

# IKEA unveils designers secrets to help school pupils

Submitted by: PDS Media

Tuesday, 16 November 2004

---

A NEW teaching DVD gives pupils a unique insight into how the Swedish home furnishings giant IKEA develops its designs from drawing board to shop floor.

Students taking design and manufacture courses can use the interactive DVD to learn how two members of IKEA's design HQ developed a new product range. The DVD will be available to every school in the UK.

A team of co-workers from the IKEA's Edinburgh store and a group of local teachers from Midlothian Council have worked together on the teaching tool after travelling to Sweden to film the IKEA DESIGNERS DVD.

The team interviewed designer Maria Vinka and product developer Liljana Kusibojoska to explain the process of design in relation to just a few of the 10,000 products the company designs and makes.

The DVD also examines the history and evolution of IKEA with an interactive walk-through the company's museum in Almhult in Sweden. The museum houses roomsets of classic furniture products from the IKEA range over five decades, focusing on changing styles and tastes.

The DVD has been produced as a result of partnerships between Midlothian Council and local businesses – IKEA, ZOT Engineering, Alexander Pollock Ltd, Charles Laing and Sons and McLaren Plastics.

IKEA Edinburgh has worked closely with a number of local schools, especially Lasswade High School that now runs an annual design competition, sponsored by the store.

Donald McKay, Midlothian Council's Director of Education Services, said: "The council and IKEA have worked as partners on a number of educational developments since IKEA opened its store in Midlothian in 1999.

"The partnership recognises the significant benefits to both organisations, while at the same time demonstrating the importance of enterprise on a number of levels. Staff, both in IKEA and within Midlothian schools have been demonstrably enterprising in developing the Craft Design and Technology learning materials cooperatively for the benefit of all schools in the UK."

IKEA Edinburgh store manager Rob Rogers said: "This DVD is a fascinating teaching tool which brings to life what could be a difficult subject to portray in a text book. Students not only see and hear the designers enthuse about their work but by seeing actual products which then become part of our range they can appreciate the value and potential of the subject they're learning about."

Hilary Robb, IKEA Edinburgh Community Co-ordinator, who worked on production of the DVD said: "I couldn't imagine a better way to learn nowadays than by getting access via this DVD to real life examples of people at work and design in action. We're confident it helps makes learning the subject much more interesting and more rewarding for the pupils and students."

Details on how to obtain the DVD are available from Smallprint Services on 0131 663 6760.

Ends

For more information please contact Peter Samson, IKEA PR in Scotland on 0141 332 3944 or 07050 391 600

IKEA UK Press Office  
PRUK@memo.ikea.com  
Tel: 0208 233 2300

#### Notes to editor

- IKEA is the world's largest furniture retailer and the UK is IKEA's second largest market with a turnover of 12% of IKEA's global turnover.
- IKEA group sales for the last fiscal year were 11.3 billion euros.
- Almost 286m people visited an IKEA store worldwide last year. In the UK, 33 million people visited IKEA last year.
- The vast majority of the 500 jobs in each store will come from the local community; which will include sales jobs, skilled chefs, engineers, administrators, designers, carpenters and customer service staff.
- We believe in supporting the local community, including schools, and in letting the community use our store as a resource.
- The UK's first IKEA store was opened in Warrington in 1987. Other UK stores are Brent Park, North London, Birmingham, Newcastle, Croydon, Leeds, Thurrock (East London), Nottingham, Bristol, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Cardiff. Work is now underway for the 13th store in Edmonton, north London.