

MORE FROM WOOD.



MORE

www.egger.com

The EGGER Group Customer Magazine

02



Adapting to Change

The future has radical changes in store. Companies must respond to this change and yet remain true to themselves. It helps to understand the nature of new trends and how they emerge.

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NEW TRENDS TAKE SHAPE AND DEMAND DECISIONS: SHOULD WE STICK TO THE TRIED AND TESTED OR INVEST IN THE NEW?



**Walter Schiegl (Production/Technology),
Ulrich Bühler (Marketing/Sales) and
Thomas Leissing (Finances/Administration/Logistics)**
EGGER Group Management

In **2050**, China will be the world's largest economy, followed by the US and India, according to a study published in 2011 by the investment bank HSBC entitled "The World in the Year 2050". By then, transition nations such as Brazil, Mexico, and Turkey will have caught up with the world's ten most important economies, sending some European economies sliding down the rankings. Change is also reflected by technology and design. New trends take shape and demand decisions: should we stick to the tried and tested or invest in innovation? This is why this edition of MORE is paying special attention to the topic of change.

A good decision in a rapidly changing world takes intelligence, gut feeling and courage. It's a topic close to our hearts, since EGGER'S success is largely thanks to the efforts of its founder, Fritz Egger Senior, who closed the old family saw mill in 1961, banking on what was an entirely new technology at the time: chipboard.

He did so in the knowledge that certain changes had to come and he was fully conscious of the importance of wood as a resource. Just like the current generation, Fritz and Michael Egger, who have built up their father's plant into an international enterprise employing **6,800** people. To this day, leading the way in innovations in processing and refining wood-based materials, from decor to finished parts, while focussing on the benefits to the customer, remains a decisive factor in EGGER's ongoing success.

At this juncture we would also like to express our thanks for the overwhelming feedback we received about our first edition in December 2011. Much of it was praise and we were also happy to take on board critical suggestions. We hope that MORE 02 will inspire you and give you a better idea of our perspective on things. On behalf of the EGGER team, we wish you an enjoyable and engrossing read.

INCREASED CAPACITY

Demand for laminate materials is growing. EGGER has responded. Management at the plant in Gifhorn (Photograph: Monika Wiora and Elmar Hagspiel) had a new, continual lamination press constructed according to their specifications by the company Hymmen. The press will increase capacity for CPL laminate production by about 20 per cent. Annual production will rise by 4.5 million m² to over 27 million m².





GIANT MAN-MADE TREES

They can be clearly seen from the airplane as it approaches the landing strip: Singapore's 18 new giant trees. The "Super Tree Groves" belong to the "Gardens by the Bay". This **54-hectare botanical park** was formally opened in June 2012. The trees don't just emulate the shape of their natural counterparts, they also perform similar functions: channelling fresh air to the ventilation shafts of the greenhouses. They also collect water: not through their roots, but by storing rainwater. And eleven of them use the light of the sun: not for photosynthesis, but for conversion into electricity through solar panels. A boldly curved bridge connects these giant steel plants and provides stunning views of the park, bay and island state. The government is investing a billion dollars to transform the metropolis into a garden city. Two further projects similar to the "Gardens" are in the pipeline, to provide the people of Singapore with more green oases.

www.gardensbythebay.com.sg



ESPIONAGE AT THE ZOOM EVENT

Right on time for the start of spring 2012, EGGER presented its new Zoom collection. Twelve colour ranges allow decors, edging and coreboards to be combined to create modern interiors. Our partners had the opportunity to use the **SpyTank** to explore these decor worlds. The mobile spies use their on-board cameras to radio information about the racing track, made up of new colours and surfaces from the collection, back to their drivers who were able to follow proceedings on their iPad touch screens. The Zoom collection is part of the Virtual Design Studio (VDS), with which users can try out more than **200 decors** in room settings on their computer screens.

www.egger.com/zoom





CHAMBER MUSIC

What does architecture sound like? Jean Nouvel has provided answers to this question. His concert halls in Lucerne and Copenhagen are temples of both music and contemporary architecture. But how does one go about creating the **perfect sound** for a large audience? Before construction work began on the new Philharmonic concert hall in Paris, designed by Atelier Jean Nouvel (opening scheduled for 2013), architect Brigitte Métra had a model built with **MDF** – the wood-based material whose neutral sound characteristics make it ideal for building high-fidelity loudspeakers. In collaboration with the acoustic engineers Harold Marshall and Yasuhisa Toyota, the architect can now use her model to get a miniature impression of what major symphonies will sound like in the future.

www.philharmoniedeparis.com

E_INSPIRATION

“Good product design is the result of a creative process aimed at the needs of the future user.”

Andrej Kupetz, Design Expert

Interview “Good design is user-oriented” (Pages 16 to 17)

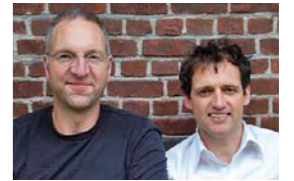
Ideas for Tomorrow



THAT BIBLICAL FEELING

www.ro-ad.org

It parts the water as Moses once did at Red Sea: the pedestrian bridge “Moses”, which crosses the moat of a Dutch fort from the 17th century. From a distance, the bridge, designed by ro&aD, literally disappears, seen from up close the wooden channel splits the waters. The bridge is made of Accoya wood, an acid-treated high-tech wood that is harder and more durable than tropical hardwood.



CORKER

www.welsky.net

This stool has a screw loose. For a practical reason: its height can be adjusted simply by turning the body. The SCRW stool by the designer Manuel Welsky is composed of just two parts: a steel pipe shaped like a screw thread and a solid cork cylinder. The cork's properties make the stool light and comfortable and its low thermal conductivity keep it at the perfect temperature – just like a good bottle of wine.

SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW

www.mecanoo.nl

“The sea giveth and the sea taketh away”, is an old saying on the Dutch island of Texel, which recently opened a new “Museum of Seafarers and Beachcombers”. In keeping with the island's tradition of recycling, the company Mecanoo made the facade out of glass and driftwood cut to size by the local cabinet maker. The design of the roof was influenced by the traditional gables of the nearby fishermen's houses.



FOCUS: ADAPTING TO CHANGE



Left 60-watt bulb, clear, 1920s
Right LED bulb with E14 Edison screw fitting.

Reinventing the New

Nothing is more constant than change. At the same time, people yearn for continuity. In this report the phenomenon of trends and the relationship between change and continuity is examined.

BY Clemens Niedenthal

“History doesn’t repeat itself”, Mark Twain is quoted as saying, “but it does rhyme.” Perhaps the American gold-digger, steamboat captain, best-selling author, journalist and publisher is the perfect model for reflecting on the nature of trends and change. His motley career, of the kind that is becoming increasingly common in the modern world, reflects the fact that Twain had no fear of change.

So history rhymes. The pairs of objects illustrated on the following pages tell the same story. Here, we have the Porsche 911, an icon of engineering art which has been continually developed for nearly half a century, without sacrificing its distinctive silhouette. Always up to date, yet always true to itself. Then, we have Apple’s first iPod, whose design was deliberately intended to pay tribute to the Braun T3 transistor radio. The radio was designed in 1958 by the leading product designer of post-war modernity: Dieter Rams.

It says a lot about Apple’s philosophy that the Braun design was so well-known and, indeed, worshipped by the computer developers. In every other regard, the iPod represents a radical break with the traditional technologies

“No society can prosper if it does not accept dynamics and change.”

Peter Schwartz, American futurologist

of listening, not seen since the invention of the gramophone. We also have the classic sneaker, whose shape has hardly changed in the last forty years, although it has gone from the cinder track to the dance floor and from the tennis court to the business meeting. Things change in terms of their technology and production, their aesthetics and how they are used and consumed.



1 Coffee Culture 1960.
2 Coffee Culture 2012.

TOPIC OVERVIEW

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1 Sneaker, 2011. 2 Adidas retro sneaker, 2011. 3 Braun T3 transistor radio, designed in 1958. 4 Apple iPod, first generation, launched on the market in 2001. 5 Porsche 911, first generation model, 1964. 6 Porsche 911, contemporary model, 2011.

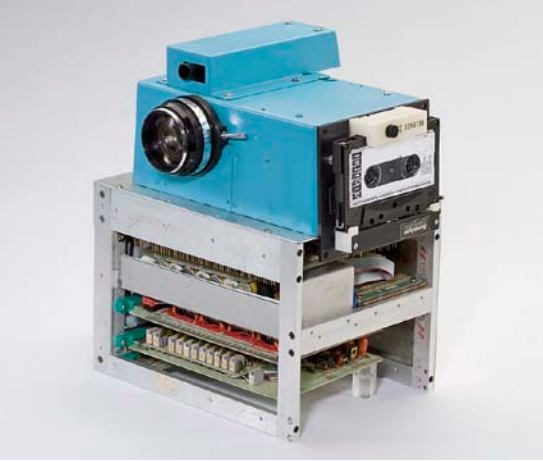


GOOD BUSINESS PRACTICE

A QUESTION OF THE RIGHT TIMING

Practical examples show that always being the first is not enough. Successful trend-setters must also be able to wait. For example, the digital camera is part of everyday life but hardly anyone knows who was the first to make one. It operated with an audio cassette and 16 Mignon batteries, had 0.01 megapixels and an exposure time of 23 seconds. The 3.6-kilogramme device was presented in 1975 by the Kodak engineer Steve Sasson. It represents the beginning of one of the biggest trends in consumer electronics, which would ultimately lead to the demise of the Kodak brand. Of all companies, the inventor of the digital camera launched it on the market too early – and then stuck with analogue technology for far too long.

But when is a market ready? According to the American consumer researchers Paco Underhill, the decisive factor can be the so-called “second movers”, those consumers whose collective size and individual purchasing power can help a product or entire product segment make its breakthrough. The electric car is a good contemporary example: an avant-garde manufacturer (the Californian brand Tesla) manufactures exclusive E-cars for avant garde consumers (for example, the actor Brad Pitt). Today, one thing is already clear: the first affordable, mass-produced E-car won’t be made by Tesla. Brands such as Toyota or VW will be ready when the herd mentality of consumers – consumer psychologists speak of “contagion theory” – spreads to E-mobility.



