

German firm raises bar for furniture software



A section of the audience in Bengaluru, comprising of manufacturers and interior designers. (R) The India market for Imos is currently growing at 25%, Mr Ingo Bathe said.

By Roy Thomas

Imos, the German company that develops integrated furniture software solutions, organised consecutive events in Mumbai, Delhi and Bengaluru, in November last year, to give a preview of its latest version that will be launched in 2017.

Imos was established in 1993 in Herford, to meet the software requirements of some of the biggest names in furniture machinery manufacture, such as Hettich, Blum, Hafele, Egger, SCM and Homag.

Commencing with software that was to be incorporated in woodworking CNC machines, today its considerably more advanced software packages are available in 16 languages and used by

more than 4,000 companies in the industry.

“Imos increases reliability as a software and increases productivity.

Mr. Ambadas Kamurthi,
owner, Benedetto Kitchens,
Bengaluru

The range on offer starts from basic software that costs around Euro 10,000, to the more advanced versions that can even be customised, based on individual requirement, and can go up to Euro 3,00,000.

Speaking at the event in Bengaluru, the articulate Mr. Ingo Bathe, Director of International Business, succinctly presented the features of this futuristic software that controls and enables a seamless process flows, from the Internet-based room planning and order entry, through to accurate calculation and controlling current CNC machines.

Global market

Delving briefly into the current global and Indian markets, Ingo estimated the global turnover to be approximately Euro 220 billion with a year-on-year growth of around 20%. This figure excluded furniture manufactured by small carpentry firms.

He pointed out that while the American furniture industry showed a marked

“After careful study of five solutions, I found Imos to be very intelligent and the best for any kind of customised furniture design and production. Imos’ solution has great capability to scale up furniture business operations.

Mr. Valluri Srinivas, owner,
Hi iN Interiors, Hyderabad

downtrend, the Chinese manufacturing industry controlled a strong 16% share that was primarily made up of exports. The growth in India was also strong with a 10% growth; but what is different here is this was driven primarily by the domestic market.

Other Asian countries like Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia and Thailand also showed robust growth.

With the Indian propensity to carefully look for tangible benefits and immediate returns on investment, a breakthrough for Imos into the market proved difficult. The first order was about 7 years ago, with a company called Shark Designs,

after it witnessed live demos of the software at Ligna and was convinced of its utility.

Currently, the software is being used by over 35 customers that include Godrej Interio, Bonito Kitchens, Haitha Design and online furniture platforms like Homelane and Urbanladder. The India market for Imos is currently growing at a healthy 25%, Ingo said.

The live demo of the software clearly highlighted its versatility in no uncertain terms and emphasised the multiple benefits that would accrue to the user, both in the short and long terms.

Augmented reality

While software that is embedded and used in a CNC machine is common place, the more sophisticated ‘sales-to-machine’, which is the hallmark of the Imos solution, is modularly structured and integrates CAD, CAM, NET and 360.

Each package takes over different tasks in a company so that orders can be processed continuously from sales (through Imos-Net) to the machine (through Imos-CAM). The furniture catalog is based on 3-D CAD data that is directly developed from the design of the furniture.

Materials and fittings can be selected from online catalogues of the furniture suppliers through its iFurn online. 3-D furniture designs can be projected into real rooms on a smart phone or tablet with the integrated augmented reality technology (Imos-360).

While Imos-CAD helps design in 3-D, handling of customers – including quotations, automatic data generation, assembly list, purchase parts, unique part identification (bar code) – the CAM helps in automatic generation by design, by order, by production lot and links part list to the saw, edge bander and other CNC machines.

Integrated solution

From the point of view of sales the Imos-Net links the point of sale directly to the machine and is a tool to help online furniture sales. It also enables automatic generation of manufacturing documents, bills of materials, and generates the numerical control programs for CAM.

All four product sections are linked together and result in an integrated solution for trade and industry.

Mr. Nitin Nalvade, CEO of Nitshaw, one of the two agents who represent Imos in India, said that the competition in India is currently from 2020 Design and Pytha Design, “but Imos is the preferred software, powered by its first-mover advantage”.

Mr. Ganaraj Tejaswi, CTO of Inch, a B2B company that supplies furniture to several leading online e-commerce platforms, said his company operates CNC machines that work on Imos software. “I am here to assess the product and do a cost-benefit analysis to see how useful it will be for us,” he said.

Today, there is increasing pressure on suppliers to improve turnaround time by half “and this package will easily help us to achieve this objective with much greater efficiency,” Ganaraj added.

Judging from comments like this, and the encouraging response the event received, the future of Imos days certainly look bright.

