

## LAS VEGAS MARKET DEBUTS

The inaugural Las Vegas Market, held at the new World Market Center, July 25-29 was a huge success. This show, developed by World Market Center, LLC, and The Related Companies, LP, is a trade show complex connecting all categories of the home and hospitality furnishings industry, including furniture, home accent, lighting, wall decor, home textiles, gifts, and more. The debut featured 1,200 exhibitors, including 161 foreign, as well as 62,000 attendees. Records indicate that Las Vegas Market was the largest show launch in U.S. history for any industry trade show.

"This is the realization of a dream that has been five years in the making," said Jack Kashani and Shawn Samson, co-founders and managing partners of World Market Center.



Las Vegas Market was held at the new World Marketplace Center.

"We are grateful to our entire world-class team for making this vision a reality, and we thank the industry for their overwhelming support. We are committed more than ever to fulfilling the totality of our vision, and along with our team, will work tirelessly to unveil the entire 12 million square foot campus on an accelerated basis."

Kashani and Samson, along with partners Marty Burger and Ron Wackrow of The Related Companies held opening ceremonies including a ribbon cutting in the rotunda with a featured presentation by Las Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman. These ceremonies were followed by a grand opening celebration held on every floor of the 10-story complex.

Attendees came from all 50 states, and international attendees represented 83 countries. Important partnerships were formed with Messe Frankfurt and Koelnmesse to bring highlights of European shows— Heimtextil, Ambiente, and IMM Cologne—to Las Vegas.

The Interior Lifestyle USA and the Association of Woodworking & Furnishing Suppliers (AWFS) were among other trade shows held in Las Vegas simultaneously. The Market and its adjacent AWFS show, which opened July 27, ran 120 shuttles during peak hours between 18 host hotels, the Las Vegas Convention Center, and World Market Center. The two events brought distinct, yet complementary, elements of the furniture industry together from equipment and supplies to end products available for retail. It was the first time the entire range of the furniture industry met concurrently in adjacent international events.

"We are pleased with the stellar reviews from exhibitors, buyers, industry observers, and the media which have established World Market Center as an overwhelming success for the global home furnishings industry," said Gerry Sawyer, chief operating officer of World Market Center. "We are confident that we will deliver to our exhibitors and buyers the type of experience that will sustain the high level of energy and productivity at Las Vegas Market."

Kashani announced accelerated development plans, "Given the support and demand for space, we along with our partners at The Related Companies, have decided to shorten the construction schedule to 7 years from 10 years for the development of the entire 12-million-square foot campus. At the same time we have expanded the size of the next couple of buildings to address the backlog of demand. Upon completion, this will be the standard bearer for the industry and a world-class facility that the industry will be proud of."

The next Las Vegas Market will take place January 30-February 3, 2006.

## ANTI-COUNTERFEIT OFFICIAL TO SPEAK ON COPYRIGHT

The vice chairman and executive director of the U.S. Department of Justice's Task Force on Intellectual Property, Arif Alikhan, CISSP, will be speaking at the Art Copyright Coalition's meeting, at 8:15 a.m. Saturday, September 17, at the Atlanta DecorExpo. Alikhan, based in Washington, DC, will be presenting "The Department of Justice's Efforts to Protect Intellectual Property." The talk will be in room C110 at the World Congress Center.

Robert Sher, president of the Art Copyright Coalition (ACC) and president of Bentley Publishing Group, will also present a short documentary entitled "Undercover in China," containing footage of the counterfeiting of artworks and outlining the huge problem the art and framing industry faces regarding piracy in China. He will detail the coalition's plans to gain the cooperation and funding support from volume framers worldwide in an anti-counterfeiting effort. Sher will also describe strategies in mailing the documentary to retailers worldwide, hoping to increase awareness at the retail level.

This meeting is the most critical coalition meeting to date. Alikhan's intellectual property concerns pertain to many industries, including software, film, music, and manufacturing (patents). The ACC, on behalf of the wall decor industry, is working hard to gain a voice in the U.S. Government's negotiations related to trade and other matters. "It is critical to the industry to have a strong showing at Alikhan's lecture, and artists, publishers, and volume framers are particularly encouraged to attend," says Sher.

## HOTEL ROOM CONSTRUCTION GROWS BY 21.5 PERCENT

According to a study published in the *Wall Street Journal*, the hotel industry will start construction on more rooms in 2005 than in any year since 2000, as the industry continues its sharp recovery from the post-September 11 downturn.

Room construction will rise 21.5 percent this year to 98,000 rooms, according to the study by PricewaterhouseCoopers. The year-over-year percentage increase is the largest since 1997. This new construction

comes as rates are showing strong growth nationwide as occupancy rebounds and business travel picks up again. There are about 4.45 million hotel rooms nationwide.

High-end hotels have done particularly well in the past couple of years, and developers are disproportionately breaking ground on them. The upscale hotel segment, which includes full-service brands like Marriott International Inc., Hilton Hotels Corp., and Four Seasons Hotels Inc., makes up 22.5 percent of current room supply but 30.5 percent of the rooms starting construction this year.

Nationwide, occupancies and revenue per available room have moved higher than expected in the past year. Through March, occupancy averaged 58.4 percent, up from 56.8 percent a year ago, according to Smith Travel Research. As the travel season hits, that number is expected to increase, and Smith Travel Research expects it to be 63 percent for all of 2005, up from 58.9 percent in 2002, when the industry hit bottom. Travelers are also paying more for rooms. The average daily rate was \$90.25, up 4.2 percent from \$86.64 a year ago. Revenue per available room jumped to \$52.74 a day, up 7.2 percent from \$49.21 a year ago.

Real estate as a whole has been hot as buyers have poured money in, diversifying away from relatively risky stocks and low-yielding bonds. Money has flooded the office, apartment, and condo markets, and good deals have become increasingly hard to find. More investors lately have been looking at hotels, which are riskier but have historically higher yields.

## WINN DEVON APPOINTS WOOD

Seattle-based Winn Devon Art Group, Ltd., has announced Kathleen Wood's appointment as vice president of business development.

Wood has been with Winn Devon for almost 14 years, beginning as an art consultant for its California gallery. She later took on a larger role as Winn Devon's Southwest regional sales director and then national account director.

In Wood's new role as VP, she will continue to work in the art, decor, and fashion marketplace with national accounts and will be a key player in Winn Devon's product development. Wood helps clients establish their imagery needs and put together successful collections. She drives Winn Devon's proprietary printing programs to create exclusive, private label programs for clients.

Wood first launched her creative career in the entertainment business as a senior creative director. She went on to spend 12 years as a senior executive in the apparel and fashion industry. Wood also had her own consulting business, specializing in sales and marketing strategies and in product/brand development.

She can be reached at 800-875-4150. ■



Kathleen Wood

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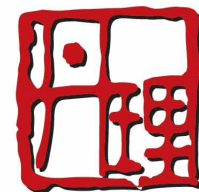
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info@chinaframeandmirror.com  
www.chinaframeandmirror.com

Main Office - Yiwu China  
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Frame & Mirror Ltd.  
818-665-4816