→ Companies must foresee or even create the conditions for their products or business areas to expand and increase in value. And that’s a good thing. For “no society can prosper if it does not accept dynamics and change”, as Twain’s compatriot, the futurologist Peter Schwartz, puts it.

The success of the iPad is based not on the invention of the tablet computer, but on its user-friendliness.

Success stories often begin with the breaking of taboos. Apple committed one of the most prominent breaches: there is only one button on the iPad – a radical simplification that made the tablet computer one of the most successful products of our time. Yet Apple did not invent the tablet, it merely touched a nerve with consumers at the right time: a mobile, easily understood terminal that could perform all the essential functions of a computer. The

design is radically focussed on intuitive operation – and on the marketing message that computers are fun. A further selling point was a new sensual quality: swiping the touch screens of the iPhone, iPod and iPad.

It is believed that company founder Steve Jobs regarded computers as a cultural technology, as part of a lifestyle. To meet this demand, Apple became the first computer manufacturer to produce a mass-produced consumer brand. The play on words of the “iFamily” developed its own dynamic, enhancing the products’ cult status. Influenced and advised by the German designer Hartmut Esslinger, Jobs the visionary and perfectionist applied the best-known rule of modern design: form follows function – from the planning and logistics to the marketing of the new product.

And it was a new way of looking at an old product that helped Adidas go from crisis-ridden company to boom-

ing multi-national giant in the 1990s. It redefined its identity, turning sporting equipment into lifestyle accessories. It no longer matters whether you wear the latest sneakers to go jogging or to go shopping.

Change is good. But do people not yearn for consistency and authenticity in this modern age? Starbucks, the epitome of globalised coffee-to-go culture, opened branches in Seattle and San Francisco that look like traditional cafés from a bygone era, with their dark wooden chairs and plush sofas. In an increasingly accelerated and virtualised world, these little oases of familiarity take on a new significance. The need to slow down, enjoy slow food, the need for a homeliness is expressed in comfy cushions. A return to the lifestyle of older generations, yet a modern and global trend.

Decisions should be taken consciously, especially when they

involve continuing to do things the same way.

“The vanity of the present” is how the futurologist Matthias Horx describes the inability, especially of successful companies, to acknowledge the changing nature of markets and consumers and to depart from their own successful strategy. Success, according to Horx, can make people blinkered. Starbucks, however, dismantled the strategy of a uniform global design at certain points, although it was still yielding success. In other words, companies that set trends or successfully take part in them are characterised by the consciousness, confidence and determination of their decisions. Especially at a point when their own success can give the impression that no further decisions are required.

“Good design is user-friendly”

People want things that last. At the same time, they also want them to be fashionable. We talk with the designer Andrej Kupetz about well-designed products and their commercial added value.

INTERVIEW BY Clemens Niedenthal

Andrej Kupetz grew up with good design. His father Günter Kupetz designed the “Pearl bottle”, a returnable bottle for mineral water which has been a familiar sight in almost every German fridge since the 1970s. His son, Andrej, is also professionally devoted to exquisite forms: as general manager of the German Design Council he annually adjudicates the German Design Award. Last year, one of the award-winners was EGGER’S Virtual Design Studio. We spoke with the well respected Kupetz about creative processes, sustainable development strategies and the never-ending search for the new.

MORE: The first design classics of the 21st century – the iPod and the iPhone – have become global icons. Is it not the case that designers and companies must think globally?

Andrej Kupetz: Good product design is the result of a creative process aimed at the needs of the future user. And nowadays, the user could be anywhere in the whole world – that makes global thinking unavoidable. On the other hand, design classics are a result of their own unique characteristics, their own authenticity, of the desire to achieve the best possible solution – and these are very personal, often regional ideas and requirements.

MORE: You mentioned authenticity – is that why retro design is so popular?
Andrej Kupetz: I regard these developments more as respect for of tradition: the more digitised our living environment becomes, the more attractive things from the mechanical age appear. People are looking for values beneath the user surface, things which do not behave like their new iPhones do. This trend definitely reflects creative energy: the avant garde of design is currently experimenting with traditional materials and hand-craft techniques, with astonishing results.

MORE: A very basic question: How does industrial design work? What is design?
Andrej Kupetz: If we consider the large majority of tasks that industry requires of designers, it all boils down to product differentiation – a marketing requirement, a surface requirement.

MORE: But your idea of design quite literally goes deeper than that.
Andrej Kupetz: Probably the first designer of all, Michael Thonet, was a carpenter, an entrepreneur and someone who changed the world. He saw no contradiction or difference between design and innovation. His aim was to industrialise chair manufacturing and he looked for suitable processes and, at the same time, aesthetic expression. He was no market researcher but his no. 14 bistro chair was possibly the world’s first international best-seller. It has been produced for more than 160 years using the same techniques. Need I say more about the durability of good design?

MORE: Is our fast life-style, the rapid change from one fashion or design

trend to another, quite simply a response to an accelerated era?
Andrej Kupetz: That’s an interesting question. In the industrial age, the pace was definitely quicker. Back then, people worked a good deal more than we do today. But what little leisure time they were left with was defined by rituals and habits. There was a clear and well-defined separation of work and free time. This is no longer the case. Fewer and fewer men wear ties to work, they look more like people on a weekend break or on their way to the gym. At the same time, these men are not capable of detaching themselves fully from the net when they leave the office. In reality, this phenomenon of a fast life style is a result of the blurred distinction between work and leisure and our inability to acknowledge that we won’t miss anything by not following this trend.

MORE: This is also a central question for companies: do we have to follow every trend? Should we take it so far as to sacrifice a successfully established product?
Andrej Kupetz: It is quite simple and at the same time, very complicated. You can only build up a brand image by remaining true to yourself, by maintaining characteristics which the customer attributes to you and only you. Audi, for example, is the only automotive brand which consistently follows the school of corporate design. Each model speaks the clearly formulated language of the brand. With impressive commercial success. But the old truism is equally valid: only by changing can you remain true to yourself. That means you must find a way to integrate technical, social, cultural change into your own portfolio in a manner that comes to be regarded as your own independent approach.

MORE: Today, Thonet’s bistro chair is a classic. In 1852 the design he chose for industrial production was radically modern. Can you name some of today’s radically modern, innovative developments?
Andrej Kupetz: I can make out a trend towards light materials, which, at the same time, have extremely stable attributes. This trend towards lightness is first and foremost a response to ever

scarcer resources. The designer’s duty is to increase the social acceptability of lightweight materials through attractive applications. Many people still think: lightweight equals poor quality.

“I can make out a trend towards light materials, which, at the same time, have extremely stable attributes. This trend towards lightness is first and foremost a response to ever scarcer resources.”

Andrej Kupetz

MORE: So you are appealing for design to be taken more seriously in terms of its social effect and significance ...
Andrej Kupetz: ... because I believe with all my heart in its social relevance. Holistic design is the result of living both corporate culture and social responsibility with the goal of improving people’s quality of life in a sustainable manner.

PORTRAIT

ANDREJ KUPETZ

Born in 1968, he has been general manager of the German Design Council in Frankfurt. He studied industrial design, philosophy and product marketing in Berlin, London and Paris. From 1997, he worked for Deutsche Bahn AG, where he was responsible for brand management and the implementation of a new corporate identity. Andrej Kupetz is married with three sons.



Not to be taken lightly

Oliver Hunger sees the future of furniture manufacturing in light-weight materials – but he feels that there is a lack of enthusiasm for them.

BY Clemens Niedenthal

Oliver Hunger is only too familiar with gut decisions. For example, when he gets excited about a new car: “Why do I buy something new? Because it awakens my emotions.” He is also familiar with rational decisions. For example, as an entrepreneur, when he invests in the future of his firm, an innovative furniture manufacturer. It’s a mixture of common sense and relishing a challenge, like when EGGER approached him with the idea of the lightweight board Eurolight. “Light-weight manufacturing spares resources and, because of its constructive characteristics, is genuinely innovative. In a word, I believed in lightweight manufacturing.” In 2007, Hunger bought an edging machine for sandwich boards with honeycomb core – the first to hit the German market.

Oliver Hunger believes in lightweight manufacturing. He also believes that it makes sense to produce components with a minimum of raw material. Yet lightweight manufacturing still accounts for just 15 per cent of his sales. The problem: “The furniture market in Germany is largely price-oriented. The storm damage caused by hurricane Kyrrill brought down the price of wood and the price of wood-based materials also fell immediately.” The prevailing opinion is that lightweight materials should be, above all, cheap. That annoys him: “If a car is very light, it’s justifiably celebrated as high-tech. In furniture construction, on the other hand, heavy is still associated with quality.” Hunger is somewhat envious of Holland or Italy, “where producers and consumers have long since approached innovative materials with a more open mind.” That’s why the entrepreneur from Bünde in the western German region of

Westphalia aims to make the rational advantages of lightweight manufacturing emotionally tangible, for example, with “electrified” furniture: “If all I have to do to charge my smart phone is to place it on a shelf – that’s cool technology that gets people excited.” Hunger conceals the cables in the cavities of the Eurolight boards. The same goes for the



“If a car is very light, it’s justifiably celebrated as high-tech. That’s not the case with furniture manufacturing.”

Oliver Hunger, Manager of Hunger Furniture Manufacturing

little electric motor that powers the sliding doors – which are four times lighter than their conventional equivalents. It’s with ideas like this that Oliver Hunger awakens emotions and connects with the consumer. Because consumers – just like himself – are inclined to make gut decisions.

www.hunger-moebel.de



The furniture factory in Bünde covers an area of 3,800 m².



The Lemet factory is located in the lush green hinterland of the city of Campina, whose prosperity is based on its oil reserves.

Consistency in Change

The Romanian family-run company Lemet manufactures modular furniture. For over twenty years, it has been a master of change – while remaining true to its principles.

