifications (ECOLABEL, PEFC, FSC, LCA, ecc.), wellbeing-oriented design

#### Theme 3.1: Health and safety as product content

Underlining health and safety contents as key (non exclusive) product values and promotion items

#### Contents:

- Health concerns in furniture materials: toxics, emissions, skin contact
- Healthy materials and healthy processes for healthy furniture
- Safety concerns in furniture design and production
- Kids and H&S items
- Elders and H&S items
- Health and safety: from just law conformity to H&S focussed and oriented design

The training session is aimed at stimulating to overcome the low-profile, legal

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conformity attitude a positive approach where risk issues are converted into product and brand strengthening strategy.

Starting from some visual examples to provoke (positively and negatively) the participants sensitivity, discussion will be stimulated to let as many proposals as possible come up in brainstorming; advantages and criticalities, "pros and cons" will then be faced in a territorial view, to obtain a SWOT analysis taking all of them into account, in a short-to-medium range vision.

Practical training/working methods:

A PPT presentation will guide the training session, from essential theoretical background to examples discussion, brainstorming up to local SWOT analysis.

Image sequences and virtual examples will stimulate team discussion on local products rethinking in a health-and-safety respectful attitude, towards

Objects and practical tools: =

Forms for SWOT analysis and potentiality assessment will be provided as a synthesizing tool; the team work results gathered in a structured way will be easier to evaluate and share at the moment within the group and with other subjects later.

### **Theme 3.2: Comfort-oriented upholstered furniture design**

Underlining comfort as design-orienting value and promotion items

Contents:

- Comfort: a wide concept for a precise status: feeling well
- Comfort evaluation for upholstery furniture: equipment and criteria
- Comfort assessment: establishing comfort levels
- Material and design choices for a better comfort
- Style and comfort: compromise or synergy
- Predicting comfort in the design phase: simulation and experimental techniques and new design methods

A systematic approach to comfort-oriented design of upholstery furniture will be proposed, supported by:

- basic design criteria, mainly coming from experience and physical studies
- experimental (semi-quantitative or comparative) tools for objective comfort assessment
- innovative numeric simulation services, to forecast comfort performance before physical prototyping

Style and comfort will be proposed to the discussion as not necessarily antithetic, but hopefully synergic and reciprocally inclusive.

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A wider concept of comfort, not limited to physical considerations and sensations, but almost a synonym of "well-being" will be suggested and proposed to common discussion as an issue for product concept re-thinking.

Practical training/working methods:

The theme will be discussed in the training session with a brainstorm approach, activated by videoclips and image sequences, with the aim of producing ideas, selections, assessment of potentials, etc.; the result will be a (preliminary) common SWOT analysis in order to orient people and companies in the aware definition of comfort-oriented marketing and development strategies .

A PPT Presentation will guide teacher and participants in the discussion path.

Objects and practical tools: =

Forms for SWOT analysis and potentiality assessment will be provided as a synthesizing tool; the team work results gathered in a structured way will be easier to evaluate and share at the moment within the group and with other subjects later.

### **Theme 3.4: Sustainability and Environmental EU strategy and Eco design for furniture design**

Getting through the main standards and rules regarding environmental issues and European policies, identifying possible future developments and highlighting the most interesting aspects for the wood furniture industry.

Evaluating environment protection and preservation as an orienting value and promotion item.

Contents:

- European Environmental Policy (EAP)
- Life Cycle Management: LCT- LCA
- Environmental Management Systems (EMS)
- Environmental Labelling
- Green Public Procurement
- Attaining EU Legislation
- Synthesis of the main ECOLABEL criteria for furniture products
- Environment consequences of present furniture production
- Evaluating environmental cost of a furniture item
- Recycling as a design-inspiring concern
- Quality and environment are necessarily antithetic?

The topic will be proposed on a double point of view:

- getting through the main standards and rules regarding environmental issues, especially within the framework of the European policies, identifying possible future developments and highlighting the most interesting aspects for the wood furniture industry
- understanding the approach and impact of environment-oriented design (EcoDesign), and how it can renew the product and image development process e give new opportunities for business promotion.

The training approach will get start from brainstorming focuses onto 2 questions:

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- Do we need Eco-Design?
  - Why do we (or do we not) need Eco design?

Green-orientation will be looked at from different points of view, like:

- materials
- forest management
- reduction of hazardous substances
- reduction of necessary material quantities (e.g. reduction of wastes)
- process efficiency (e.g. paint)
- distribution efficiency (e.g. transportation volumes/weights/costs)
- low impact along life and use (e.g. consumables, energy)
- optimal management of lifetime and its end

Practical training/working methods:

A PPT Presentation, rich of images and stimulating items, will provide both background information and stimulating examples of good practices to start discussion and team work.

