

For technology-seekers, the first-of-its-kind interactive Smartphone application designed by World Market Center launched a week prior to Las Vegas Market. Market-goers had the ability to easily access exhibitor and event information, strengthen social communities and share information with others – all from their touch of their iPhone.

“World Market Center’s new App for iPhone is really well-done. Buyers were using it and coming in to the showroom referencing it. We picked up new buyers and proudly serviced the retail ‘survivors’,” said Lyndell Glassco of Paragon.

See-through pool tables

The transparent pool tables from Adelaide-based Nottage Design blend modern styling and brand new patented technology. The transparent playing area is composed of the patented Vitrik transparent playing surface on top of a 15mm toughened glass top. The Vitrik playing surface is the world’s first and only clear playing area, replicating the rolling resistance of an average-speed cloth. It is hard and allows spin (English) to be applied, and retains consistent roll characteristics over its lifetime. The premium safety glass that is used has been toughened so that it is 4-6 times stronger

than standard glass. Glass is not prone to sagging or warping so it provides a useful alternative to slate. The G1 is the flagship pool table and its completely visible integrated ball return system makes a feature of pocketed balls so there is no more guessing of which ball just went in.

The ball return is built into the designer frame to achieve strong aesthetics. The G-4 pool table blends minimalist styling and practicality by converting to a glass top dining table with a three-piece cover and matching benches which are optional extras. The pocketed balls on this table drop into a silent rubber pad and appear to “float” across a secondary transparent layer finishing in the collection area. Both tables have accessory kits that include 2.2” balls, triangle, two matching silver cues and a bridge stick. Nottage Design is focused on producing the most innovative designer game room products available. The company designs, manufactures and assemble in Australia. Craig Nottage and Edgar Polanco share the vision of creating modern lifestyle products. Nottage is the designer and inventor of the glass top pool table while Polanco brings his business and marketing skills to help the company sells its products to a local and international market. They work with interior designers



These high-end, transparent pool tables are made by Adelaide-based Nottage Design



and architects for private and commercial projects, as well as selling directly to consumers. The partnership has resulted in the exports to countries including the USA, Russia and Saudi Arabia.

UK expansion for Milan Direct

Milan Direct is a leading online store for office chairs, office furniture and modern designer furniture in Australia, and will



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COMPANY ANNOUNCEMENTS



Dean J. Ramler co-founded Milan Direct with Ruslan Kogan in 2006

be expanding its operations to the United Kingdom. The opening of its Bedfordshire warehouse signals a new stage in the young company's story. Beginning in 2006 with just two staff, the company now has over 10 employees and has assisted more than 80,000 Australians in furnishing their homes and offices.

Managing director Dean J. Ramler, says: "We are very excited about capitalising on the Australian team's expertise to establish ourselves as a serious competitor in the UK furniture market. The United Kingdom has a reputation for style, elegance and fine taste, hence making it a perfect market for Milan Direct to enter.

Ramler co-founded the company with Ruslan Kogan but his background in the furniture industry goes back a long way. Ramler's grandfather

started the family business, Ramler Furniture during the 50s in Cheltenham, Melbourne. His father and uncle still run the business and Ramler worked on large projects such as the Sydney Olympics in 2000 and the 2006 Melbourne Commonwealth Games. "My grandfather over 10+ years taught me to manufacture, market and sell furniture, skills that I have used to start and succeed at Milan Direct," he says.

Milan Direct has been supplying furniture to popular TV shows such as Big Brother and Neighbours that garnered a lot of interest from UK consumers. "After constant emails from customers in the UK and Europe demanding our products, we spent time doing our due diligence, researching the market, finding the right providers [ie. shipping lines, transport

companies and warehouses]," he explains. "We launched in the UK with a selection of our most popular products and due to the positive feedback from our UK customers, we have since doubled the product range, and plan on doubling the range again in the coming months."

The company currently sells to customers in Europe through www.milandirect.co.uk and its UK warehouse. "Our plan is to set up warehouses throughout Europe to properly service the entire EU with a new website in EU currency. What we have found is that people globally want a designer lifestyle on a budget, and thanks to our scalable business model, we are able to provide it," says Ramler.

There are many classic pieces in the range from Milan Direct including Eames office and lounge chairs, Barcelona chairs, Nelson replica clocks and Noguchi coffee tables. It deals directly with overseas manufacturers, in the process cutting many links in the supply chain. By eliminating what are often significant "middle men" costs, real savings can be passed onto consumers. There have been over 300,000 pieces of designer furniture sold to date.

The expansion also benefits Australian consumers because an increased customer base usually translates to increased bargaining power and lower prices. "In the excitement over our UK expansion we haven't forgotten about our loyal band of Australian customers.

All products in the Milan Direct range are premium-end reproductions of modern-retro classics. The growing product range is selected based on functionality, purity of form and aesthetic beauty. **FI**



The Aeron Inspired Office Chair and Ergo Elite Office Chair are just a few of the many items in the Milan Direct range

Inspired by Brooklyn

Mandy Toniolo's chairs were created when she was working as an artist in residence in Brooklyn, New York. The designs are a combination of street and gallery art as well as old

signage common to the Brooklyn area. After gaining a Diploma in Fine Art in Melbourne, Toniolo worked for both a ceramics and decoupage business before focusing on exhibitions.