BY Kirsten Niemann

In July 2011, the Romanian entrepreneur Alexandru Rizea had people shaking and scratching their heads when he said: if someone approached him with “a sack containing 50 million euros”, he still would not sell his company Lemet for that price. The previous year, Lemet had sold 34 million euros-worth of furniture. Many of his compatriots would have decided otherwise, given that the Romanian economy had been in crisis since 2008. But it is at times like this that Lemet seizes the opportunity to adapt to new market conditions. That is the company philosophy.

Twenty years earlier, the technician Rizea was staring into the abyss. The revolution of 1989 meant everything was starting from scratch and his job as a company director in the town of Campina was about to get the chop. Two years later, he produced his first 15 coffee tables in the hope of selling them to his friends. With a mixture of courage, organisational talent and versatility, he got through the difficult start-up phase. His concept: inexpen-

sive furniture at a time when consumers had very little money at their disposal.

That was right at the time. Today, however, Lemet is continually improving the quality of its products to attract new customer groups. “Constant change is essential for survival”, says his son,

more than a 100 franchised Lem Stores throughout the country sell Lemet furniture. They are similar to IKEA in terms of concept and popularity: modular furniture that can be combined individually and taken away immediately in flat packs. But despite all the changes, Lemnet remains true to its basic principles. Because: “Without consistency,



“Change is essential for survival. But without consistency, you cannot win over the consumer’s faith in the brand.”

Adrian Rizea, Director of Lemet’s Marketing Department

Adrian Rizea. He is due a large part of the credit for Lemet’s success. In 1996, he introduced modern marketing to the company, investing in a factory, machines and staff. But his biggest coup was in 2005, when he opened the company’s first furniture store. Today,

you cannot win over the consumer’s faith in the brand”, says Adrian Rizea. That also includes remaining a family-run company. Selling it or going public remain taboo.

www.lemet.ro

E_SOLUTIONS

“Acquiring Roma has put us in a position to produce our own ABS and laminate edges to match the Eurodekor range. We are the only manufacturers of wood-based materials who can do so.”

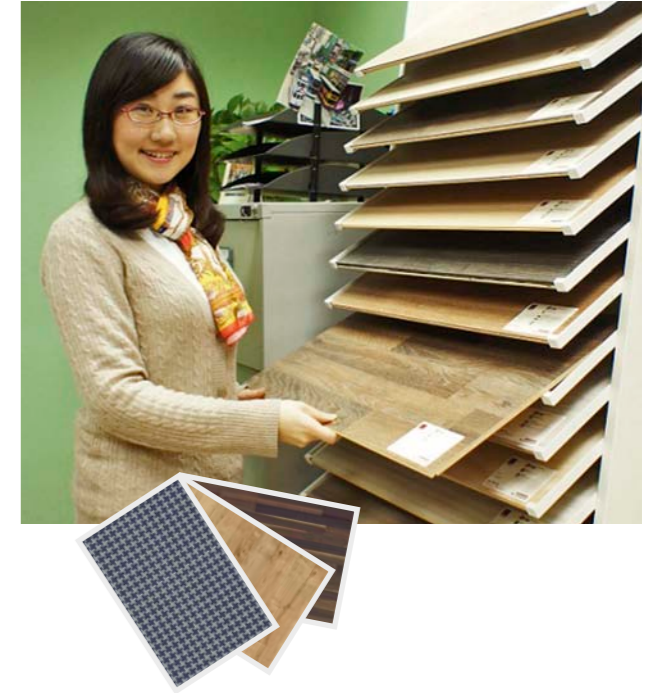
Walter Schiegl, Technology and Production Manager of the EGGER Group
Of Bridges and Edges (Pages 22 to 27)

The EGGER Team

THERESA WEILEI QIAN

Sales, Shanghai (China)

EGGER has been active in the Chinese market since 1999. In 2009, the college graduate Theresa Weilei Qian took up a position in administration and marketing in the sales office in Shanghai. “It’s the beginning of my career”, says the young Chinese woman enthusiastically. One of the highlights for her so far: EGGER’s stand at Interzum Guangzhou trade fair. Not only does she provide simultaneous translations at interviews and presentations for business partners, she also acts as a mediator between the cultures and marketing philosophies of the two continents. And there’s one trump card that she is especially fond of playing: “Telling people that EGGER is a family-run company”, says Theresa, “that means a lot to the Chinese.”



ANDREY BALAKIREV

Manager of the Wood Purchasing Department, Shuya (Russia)

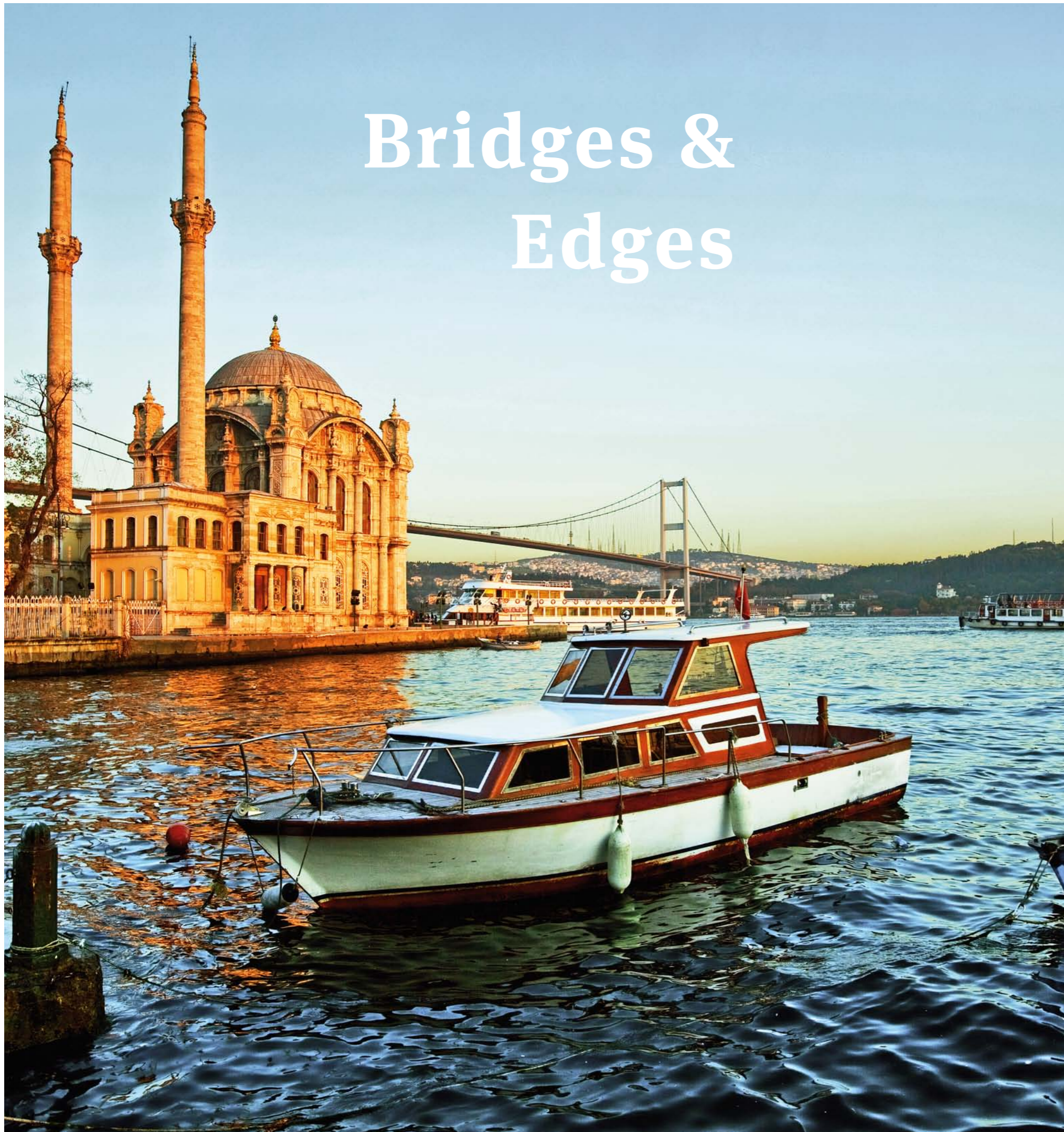
When Andrey Balakirev is asked about his line of work, all he says is: EGGER. The company is one of the most stable and reliable companies in the region of Ivanovo. Everybody knows EGGER, according to Balakirev, and admires the respect with which the company treats its business partners. The 47 year-old electrical engineer is manager of the wood purchasing department at the Shuya plant. The atmosphere in his department is good and 2011 was the most successful year so far for the plant. In the rare event of difficulties, he says, “all people have to do is approach management and we will solve the problem. That’s typical EGGER for me.”

DIDIER SOISSON

Shift Manager, Rion des Landes (France)

Didier Soisson was production shift manager at two other manufacturers before he came to EGGER in 1994. A trained electrician, he knows all about the ins and outs of his job. His responsibilities include managing five teams and controlling quality, capacities and safety. As safety commissioner, the latter is especially important to him: “Work can’t just be run-of-the-mill.” That includes things such as eating together with colleagues and celebrating each others birthday. For he knows that “good relations are essential to team spirit.”





Bridges & Edges

The Fatih Sultan Mehmet Bridge in Istanbul connects Europe with Asia. The motorway leads from the site of Roma Plastik's original workshop to the current factory.

E_SOLUTIONS

By integrating the Turkish edging manufacturer into its operations, EGGER is now in a position to offer a full range of edging. Decor and edging must match precisely. That also applies to cooperation between the two producers – across all cultural boundaries.

BY Till Schröder

Crisis? Change? The two young men who founded Roma Plastik are experts at managing both. It's an essential ability for anyone who wants to thrive in their native city, Istanbul. This metropolis on the Bosphorus, spanned by bridges connecting Asia with Europe, has been through many crises in its long history, most recently in 2001. "Economic activity fell by 70 per cent, the value of our currency was halved and we had to cut our workforce from 200 to 70 employees", explains Ari Mazon. Today, he and his partner Aydin Robert Baler employ more than 550 people in the edging factory.