Eco-designed objects will be shown virtually rather than physically to reduce logistic problems.

A very complete standard and regulatory acts synthesis is available for the teachers and the participants to go into deeper details about EU policies and regulations.

An Eco-Design Survey form will be provided as a tools to help the discussion and the relevant result systematization, management and synthesis, as well as a scheme for SWOT analysis, to be developed with strong connection to the local cluster features, opportunities and criticalities.

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## **Module 4: Marketing, Strategic Design, Communication and Retail**

### **Keywords:**

Market orientation, marketing, marketing mix, competitive intelligence, product development, design strategy, branding, price policies, service quality, customer care, web 2.0, site construction, interactivity, web marketing plan, communication mix, pull strategy, sell out, distribution strategy, retail spaces, layout, visual merchandising, product display.

### **Participants:**

Entrepreneurs, designers, product specialists, market personnel, sellers

### **Duration:**

Each class is 4 hours long and consists of:

- Theoretical introduction (1:00/1:30 hrs)
- Local suitability (1:00hr)
- Case history/best practice (1:00 hr)
- Debate (0:30/1:00 hr)

### **Objectives/description including competences:**

Make the participants understand the importance of the marketing function within a company today. From an organizational point of view, it is not necessary to have a dedicated marketing department or office within a company, especially if it is small. What is important is that a marketing orientation must replace a product or to sales one.

- Convey an awareness of the working phases through which a marketing strategy can be planned and implemented,
- Provide practical work methodologies and operational tools to entrepreneurs, managers, executives and designers in order to manage consistently, effectively and efficiently the process of cultural heritage, translating it into marketing strategy,
- Improve the company's marketing mix through the use of new techniques and new approaches,
- Introduce a different relationship with distribution companies, moving from sell-in to sell-out policies.

### **Theme 4.1: Marketing Mix**

Provide to participants basic concepts of marketing mix, useful as an introduction to the concepts expressed in subsequent meetings and giving a new point of view of the company and how to pursue business goals

### **Contents:**

- Market change factors,
- Impact on furniture companies,
- Importance of introducing new tools, techniques, and methodologies,

Raise participant awareness regarding the consequences of errors in setting the marketing mix.

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Completion of the **preliminary analysis form**

Use of the **profile analysis of marketing mix form**

Analysis of a business case study on the complexity of managing sales policies in medium and small furniture companies.

Examination of a method based on the construction of market product matrices

**Practical training/working methods:**

Distribution of the case and individual reading.

Division of participants into small groups (3 students per group), identification of a spokesperson for each group,

Discussion in the individual working groups,

Guided discussion of the company case study.

Reference to Modules 1 and 2 and developing changes in the current marketing mix.

Examination of a method based on the construction of market product matrices, broken into five steps:

Final discussion

**Theme 4.2: From Product Design to the Product Design System**

Analyze, with the participants, the consequences of an unsuitable or improperly integrated design.

Referring to the preceding modules, highlight how tradition, culture, and materials innovation can influence the design.

Explain the need to link design to an analysis of the external environment and to the target market.

Provide a methodology for the identification and selection of new product offerings.

*Contents:*

The development of a design within the logic of looking at the environment.

Analysis of a **business case study** on the consequences of an unsuitable product concept and discussion with participants.

Elements to be considered in design: innovation and market impact, manufacturability, and cost.

The concept of product positioning and its perceived value by customers,

The design and development process of a new product.

**Practical training/working methods:**

Distribution of the case and individual reading.

Division of participants into small groups (3 students per group), identification of a spokesperson for each group,

Discussion in the individual working groups,

Guided discussion of the case study.

Examination by stages of the research process and selection of new ideas, aimed at developing creativity based on divergent and convergent thinking.

On this subject, after using slides to present the method,, the instructor may carry out a practical exercise using specific modules .

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Final discussion

### **Theme 4.3: Strategic Design**

Introduce the design into an integrated new product development process.  
Provide a methodology for the assessment and selection of different design ideas  
Suggest the systematic use of technical and other tests.

#### *Contents:*

From image to design proposals.

From design proposals to selecting an idea to be produced.

After a preliminar explanation these subject will be treated:

Dry test (concept)

Show test (design)

Blind test (comparative study)

Test name (name and logo)

Test product (final prototype)

Test area (impact of the entire marketing mix in a limited area of the market)

#### **Practical training/working methods:**

Examination of two matrices to be used for a practical exercise linked to the development of new proposals based on the criteria of innovation, market impact, and cost / manufacturability.

Through this methodology, the form is closely connected to Module 2 (innovative materials and processes).

The instructor will explain how to evaluate creative ideas for the proposed name and logo of new products. Presentation of an **evaluation form**.

