

IHGF 2004

India Handicraft & Gift Fair, scheduled from 13th to 17th October 2004, is one of the most sought after showcases in Asia, for handicrafts & gift products and is organised by the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH).

One of the noticeable features of the fair has been excellent turnout of foreign buyers on a regular basis. The main advantage of the fair is that it shows under one roof, a vast variety of handicrafts ranging from home textiles to accessories to decorative gift items to jewellery, carefully crafted by the master artisans from all over India. Buyers comparably see what India has to offer in nine halls at the Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.

Source: EPCH.com



Craft Development Institute, Srinagar

September 2004

News

Design for Competitive Business

With rising competition and saturated markets, overloaded with products & services, it is becoming increasingly difficult for companies to sustain profitable business in the new global scenario. Advance technologies of mass production and manufacturing techniques, specially from countries like China, Korea and now India, are pushing the limits of price as well as time based advantages to the edge. Innovative approaches to marketing, promotion and retailing are creating further stresses on competitors to continually change their strategies and mind-sets. The classical theories of segmentation, targeting and positioning for determining competitive advantage no longer seem sufficient to withstand this new epoch of complexity.

On the other side consumers are also confused and finding it difficult to deal with the present chaos produced by available variety of offers and perusal tactics used in the market. The convenient & free access to unending information is leading both buyers and manufacturers towards situations where discretion of the correct choice is a tedious task with greater degree of uncertainty. Laws for protecting intellectual property and traditional knowledge will build added pressures, forcing manufacturers to adopt original thinking for managing competitive business.

To navigate and survive through this ever increasing complexity would require serious deliberations if we are to aspire for a secure economic future. Though there are hardly any clear answers, many companies are now exploring the design-led approach to survive, lead & overcome competition. However, in more situations than ever, design is being used as a strategic tool to plan manufacturing & shape marketing rather than merely for attractive styling of individual products.

The design expertise is unique in its sense to be able to look beyond, envision and interpret the future. Companies must recognize the significance of design towards the "thinking part of business". Design can be successfully used to identify new opportunities, create strong brand identities, understand socio-cultural trends, reinvent competition, re-mix materials, skills or techniques and extend possibilities of variety. The design dimension is no longer an optional feature of marketing & corporate strategy but must be positioned at their very core.

Visuals

New products developed in various design workshops

- 1 Stackable Willow baskets for storage
- 2 Decorated terra cotta Planters
- 3 Hanging oil lamps in terra cotta
- 4 Flower vase in terra cotta
- 5 Terra cotta lamp base with willow shade
- 6 Willow Lamp Shades with wooden fitting



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Design & Technical Training Workshops

Additional design & technical training workshops have been organised by the Institute in the areas of Willow wicker, Pottery and diversification in application of embroidery. These workshops provide new product development & skill based training to artisans and others engaged in manufacturing & trade of handicraft products. The workshops are being conducted by professional designers from premier Institutions like NIFT and NID.

The products developed in these workshops are based on real life briefs from potential markets with a focus on combining different materials or skills to lend an added perceived value. All new designs with necessary specifications are available at the CDI for commercial utilisation, on a nominal cost.

Two more workshops in the area of Crewel Embroidery & Chainstitch are expected to commence in the 1st week of October 2004

The Institute is also making adequate efforts to build suitable linkages & network to provide marketing support for new designs and artisans who have participated in these training programmes.

Integrated Design & Technical Development Projects

The background work is in progress on two integrated design & technical development projects sanctioned to CDI by the Development Commissioner- (Handicrafts)

The first project proposes to develop new products consisting of souvenir & gift items from Kashmir specifically targeting the tourist industry. The project is envisaged around 3 main stream crafts of paper mache, wood carving and copperware.

The second project is to introduce technology and production based intervention in the area of wooden furniture, traditionally manufactured in Kashmir.

The project will focus on exploring knock down possibilities, convenient assembly, stackability for economical use of transportation, optimal use of skill & raw material & refinement in joinery & detailing.

The projects are being carried out in close partnership & interaction with industry and the new products shall be based on the requirements of manufacturing & potential markets. The Kashmir Chamber of Commerce & Industry has expressed willingness to provide necessary networking with the local industry to achieve best possible productivity from these projects.

Pattern making skill up gradation workshop at NIFT

A 10 day workshop is being conducted at the National Institute of Fashion Technology, New Delhi to provide advance training for master pattern makers in the area of fashion apparels with a focus on pattern cutting, stitching & finishing. CDI, Srinagar was requested by NIFT to identify suitable & motivated candidates to participate in this workshop.

The short-listing of participants was done by CDI in consultation with J&K Handicrafts Corporation & Kashmir Chamber of Commerce & Industry. The approach was to seek fair participation from industry, working professionals & NGOs active in related training or development work.

Visit of DC-(H) to CDI, Srinagar

Ms. Tinoos Joshi, Development Commissioner - (Handicrafts) visited CDI in the 1st week of October for an appraisal on the progress and current activities of the Institute. Ms. Joshi provided her comments on the future prospects of expanding the service oriented initiatives of CDI.



Participation in IHGF 04

The Institute will be participating in the forthcoming India Handicraft & Gift Fair from 13th to 17th October 04, at New Delhi. The objective of this participation is to promote CDI and also showcase selected products developed in various design workshops held at the Institute, for market testing and networking.