In 2010, EGGER took a 71.5 per cent stake in the firm. "Roma and EGGER have the same genes", explains Thomas Leissing, Director of Finances, Administration and Logistics for the EGGER Group: "The drive for success and growth". And it is this entrepreneurial mentality that forms the bridge between Tyrol and Turkey. "We share the same values, business ethics and entrepreneurial philosophy as EGGER", says Ari Mazon. It is a meeting of entrepreneurs who are unanimous in their goals, decisiveness and mutual respect.

When the two companies began talks, another crisis had just been successfully mastered: in 2009, the Turkish economy recovered swiftly from the economic crisis. The country had learned its lessons from 2001 and reformed the banking system. The "relatively stable Turkish banking sector" withstood the crisis "without state intervention, in contrast to other OECD countries",

according to the country portrait issued by the information service Germany Trade and Invest. "By the first quarter of 2010, Turkey was able to achieve an economic growth rate of 11.7 per cent, the second highest in the G20 after China."

That Roma Plastik also emerged successfully from the crisis has a lot to do with the level-headedness of its leadership duo. When Lehman Brothers went bankrupt in 2008, Baler and Mazon immediately grasped the seriousness of the situation. First, they took measures to secure their liquidity. They reduced fixed costs and kept their employee numbers flexible. Roma reacted quickly and resolutely, putting investments on ice, taking the risk of initially losing market share. But when demand suddenly began to rise again in spring 2009, the company had enough capital to take on orders that other companies on the market were unable to cope with. The falling price of oil also played into the edging manufacturer's hand.

1996: the beginnings of Roma Plastik in a small, central workshop in Istanbul.

What is now the third-largest edging manufacturer in the world, with customers in more than 50 countries, began in 1996 in a small workshop in an industrial park in Istanbul. "The curve did not always point upwards", says Robert Baler, drawing a zig-zag line on a piece of paper. He and Ari Mazon were childhood friends. They grew up as the sons of businessmen in a city



→ that is bursting at its seams, constantly growing outwards and upwards: there are construction sites everywhere; skyscrapers, housing estates and industrial parks. Istanbul is the gateway to the expanses of Asia – and Asian markets. With a population of 18 million, which is more an estimate than a calculation,



“ We share the same values, business ethics and entrepreneurial philosophy as EGGER. ”

Ari Mazon, co-founder of Roma Plastik

this is one of the biggest conurbations in the world. The majority of the inhabitants are under 25, the estimated average age is 29. Many are well educated, western-orientated and cosmopolitan.

The extrusion plant handles all processes, from mixing the raw materials, printing the edging and rolling it up. Extruders play a prominent role in Roma Plastik production processes from start to finish.

At seven in the morning, the traffic is still moving freely on the orbital that circles the centre of Istanbul on the

European side. Just before it reaches the imposing Sultan Mehmet Bridge to Asia, it passes the industrial park of workshops and small factories where Baler and Mazon set up their first extruders in 1996. They had bought the used equipment in Italy. In the mid-1990s, the chipboard industry in Turkey enjoyed a huge boom. Suddenly, there was a shortage of edging. Producers were dependent on suppliers from abroad. “Orders had to be paid for in advance, there were several weeks waiting time”, recalls Ari Mazon, who worked for a regional laminate producer at the time. Many producers would simply cut a strip off the laminate and use it as edging. That meant accepting a black edge.

Service orientation opened up doors and opportunities for Roma. First of all, customers did not have to pay until their goods were delivered. It wasn’t long before the two businessmen had to hire their first employee to process the orders. He is still working for the company. More colours meant more extruders. The company rented additional floorspace in their original building, and then across the road. Overhead telephone cables were run across the street to enable communication between the two sides. After four years, the narrow streets were unable to accommodate the trucks needed to transport the goods. To keep growing, the company needed its own, bigger plant.

The next step followed from 2000 to 2006: construction of the new factory in the industrial park at Gebze.

The drive from here across the bridges to Gebze on the Asian side takes about an hour. Ten years ago, this area was covered in forest, today the motorway is lined with logistics centres, production facilities and office complexes. In the year 2000, four years after the company was founded, Roma Plastik set up its factory and head office here on a 30,000 m² plot of land. The wasteland next door was soon added – enough reserves for further expansion. But first, there were two crises to master. As mentioned already: the first came immediately, in the year after the move, 2001. Roma had to go into “survival



- 1 The factory halls and EGGER’s new sales offices are located beside Roma Plastik’s head office.
- 2 The printed rolls are cut to edging width.
- 3 The jumbo rolls are stacked, ready for printing.



The extrusion plant handles all processes, from mixing the raw materials, printing the edging and rolling it up. Extruders play a prominent role in Roma Plastik production processes from start to finish.

→ mode”, as Robert Baler calls it. The remaining staff made their contribution to the company’s survival by taking a temporary salary cut of 50 per cent. At the time, the owners did not take any pay at all. Family, friends and loyal business partners helped them out. They offloaded their laminate production business, selling the machines at low prices to competitors, who, became partners at one fell stroke. At times of crisis, Roma Plastik returned to its core business and recipe for success: edging.

2006 to 2010: investors get involved, helping Roma Plastik to become market leader.

The lessons of the crisis were hard: “The weak die off, only the strong survive”, says Robert Baler succinctly. Roma survived. But they could no longer finance their big investments reliably under their current system. Luckily, a Private Equity Society noticed the growth rate of the Turkish edging manufacturer. In 2005, Roma accepted the investors’ offer. The new partners gave the entrepreneurs free rein in technical decisions. One of the few compromises they had to make was an increase in returns. But the new investments did not bring with them new sales chan-

nels. So Roma Plastik had to find a new production partner. And all the while, they were confronted with the prejudice that Turkey was a low-wage country. “We cannot reduce our production costs”, says Robert Baler. “We are not in China”. Wage costs accounted for about ten per cent of production costs. Roma had to buy its machines, chemicals and raw materials in Europe, for the usual prices. “We are orientated towards European quality standards.”

In 2009, the first talks were held with EGGER, with a successful conclusion the following year – a strategically important step for the Austrian wood-based material producer: “Acquiring Roma Plastik has put us in a position to produce our own ABS and laminate edges to match the Eurodekor range”, says Walter Schiegl, Director of Technology and Production for the EGGER Group. “We are the only manufacturers of wood-based materials who can do so while maintaining a consistently high quality.” Back then, Roma was already planning a new social centre with canteen and changing rooms for its employees, adjacent to the production hall. To accommodate EGGER’s new sales office, they promptly decided to add a storey on top, to make use of

synergies. It went into operation in November 2011 and houses a sample exhibition, a Virtual Design-Studio (VDS) in HD with 70-inch touch screen and Mixed Reality Interface (MRI).

EGGER and Roma Plastik have been growing together since 2010. Decor and edging match perfectly.

Istanbul is the gateway to Asia. “Turkey and the countries on its borders are among the most interesting growth markets in the world”, says Ulrich Bühler, director of Sales and Marketing for the EGGER Group. In addition, Roma aims to expand its European market shares with EGGER. To make it in these highly competitive markets, western European quality standards are required. Consistency of colour and structure are analysed more closely, the more environmentally friendly ABS edging is favoured over the cheaper PVC. The nerve centre of this technical integration is a small room where the printed edging is compared with the decors by expert eyes. The team manages 2,500 “colour matches” every year. “Integrating the two was hard work, both in terms of human and technical resources”, says Michael Wehmeyer, who took charge of the integration process in his capac-

ity as head of edging sales for EGGER. “It was just as well that we had twelve months in which to adapt the new Zoom collection.” For this collection, the factory specially installed an automatic inspection plant for quality control, which monitors colour,width, thickness and



“ We apply western European quality standards. We cannot produce more cheaply, we are not China. ”

Robert Baler, co-founder of Roma Plastik

flatness. It involved accommodating two cultures, which had to get to know each others clients priorities. Wehmeyer recalls long meetings, a proud “No!” here and there and the occasional flying roll of edging, but also cordial relations and mutual pride and satisfaction at what was achieved. Today, the integration process functions like the bridges over the Bosphorus: the traffic flows freely in both directions. Seen from Asia, Istanbul is also the gateway to Europe. And now, it’s wide open for Roma.

THE ROMA STORY

ROMA PLASTIK: AN OVERVIEW

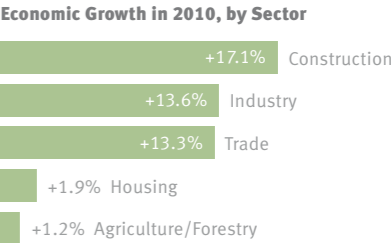
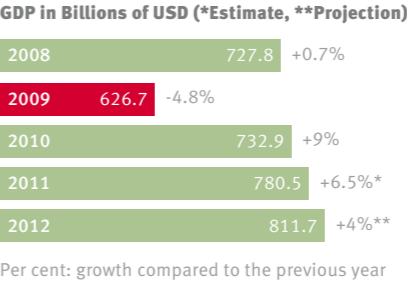
Roma Plastik was founded in 1996 by Robert Baler and Ari Mazon. In 2000, the company moved to its new headquarters in Gebze, Istanbul. In 2010, EGGER took a 71.5 per cent stake in it. Roma Plastik produces ABS, PVC, PMMA, melamine and aluminium edging under its own brand name. The factory also manufactures the complete range of edging for EGGER décors.

1 Edging for EGGER collections at a sales exhibition. 2 The printed edges are matched precisely with the customer’s choice of decor. 3 Roma Plastik archives all edging samples.

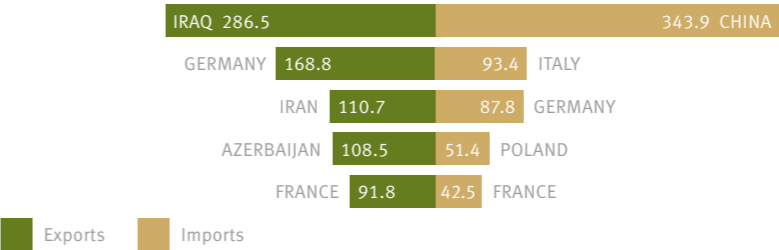


Turkey in Numbers

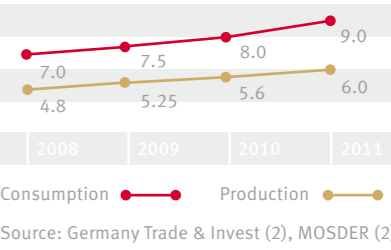
The Turkish market is growing rapidly and the country is considered the lynch-pin of the Middle East. However, important markets are currently on hold due to political crises such as those in Syria, Iran and Libya, increasing the importance of the EU as a market.



