



# TITLE OF THE CASE STUDY:

# on furniture industry facing home office.

Name of the organisation:

Max Mebel

Country and sector of the organisation:

#### **BULGARIA**, furniture

Type of organisation:

Private organization

#### Size of the organisation:

small

#### Brief description of the organisation:

"Max Mebel" was established in 2011. One of the main areas of its activity is related to offering customers a diverse package of services in the field of furniture production and home and office furniture, in order to solve and meet their needs, working on their own home interior project and and non-standard furniture for the home - living rooms, bedrooms, children's rooms, kitchens, hallway furniture, furniture for office, furniture and hotels.

The main priority of "Max Mebel" is united around the idea of competent consulting, providing quality, expeditious and professional service to customers. The company always strives to meet customer requirements by offering products with high quality, functionality and good design at competitive prices.

Motivated by the high requirements of customers, the company improves, refines and constantly looks for the ideal proportions and shapes of the furniture they produce, with the main task of finding the perfect formulas for ergonomics and comfort. The good design and quality of the offered products and the company policy for correct cooperation with partners and clients build its presence on the market.

It has a highly qualified, highly motivated team of professionals with many years of experience and knowledge in their field of work.



Short description of the case study (500 characters)

The impact of the Covid-19 crisis on consumer behaviour and manufacturing trends has increased the importance of digitalization and automation for the furniture industry. Consumers are now seeking personalized shopping experiences and competitive prices. This is pushing furniture manufacturers to innovate on their existing workflows. Whereas advances in digital technology and communication tools are empowering furniture executives to respond faster to the changes in consumer demand, gain cost-saving benefits, and boost their operational efficiency.

People spent a lot of time in a lockdown at their homes. This case study will analyse the strategy of a local furniture brand and how did they manage to continue working.

Key words:

Furniture, COVID-19 impact, market, industry, manufacture, consumer, home, office

# **BEST PRACTICE PROFILE**

#### **DETAILED DESCRIPTION**

Because of lockdowns, people are trying to transform their homes to accommodate life in the pandemic era, consumers are increasingly turning to shopping for furniture online. In fact, online orders for all products, from the essentials to home repair and furnishings, have increased a lot. The post-COVID consumer has a strong desire to improve their living space. COVID-19 forced us to stay at home, causing a sudden explosion in working-from-home, home schooling, and a litany of "-at-home" activities—church-at-home, dining-at-home, etc.—that benefit from an upgrade in comfort and style. With social distancing being the new normal, consumers are willing to spend on furniture and home furnishings.

Max Mebeli is a Bulgarian company with 10 years of experience in furniture. As we can image it was impossible for managers to let workers work from home. A lot of measure took place right after the announcement of emergency situation in Bulgaria on 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2019. It was also important to announce to customers that Max Mebel is still taking orders and the managers have made all the necessary to provide a safe workplace for their employees. The new strategy of workflow was essential in the warehouse in order to minimize the risk of disease. Employees were divided in groups so that a minimum number of people had to work together in the same place/room. Severe hygiene measures were established to prevent the risk of COVID-19. A very interesting statement is made by the CEO of the company Mr Milan Kozarov : "Actually the pandemic had good impact on furniture industry. Our business boomed in 2020, as people were stuck at home and started relocating and reorganizing their homes. We have produced a lot of office furniture, because of the home working model and also a lot of furniture for kids."



The CEO of Max Mebel confirms that at the beginning he was a little bit afraid for his company and employees. The fear of the unknown couldn't make them stop working. So he initiated concrete steps to make their workplace a safe and happy place. He provided rapid PCR tests, face masks, gloves, sanitizers and regular disinfection of the surfaces.

#### RATIONALE

The new strategy and workflow organization were essential for the wellbeing of employees.

The CEO of the company knew that a lot of changings are coming due to COVID-19 crisis. He ordered in advance some of the materials, but the risk paid off later as it was one of the main market need in furniture. Max Mebel started taking orders only online via their website and this contributed to minimize the disease between employees.

#### GOALS

The most important goal of the company was to keep its employees in good health and motivated to work. The CEO of Max Mebel knows that if his employees feel well, the business will continue to grow. This is the reason why he put so many efforts in providing a safe workplace for them.

The company aimed to :

- Inform customers that they are still working, with all safety measures and precautions taken
- Diversify their materials by wood and other natural materials, marked as "COVID-19 safe materials"
- Keep competitive prices without decreasing the quality of their production
- Adjust work spaces in the best possible way in order to divide employees in different teams
- Secure employees about their future in the company

### IMPACT

As medias were daily reminding that virus COVID-19 could remain on surfaces for several days, Max Mebel decided to focus on choice of materials. It was told that furniture with leather and upholstery has a high chance to collect germs in the seams, cracks, and creases. However, this was easily be avoided by using natural materials like wood. There are natural antibacterial and antimicrobial properties in wood which eliminate potential contaminants. Since wood surfaces dry quickly; this dryness puts bacteria at a disadvantage too. Max Mebel started using mostly natural, non-toxic and anti-allergic which meets sanitization requirements.

We can conclude that short-term and long-term impact on the work atmosphere are positive, as the business is growing and employees feel more safe with the new sanitary measures. The company has now more B2B clients than B2B as a big part of offices and corporations are still closed.



## LESSONS LEARNED

Leaders learned that their most important work is to predict future market changes as the times we are livening in are very dynamic. Some of the skills that they developed are : organizational skills, empathy, flexibility.

Employees developed even more their sense of responsibility, collaboration skills, adaptability, empathy, teamwork.

Both leaders and employees have learned to quickly adapt to the current market needs.

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### REFERENCES

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http://maxmebel.eu/

Interview with the CEO of Max Mebel