Discussion on the current work modalities used in the company and on the possibility of introducing the company to new types of tests.

### **Theme 4.4: Internet 2.0 for Business Communications - Participative Design**

Identify, together with the participants, the objectives of using the Internet.

Analyze the key elements of a web marketing plan.

Understand the dynamics of search engine rankings.

Provide tools for the proper identification and management of a relationship with an agency.

#### *Contents:*

Characteristics of the Internet and its multiple functions:

- Distribution channel
- Advertising
- Assistance and Training Platform
- Logistics Support

- Customer care network and customer satisfaction
- Innovative benchmarking tool

The web marketing plan:

- Objectives
- Target
- Strategies
- Time
- Constraints & Results

#### **Practical training/working methods:**

After a preliminary discussion on characteristics and functions of internet participants will be provided with the knowledge to carry out the evaluation of a web marketing plan, the importance of properly positioning your site with search engines. Identification of verification and control tools, choosing an agency and managing the relationship through the identification of tools and methodologies that enable recognizing objectives, defining tasks, and verifying results.

The used methods will be presentation and discussion.

#### **Theme 4.5: New Forms and Spaces for Retail**

Stress the importance of distribution in furniture sector marketing strategies

Focus on the need not to be limited to sell-in shares yet emphasize the importance of sell-out policies

Suggest new types of relationships with distribution facilities and a different role for the sales figures that interface with them.

Provide information related to the modern management of visual merchandising of furniture in its distribution in order to encourage better integration between manufacturers and distribution companies.

#### *Contents:*

importance of visual  
 merchandising and re-merchandising  
 Basic Rules and Objectives  
 How to manage image  
 Lay out  
 Client Flow Monitoring  
 Identifying important sales areas for product promotions  
 Showcasing  
 Showcasing Role  
 Creativity / atmosphere  
 Sensitivity to color and composition  
 lighting

The different contributions developed in recent years on the theme of shopping, they all agree in recognizing the experiential dimension as the fulcrum around which the store

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has become a real "relational platform." The idea of experience as a competitive tool is introduced especially when you look at how to differentiate and make products recognizable by, among others, is no longer sufficient to operate on the same characteristics, but it's necessary to raise the emotional level of involvement between business and consumer, where the company "shows"

**Practical training/working methods:**

Presentation and discussion on the applicability of what was observed

## **6. Suggestions for Project Work**

Project Work (PW) themes can only be drafted as "expected" or "suggested" at this stage, since they should arise from the suggestions and common discussions during Modules training.

At any rate, considering the Modules themes, some hypotheses for PW items can be imagined. The following are some of them, which could be proposed as examples.

**PW1: "Think Nano, think new"**

Experimenting nano-functionalised materials as product innovation suggestions:

- Water repellence, dirt repellence
- Odour emission / absorption
- Fire behaviour
- Touch and/or sensing modification

A small-scale demonstrative prototype could be developed

**PW2: "Natural touch"**

Experimenting paint-free wood surface finished as product innovation suggestions:

- Natural look
- Natural touch
- Interaction sensations
- Cleaning and renewing

A small-scale demonstrative prototype could be developed

**PW3: "Free your mind with composites"**

Composite materials can jump over present feasibility "stops", thus freeing the designer's mind.

- creativity vs feasibility: end of a historical struggle?
- "how to" sessions to give body to "impossible" shape and ideas

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#### **PW4: “Comfort as wellbeing”**

Brainstorming and experiencing on comfort-oriented design:

- what is comfort?
- how to make comfortable in practice
- how to make uncomfortable in practice
- how to evaluate comfort?
- how to promote comfort
- comfort vs creativity: any solution to this contrast?

#### **PW 5 “Construction of a personal market product plan”**

- identify the product and market variables that we consider important
- break down each variable into elements that are considered relevant and distinct.
- build a double-entry matrix using a break-down of the variables in which a theoretical segment originates at the intersection of a row with a column.
- eliminate inconsistent segments that do not exist in practice or cannot objectively make sense from a business point of view and instead aggregate segments with similar characteristics, which can thus be achieved with a single offer.
- collect basic market and competitor information in those segments that are of most interest and then provide them to the product office.

#### **PW 6 : “Development of new proposals based on the criteria of innovation, market impact, and cost / manufacturability”**

- Use of the matrices for a personal work of development of new proposals based on the criteria of innovation, market impact, and cost / manufacturability.

#### **PW 7 “Our personal web marketing plan”**

- How to identify the personal objectives
- How to evaluate the web marketing plan
- How to choose agency

#### **PW 8 “The best spaces for Retail”**

- My personal visual merchandising and re-merchandising
- How to create my personal atmosphere
- The importance of color, light and composition

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