Top 5 for Furniture Imports and Exports in 2011 (in Billions of USD)



Furniture Market in 2011 (in Billions of USD)





Beneath the oak decor: Eurolight, with its recycled paper honeycomb core.

Beauty Sleep

It's a hotel for long-term guests.

The new Residence Inn by Marriott in the Scottish capital, Edinburgh, was designed with sustainability in mind.

The architects opted for Eurolight boards with matching decor by EGGER.

BY Patrick Fink

Hotel operators regularly refurbish their establishments. On average, beds, carpets, wallpaper and floors are replaced every five to seven years and bathrooms every ten years. Ecologically responsible hotel operators also have an eye for scarce resources. And since the people who run the Residence Inn hotel chain place great store in being ecologically responsible, they decided to make this a prerequisite when planning their new establishment in Edinburgh. They stipulated that the materials used in the design should consume as few raw materials as possible and be easily recycled. They wanted materials that look natural and ruled out anything that appeared synthetic. EGGER was able to

offer the solution – materials with just these characteristics.

Residence Inn has been an established hotel brand in the US for decades – yet the chain, which belongs to the Marriott Group, did not start expanding into Europe until about two years ago. The plan was to open two branches, one in Munich and the other in Edinburgh. The hotel in the Scottish capital was part of Foster & Partners' plans for the revitalisation of the Quartermile district in the city centre, which also include office buildings, shopping mews, tourist apartments and residential quarters. The project is scheduled for completion in 2015. The task of designing the

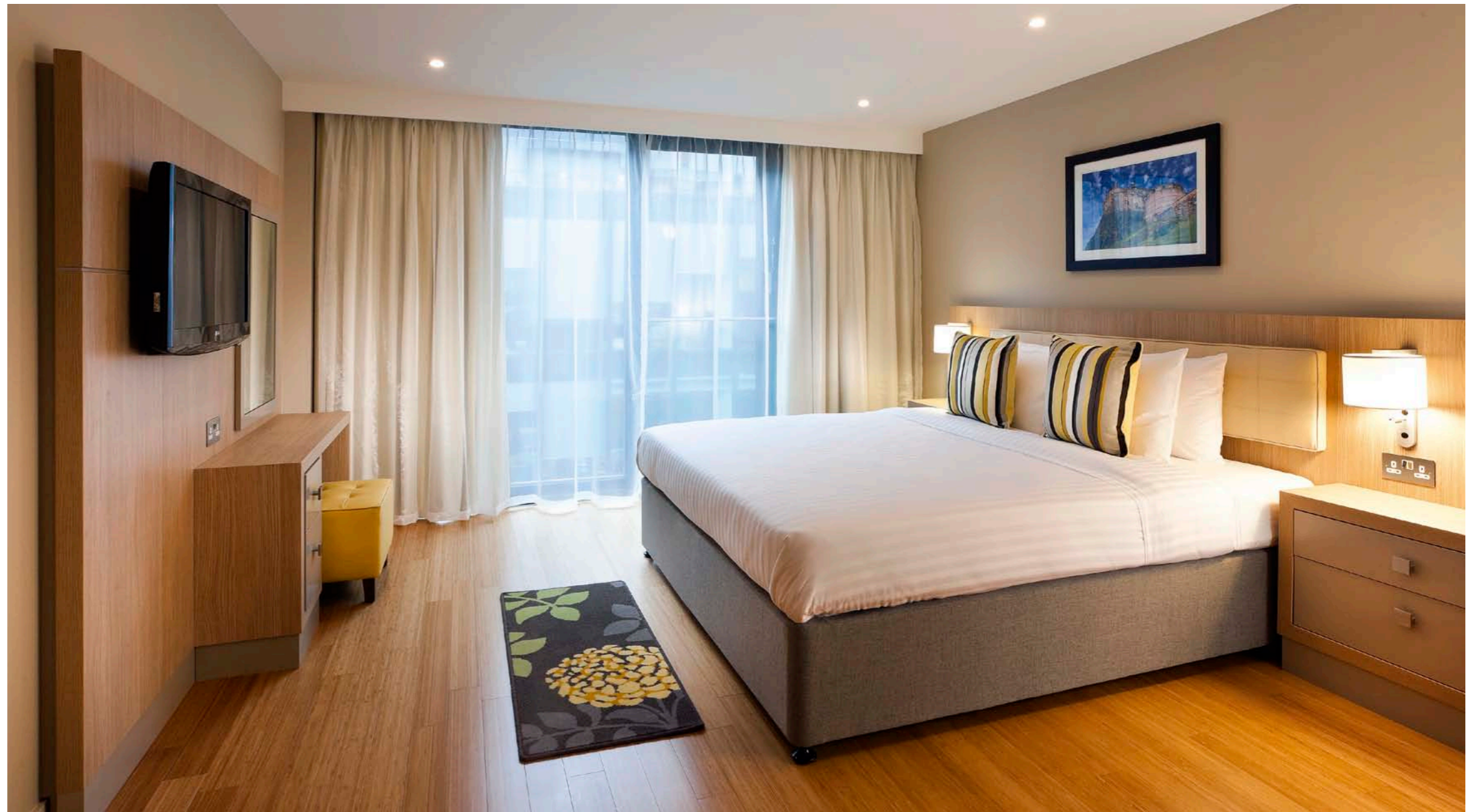
interior of the Residence Inn went to Ica Interiors, who specialise in hotel design. In search of the best materials for the hotel fittings and furnishings, these renowned interior architects turned to EGGER.

Melamine faced boards are versatile, attractive – and lighter than solid timber.

“We had already shown the architects of Ica Interiors our products two years previously. They were impressed by the standards we set with the high quality of our laminates,” says Richard Milligan, architectural consultant with EGGER UK. In particular, the architects

were very taken with the lightweight Eurolight boards, with their many uses and significant weight advantage over solid timber.

Choosing the right decor with matching surface turned out to be trickier than picking the coreboards. “We wanted a finish, not matt but shiny and fresh-looking,” says Dawn Campbell, Associate Director at Ica Interiors. Because the Residence Inn is conceived primarily as an apartment hotel for business-people, who often spend days or even weeks in their suites. The idea was that the surfaces should suit not only the bedrooms, but also the separate living room, kitchen and study areas. Our aim



The dominant design in the bedrooms of the Residence Inn by Marriott is the Natural Aragon Oak look. It was also used in the bar and reception areas.

1 For the Eurolight boards, the designers chose ABS edging.
2+3 EGGER Products were utilized in the work-, living- and sleepingspaces of the hotel rooms.



“ We wanted a finish, not matt but shiny and fresh-looking. ”

Dawn Campbell, Interior Architect

→ was to create a healthy working atmosphere while, at the same time, making sure that our guests could relax and recover in their rooms. One decor that has been tried and tested with Eurolight and is popular with interior architects is “Light Ferrara Oak”. Ica, however, decided to break new ground and opted for “Natural Aragon Oak”. The naked eye can barely discern it from the distinctive natural wood, which is currently all the rage in furniture design. The use of the Natural Aragon Oak design in combination with Eurolight was a first.

Before a final decision was made, senior representatives of the Marriott

management team flew out to Britain specially from the firm’s headquarters near the US capital Washington. Once there, the decisions did not take long: the owners of the Residence Inn were delighted with the choice.

EGGER, meanwhile, set about adapting the chosen decor to the lightweight Eurolight boards. That included manufacturing the matching edging: all told, some 5,700 linear metres of the environmentally-friendly ABS edging.

Meanwhile the interior architects decided that the decor should not be reduced to a mere detail, but to make the



The hotel suites are also equipped with a kitchenette.

EGGER products a recurring feature of the hotel furnishing. In all, 306 sheets of Eurolight with Natural Aragon Oak finish were used in the Residence Inn, and not just in the 107 suites, but also in public spaces such as the reception counter and bar.

Expansion of the Marriott brand to Europe is still in progress, with other markets still to come.

The Residence Inn in Edinburgh opened in November 2011, becoming the Marriott chain’s second in Europe, just a month after the Apart-Hotel in Munich welcomed its first guests. The amenities available to guests of the Residence Inn include a fitness room and a twenty-four-hour supermarket. Those who do not wish to do their own shopping can have it brought up by hotel staff.

Hopefully, the hotel in Scotland won’t be the last project that EGGER and Ica Interiors work on together. “We can envisage using Eurolight in other hotel buildings, since it is a sustainably



“ Guests see our product immediately when they walk in the door and recognise it again in their own rooms. ”

Richard Milligan, Architectural Consultant

manufactured and versatile product,” says Dawn Campbell. However, in the event of another Residence Inn being built, another décor would be needed, because every hotel is to have its own individual character and design. The same goes for Marriott’s latest new projects around the world: in 2012, Marriott plans to inaugurate a Residence Inn in Saudi-Arabia and a new hotel is scheduled to open in the North African city of Algiers in 2014. But even if there are no concrete plans for Europe at the moment – Marriott’s expansion into the old world is anything but complete.

“The wood market has changed fundamentally in the last ten years. It has become more complex, leading to greater uncertainty.”

Udo Mantau, economist, Wood Management Centre, University of Hamburg
How much wood can we expect? (Pages 34 to 37)

Sustainable Living

FUEL FROM PAPER MANUFACTURING

www.biodme.se

If all the paper produced by the Smurfit Kappa plant in one day were to be rolled out, it would stretch from Piteå to Paris. There would also be a similar amount of waste produced, as paper manufacturing only uses 43 percent of the actual raw wood. Due to this, scientists at the University of Stockholm have joined forces with the truck builder Volvo and other partners to turn waste products into a gas mix called BioDMe. Now, wood-fuelled trucks are doing the rounds in Lapland - far-sighted and far-reaching recycling.



SOPHISTICATED FOREST OWNERS

www.efi.int

Experts are increasingly paying attention to the cultural and social factors in the mobilisation of native timber. About 50 percent of Europe's forests are privately owned, but only a fraction of the land-owners manage their forests commercially. The European Forest Institute (EFI) is planning an initial project in 2012 to work out solutions.

WIND AND WOOD POWER

www.timbertower.de



The higher a wind turbine, the more efficiently it produces energy – but once a height of 100 metres is reached, it is no longer economically viable to build the structure out of steel. Wood, on the other hand, is cheaper, more environmentally friendly and very durable: laminate board constructions can last decades. After five years of development, the company “timbertower” aims to put the first 100 metre-high wooden wind turbine into operation in 2012.



A CONVERSATION WITH UDO MANTAU

How much wood can we expect?



It's about more than just stem wood. Udo Mantau highlights misunderstandings regarding the way the resource wood is used in Europe.

Ten years ago, the wood market could hardly have been described as dynamic. The development of alternative energy sources brought about far-reaching change. The question of how much of the raw material was available suddenly became much more complex. The economist Udo Mantau set new standards with his study “EUwood”. Read our conversation about traditions, change and the future.

INTERVIEW BY Till Schröder

To get to the Forestry Centre of the University of Hamburg, you have to leave the bustling city centre and drive out to the suburb of Bergedorf. The institute is located in a quiet park with a pond. The shrubs and trees are marked with nameplates, exotic trees stand side by side with native species. Professor Udo Mantau is an economist, but he values the forest highly, he says – reason enough to conduct the interview in the park.

MORE: You are regarded as an expert in the wood market. What fascinates you about it?

Udo Mantau: All markets are different but the wood market is more different

than others. It's a raw materials market, but it is more complex than the oil market or the copper market, for example. It is also a part of our everyday lives, because wood is not extracted from some remote copper mine in Chile, it is to be found “next door”. That means the wood market is also the focus of social interest to a much greater extent than other markets.

MORE: What makes it so complex?

Udo Mantau: With other markets for raw materials, we are more or less dealing with the same material: like our previous examples, copper and oil. With wood, on the other hand, there

are different types of tree, different forms and different regional traditions. Furthermore, competition for raw materials is very intense nowadays. The subsidisation of wood as a source of energy changed the market a lot. Certain factors, which are now being analysed much more precisely than in the past, became more relevant.

MORE: How bad is the situation when it comes to wood as a resource?

Udo Mantau: I would not say it's “bad” just yet but we have to get used to the fact that there is just enough wood available right now for our energy and production needs. At the moment, we use about 825 million cubic metres of forest wood and other wooden raw materials every year. If we produce wood sustainably, we have about 1,025 million cubic metres per annum at our disposal. However, availability on the market is scarcer than the figures suggest. Most of the available timber is in Northern Europe. We also have a mobilisation problem in Central Europe, where scarcity is already the order of the day. This scarcity will worsen considerably in the future. If we are serious about reaching our goals for renewable energy sources by 2020, we will need about 320 million cubic metres more per annum than we have now.

MORE: What are the most promising approaches to meeting this challenge?

Udo Mantau: In many countries, politicians have focussed on their energy policy goals and promoted demand for renewable energy sources. Now they must recognise that this has made supply scarce. That means they must focus more closely on improving supply. But that will only ease the situation, it can't solve the scarcity issue.

MORE: What has to happen so that demand and supply are more balanced in the future?

Udo Mantau: The most effective measure I can think of is to quickly expand the use of other renewables, so that the pressure on wood as a quickly available resource is eased.

MORE: What sort of an effect do design trends have on wood reserves? Oak furniture and

floors are very popular at the moment – is this putting our oak forests under threat?

Udo Mantau: Usually, this is regulated by price and the attractiveness of alternatives. If a raw material gets expensive, people turn to other materials. The world changes when a resources grows scarce but it does not stop going around.

MORE: You mentioned the different traditions in the use of wood. Are there similar differences among experts in the wood market – or do you all share the same opinion?

Udo Mantau: We have settled most of our differences. They were mainly the result of different methods of calculating the scale of wood reserves. Unfelled wood is measured differently from country to country: one country measures it at chest height, another at ground level. It is also wrong to equate

“ Competition for timber is intensifying. That is changing the wood market. ”

that with the quantity harvested: you must deduct the bark, branches and waste through sawdust to calculate the amount of the raw material available. What actually gets transported away after logging can be up to 30 per cent less than the unfelled timber. It took us ten years before everybody accepted this discrepancy. The EUwood project set standards throughout Europe.

MORE: Do you sense different attitudes when you discuss how to solve the problem with colleagues from Sweden, England, Russia or Spain?

Udo Mantau: Oh yes. That's what makes Europe so difficult and so interesting at the same time. For example, the Scandinavians are fundamentally more interested in wood as a raw material and they also have the biggest reserves. Wood scarcity is not a big issue for them. The Central Europeans are more interested in environmental aspects.



→ They consider the forest a place of recreation that is of cultural value, they observe every interference closely and it is the object of public debate. And the Southern Europeans are inclined to place more value on the produce of the forest, such as fruits and berries, mushrooms, cork and other things. A Spaniard has to live with the risk that

“ *The best way to control complex systems is to concentrate on the dominant factors of influence. We should not try to control every little detail.* ”

Udo Mantau, Economist

his forest will burn down before it can be harvested. Naturally, that affects how he manages his forest.

MORE: Can a pan-European solution be found nonetheless – or does every country have to find its own way, one that matches its culture?

Udo Mantau: We could have the same conversation about the euro, but wood may be slightly simpler. If a country chooses to follow its own path, it may run into trading difficulties but otherwise there won't be any far-reaching effects. Maybe I'm overlooking something but I do not consider diversity of individual markets to be a fundamental problem. Difficulties may arise in terms of transparency, which is a challenge for internationally active companies.

MORE: Is there any way of understanding the globalised wood market from a national point of view?

Udo Mantau: The market for timber has changed fundamentally in the last ten years. It has grown more complex, leading to greater insecurity. The best way to control complex systems is to concentrate on the dominant factors of influence. We should not try to control every little detail. We need to find out first which details are important. For example, we recently conducted an analysis of material flows in Europe. We illustrated the flows with a graphic. It looked like all the intertwined pipes

on the façade of the Centre Pompidou in Paris (laughs). In other words: by illustrating all the flows of main products and by-products, we make it look very complicated indeed. But it was a necessary step, so that we could calculate clearly and correctly. Next, we started trying to filter out the politically important issues from this tangle of material flows. We then had transparency but a lack of consistency. One aspect is science, the other communication. Both are important in practise but they need each other to be effective.

MORE: All the same – how would you formulate your core message?

Udo Mantau: Agricultural policy in Europe is very homogeneous but forestry policy, in contrast, functions on a more regional level. On the other hand, the wood market is increasingly becoming more international. That makes a certain uniformity necessary, for example regarding terminology and measuring techniques. The core messages are to improve use cascades and recycling to get as much as possible out of the raw materials. Currently, timber is used approximately one and a half times before it burned. That can be improved on. 30 per cent of our wood reserves are secondary raw materials (e.g. saw-mill by-products, second-hand wood) whose potential will be exploited more efficiently by the timber and paper industries in the future. I'm optimistic about that. Because the forestry and timber industries have always been exemplary when it came to making efficient use of raw materials.

PORTRAIT

UDO MANTAU

A trained economist, he has been Professor of Forestry Economics at the Centre of Forestry of the University of Hamburg since 1991. In 2008, he initiated the EUwood project along with organisations such as UNECE/FAO, the European Forest Institute (EFI) and other partners. EUwood set standards when it came to calculating Europe's wood reserves.





CERTIFICATES

Certified Growth

Spruce monoculture: not every forest is considered worthy of protection by PEFC – which does not insist on fixed quotas for protecting forest areas.

Certificates guarantee sustainability and transparency – and that also applies to where the timber comes from. Two labels have established themselves internationally: FSC and PEFC. The two organizations pursue similar goals but with different philosophies.

INTERVIEWS BY Jan Ahrenberg, Lars Klaaßen

Making sure forests have a future is in the interests of a broad range of parties: from the fawn and fox to the hedgehog, from the carpenter to the forester, from the cabinet-maker to the architect. In short: it is in the interests of all life forms which breathe in O₂ and breathe out CO₂. The proposed solutions for the preservation of our forests are almost equally diverse. But we can identify two main parties: the environmentalist movement, which demands as little human interference as possible, and the pragmatists, who wish to make the unavoidable exploitation of wood as a resource as harmless as possible.

Hence, responsible users of wood are banking on the principle of “sustainability”: they aim to minimize illegal logging and clear cutting, secure social co-

hesion and maintain their profits. Ideal production chains integrate economic, ecological and social aspects. That’s an aim shared by “Forest Stewardship Council” (FSC) and “Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes” (PEFC). Their certificates are both selling and buying points, since both value the forest as a source of products made of certified timber – but according to different rules.

One focus is on protecting sections of forests: bio-diversity comes at the cost of increasingly scarce timber resources.

The FSC requires that “five percent of the area covered by the forest be identified as an area of special importance to nature conservation.”

The FSC regulations also stipulate: “private forest owners shall strive to remove 2 per cent of their forest area from harvesting in the long term, in return for economic compensation”. The main argument is preventing the loss of biodiversity. “Nature-orientated foresters, eco-system researchers and environmentalist groups are in favour of protecting parts of forests”, says Marion Karmann, manager of the FSC International Monitoring and Evaluation Programme. “Be it to maintain biodiversity or as a reference area by which to evaluate the natural development of the harvested area.”

Industry and trade unions are concerned about this requirement that parts of forests should be protected. It is not just about securing busi-

nesses and livelihoods. The increasing competition for wood as a raw material makes the issue a controversial one. If supplies are no longer available regionally, transport distances will increase accordingly. These transports go hand in hand with increased greenhouse gas emissions.

The PEFC is in favour of protecting parts of forests but does not insist on fixed quotas. “Not every forest has an area of five percent that is worthy of conservation”, says Thorsten Arndt, Head of Communication at PEFC International in Geneva. “Sometimes, especially with regard to group certification, it can be better for one owner to preserve none of his forest while another preserves 20, 30 or 40 per cent, because it is more worthy of protection.



→ With some 243 million hectares of certified forest, PEFC is the current market leader. But because the organization was launched on the initiative of forest owners and the timber industry in 1998, the label is widely regarded as an industry certificate. Thorsten Arndt does not agree, saying it is recognized by environmental groups such as Conservation International in the USA, the Austrian umbrella environmental organization and France Nature Environnement. “In Finland, for example, the typical forest owner has an area of about 1.7 hectares, which yield about 170 Euro per annum.” The axe is only wielded twice every generation. “Certification can only contribute to forest conservation if it offers an economic incentive for the forest owner not to clear his forest for more lucrative purposes, such as tillage or livestock farming.”

PEFC and FSC also differ in their geographical emphasis: Until now, FSC has certified 148.62 million hectares of forest, of which 17.70 million hectares are tropical. “In Brazil, for example, it has been shown that certification can make a significant contribution to protecting forests”, says Karmann. “Experience has shown that certified companies are much more consistent than uncertified operators in complying with the demand – also set down by the government – that they preserve five percent of virgin forest.” She adds that the areas in question usually boast high levels of bio-diversity.

However, according to PEFC, only nine per cent of the world’s forests are certified, and 90 per cent of those are in moderate climate zones. PEFC, therefore, does not see itself as being in competition with FSC, but as helping to find common ways of increasing this share worldwide.














In Europe, the decision to seek certification pits economic arguments against idealistic views: “in Germany, for example, private forest owners have an average of two to three hectares”, says Werner Zwingmann, who purchases timber for EGGER in southern Germany and is responsible for the topic of certification for the entire EGGER Group. “The FSC does offer the possibility of group

certification for small forest owners, but often, the FSC seal is not economically viable.” The cost for a five-year audit of a foresting organization with 1,000 members and 2,000 hectares of forest: about 15,000 euro. And there’s a further, even more demanding factor: the requirement that a certain percentage of forest is protected. “If we assume a growth rate of eight solid cubic metres per hectare and an average yield of 40 euro per cubic metre, this would amount to a yield of just 64,000 euro over five years: not counting harvesting costs”, says Zwingmann. “Selling the timber does not always yield a profit, and many forest owners opt for FSC for idealist rather than economic reasons.” PEFC certification, on the other hand, can also be economically viable even for the owners of small, private forests. The numbers prove the point: some 450 hectares of forest are FSC-certified in Germany, in comparison with more than 7.3 million hectares of PEFC-certified woodlands.

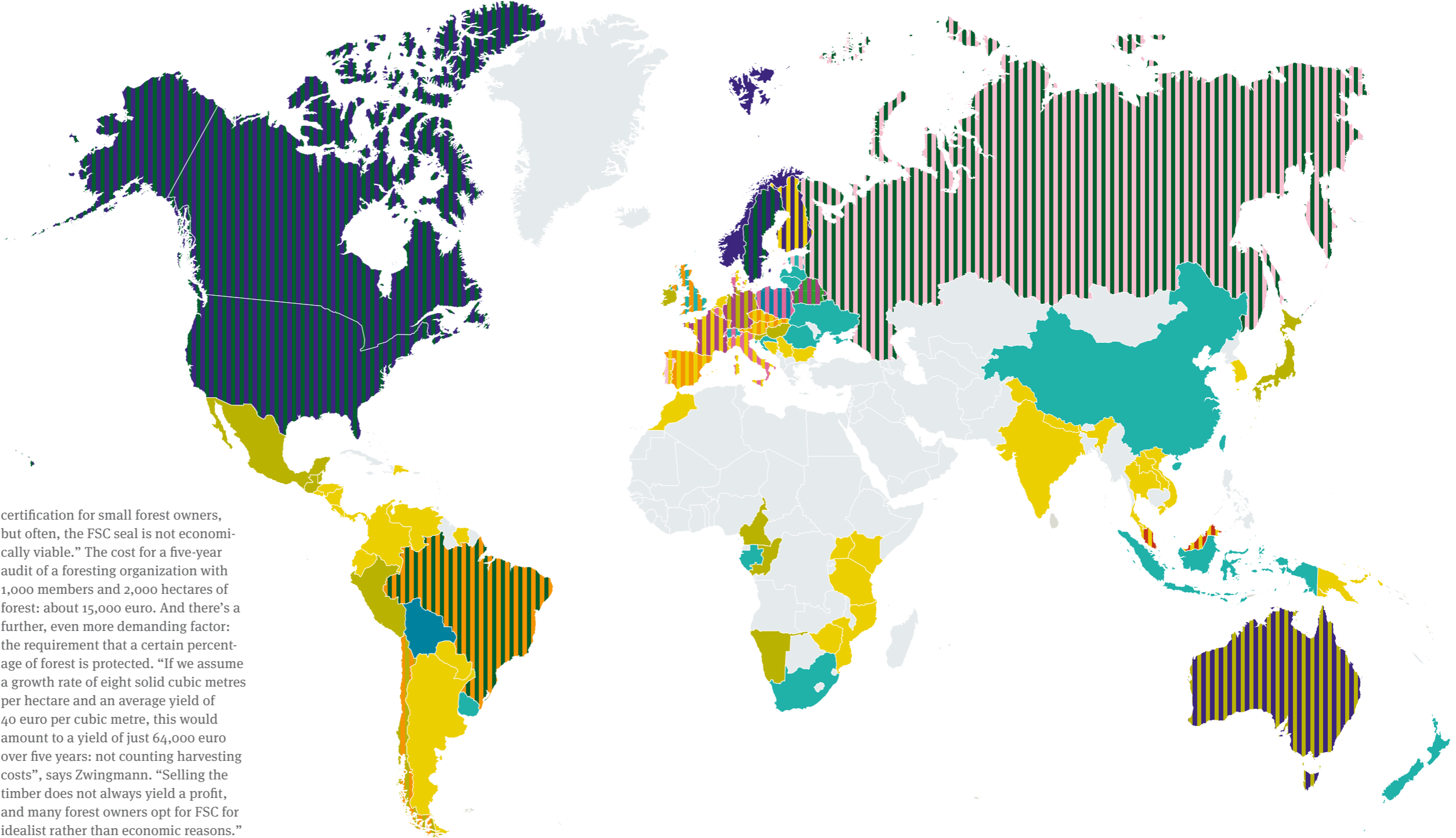
But despite their different emphases, Marion Karmann and Thorsten Arndt agree on one thing: the competition between FSC and PEFC contributes to better protection of our forests. And in the end, that’s good for all involved, including fawn, fox and hedgehog.

Certified Forests

The world map shows where the certified timber comes from. FSC stands out for its protection of rain forests in India, South America and Russia. PEFC is also represented world-wide, but predominantly in Europe. The two forms of certification are established in equal measure in North America.

FSC	PEFC	HECTARES
		7 500 000 +
		5 000 000 – 7 499 999
		2 500 000 – 4 999 999
		750 000 – 2 499 999
		250 000 – 749 999
		100 – 249 999
		No certified forests

Source: latest comparable information provided by the organisations FSC and PEFC in 2010.



GUARDIANS OF THE FOREST

FSC



Representatives of indigenous people, environmental organisations and sections of the timber and forestry industries founded

the Forest Stewardship Council in 1993. FSC certification stipulates ten principles and 56 criteria, according to which more than 80 national working groups define regionally adapted regulations.

www.fsc.org

PEFC



In 1998, forest owners initiated the “Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes”.

PEFC allows interest groups such as trade unions, industrial federations or environmental organisations to have their say through stakeholder voting rights.

www.pefc.org



1 Vegetable patches on the 15-metre-high roof of a former factory in Brooklyn, New York.

2 City and country in flux – the futurology workshop of the trend researcher Matthias Horx near Vienna.



Going Regional

Today, successful furniture design looks natural and authentic. MORE looks at the reasons why.

BY Johanna Rüdiger, Till Schröder

The country life is all the rage. The rural idyll – at least as portrayed by the media, is setting the tone for style and design both in the countryside and in the city. This is also reflected in the latest furniture and interior trends. Authenticity is in big demand, as expressed, for example, by the authenticity and sensual quality of solid wood. Recycled wood, reused wood and the patina of old wood are part of the modern chic. Bulky beams, splits and knots – what used to be regarded as flaws now stand for honesty and authenticity.

This design trend is a reflection of a dominant feeling in society and our changing living environment. The differences between urban and rural life and the criteria by which they are defined are also changing. Visionary architects illustrate this with new, green approaches, ranging from computer-controlled, low-energy, in-

ternet-connected smart homes through to 30-storey greenhouses or forested metropolitan high-rises: “Bosco Verticale”, Vertical Forest, is the name given to the two towers currently being built in Milan by the architect Stefano Boeri. Each of the two towers will be decorated with more than 900 trees and 5 000 shrubs: that’s equivalent to the vegetation in a hectare of woodland. The perfect symbiosis of urbanity and pastoral idyll: a vision of the future?

Urban and rural life are changing rapidly and radically. “The characteristics of the city and of certain regions are converging all the time”, says Eike Wenzel, director of the renowned Institute for Trend and Future Research in Hamburg. He was the first German trend researcher to investigate the trend towards the “Lifestyle of Health and Sustainability”, or LOHA. This ecologically conscious individual does not rule out the use of modern technology.

There is no competition between the city and the country, merely between different regions.

Many modern life concepts incorporate both metropolitan and rural culture. Wenzel sees competition taking place at a different interface: “In the future, the decisive factor will be the distinction between flourishing, booming regions and cities on the one hand, and on the other hand, regions left behind by these developments”, says Wenzel. The cities and regions which win the race to attract companies and high-earning professionals will offer a quality of life, which, thanks to motorways, regional airports and the Internet, are becoming increasingly similar to the advantages of a metropolis.

In this competition, it is not agriculture that makes the difference, rather the urban sectors of industry and service: to thrive, according to Wenzel, a region

must be home to an “alpha industry” in the form of an international company or an entire industry branch. Or, it must be home to a well-established, prospering middle class, complete with the companies to sustain it. Or, a third ingredient of success, a region can live off a sustainably and successfully developed tourism industry. Locally-based companies can use the high quality of leisure time to compete for the most highly-qualified people.

Since the 1990s, this competition has been intensifying as a result of demographic change and the dominant media image of big cities as centres of decision-making, creative ideas and trends. “The big cities and their good jobs still have great pulling power”, says Wenzel.

Our working lives are changing, too. Career-building is no longer strictly the domain of the city. Modern careers



→ are often influenced by multi-nationals which have their headquarters in rural surroundings. Many of them started out as family-owned companies. Rather than relinquish their local bonds, many of them remain loyal to their traditions and regional ties, seeing them as part and parcel of their successful company philosophy.

At the same time, typically urban professionals such as freelance consult-

River and the Manhattan skyline, tomatoes in the “Rooftop Farm” glow red in the sun, pumpkins bulge out the vegetable beds and the scent of basil mingles with the sweet aroma of ripe strawberries. The first years were hard, but in the meantime, business is booming in the farmyard shop, whose customers include six restaurants.

It’s hands-on work, but the feeling of moist earth and the taste of home-farmed produce have their rewards: “You can immediately taste the difference between our tomatoes and the ones you buy in the supermarket”, says Annie Novak. And this is about more than the airs and graces of a food connoisseur. The taste of these tomatoes stands for genuine, natural farming, and the food is ecologically sound: the movement has its roots in the Local Food Movement, which calls on people to buy their foodstuffs from the surrounding region. And if the surrounding region consists of high-rises, then the skylscapes can be turned into landscapes, too.

A network of neighbours donate seeds, hereby earning the right to harvest the goods. The local residents enjoy the country life on the rooftop. The city gardener and her friends emanate the kind of social warmth and familiarity normally associated with village life – amid the anonymity of the metropolis.

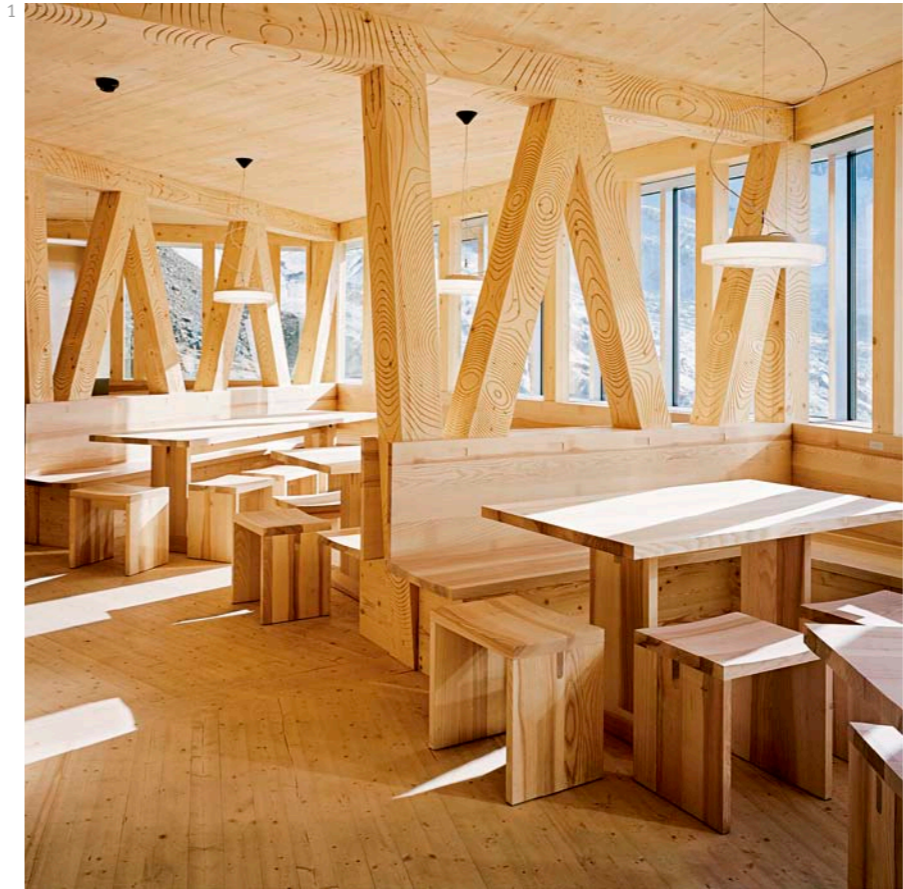
Nature is a place of human desires. Today, it is to be found in the city just as much as in the country, in furniture design with authentic timber and in eating culture. And “rural” no longer automatically means “provincial”. Architectural examples such as the award-winning Monte Rosa Hut in the Upper Valais region of Switzerland demonstrate that the city no longer has a monopoly on contemporary architecture. It goes without saying, of course, that the main construction material used here was wood.

“ *You can immediately taste the difference between our tomatoes and the ones you buy in the supermarket.* ”

Annie Novak, urban farmer

ants, creatives and experts can escape the constraints of place with their laptops and smart phones – and move their offices temporarily or permanently to the countryside. After all, here they can find peace and quiet, nature and authenticity. These are soft location factors which offer the opportunity to concentrate on creative work and lead a time-efficient lifestyle. Many erst-while big-city-dwellers are changing the reality of regional life: by buying and refurbishing farmhouses, tending gardens, increasing the demand for local produce and frequenting local restaurants and inns with their friends or relatives.

This attraction to the country life is also being reflected in the cities, in the form of “urban gardening”. This is not about allotments, this is an entire cultural movement whose epicentre is in New York, home town of Annie Novak. Not only is she founder and head of the organisation “Growing Chefs”, which introduces children to natural nourishment and explains the food chain from soil to plate. Three years ago, when Novak piled 90 000 kilogrammes of soil onto the roof of a former bagel factory in the Greenpoint area of Brooklyn, she also became the first ever gardener in North America to start a commercial farm 15 metres above ground. Against the spectacular backdrop of the East



1 Quality without frills: the new Monte Rosa Hut sets the standard for modern Alpine architecture. 2 The country guest house “Landgasthaus Berge” by designer Nils Holger Moormann reflecting contemporary interior style.



3 “Vertical Farming” is what the American architect Blake Kurasek calls his vision of multi-storey greenhouses in the city. 4 The Bosco Verticale (Vertical Forest) by Stefano Boeri: the building is currently being constructed in Milan.



URBAN FARMING

HIGH-RISE GREENHOUSES

“Urban gardening” is the product of neighbourhood action groups. It is not to be confused with blueprints for high-rise greenhouses that could represent the future of food production in large conurbations. One of the pioneers of “vertical farms” is the New York professor, Dickson Despommier.

www.verticalfarm.com

FIVE THINGS ABOUT

Lignin

Researchers are getting very excited about plastics made of renewable raw materials. Lignin can play a special role.

1 AS A POWDER

Wood is composed of lignin, cellulose and hemicellulose. Global paper production yields an estimated 70 million tonnes of lignin as a by-product every year. It usually hits the market in powdered form, which was the basis for plastics before the petrochemicals boom.



2 AS A CASING

It's still too early to imagine the use of lignin-based biological plastics on a large scale. However, there's always an exception that proves the rule and in this case, it's the computer manufacturer Fujitsu. Its product range includes a mouse and keyboard made of Arboform and Biograde, both biologically degradable plastics.



3 AS A WELD SEAM

Put simply, lignin holds the fibres of the timber together. There are new methods of activating this adhesive characteristic to hold manufactured parts together. This includes welding wood, a procedure developed at the Bern University of Applied Sciences. When vibrated under pressure, lignin turns into a form of Thermoplast: it becomes liquid and penetrates the pores of the manufactured parts. One of the first companies to use the technique commercially is the snowboard manufacturer Nidecker, which uses it for the core of its top-of-the-range board. Not only does the glue saved allow the "Ultralight" to live up to its name, it also makes it an ecologically sound product.



5 AS A HEEL

Arboform by the Tecnar company is also known as "liquid wood". Its makers say it is not just interesting because it is biodegradable but also because it can be finished even more precisely than aluminium for making machine parts. It also has its own aesthetic qualities, as demonstrated by the heel of the Gucci stilettos in the photograph.

4 AS BLACK LIQUOR

The paper industry extracts the lignin from the cellulose using various salts. The commonly applied sulfite process yields what is known as black liquor. Many manufacturers burn this black liquor to produce energy and recover the chemicals used. They have little interest in selling their black liquor. This is why there are state subsidies for biorefineries which produce lignin for manufacturing bioplastics.





PICTURE PUZZLE

Tree-Huggers’ Corner

This time we are looking for the creator of a brand that is considered the Rolls Royce of leisure boats, synonymous with the glitz and glamour of the Côte d’Azur in the 1960s. It conjures up images of style, water skiing and an American-built V8 in the tail. Sean Connery, Sophia Loren, Brigitte Bardot and Gunter Sachs all fell in love with the exquisitely worked mahogany panelling. Translated, the brand name would mean “quay” or “bank”. While the boat comes from the banks of a famous Italian lake, its name is that of its inventor. Inspired by American “pleasure boats”, the person we are looking for gave the racing boats built by his father a more elegant design – with

great success: to this day, these nautical classics are much sought-after icons of “la dolce vita”.

What is the name of the boat-builder? Send the solution to **MORE@egger.com**. Correct answers will go into a draw for one of Manuel Welsky’s new cork stools. (p. 11). Closing date for entries is 31 December 2012. There is no right to redress through the courts.

The photo puzzle in the last edition featured a hand playing a tree like a cello. The personality in question was Antonio Stradivari. Our thanks to all those who sent in the correct answer: for each one, we donated a tree to “Plant for the Planet”.

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