

"knock-down" claiming that the phrase automatically creates a picture of low priced shoddy merchandise in the mind of the consumer. The giant Swedish retailer Ikea prefers "self assembly" and others have tried "cash-and-carry", "carry-home", or similar phrases. At the present time the original phrase "knock-down" seems to be holding its own and is being used widely promoting the category in the US.

The term "knock-down" or its abbreviation KD has been used for simplicity throughout this report.

Kit Furniture: this term is used primarily in Europe and covers KD products whether they are finished pieces needing only final assembly or unfinished wooden parts requiring more basic woodwork and finishing. In the United States the term "kit" is definitely synonymous with the latter and suggests an altogether quality product.

Flat-Pack: is basically a trade or manufacturing term describing products such as modular storage, shelving, or kitchen furniture manufactured on a completely horizontal production line (usually fully automated) out of converted particle board. The particle board can be painted, veneered, or plastic laminated. Medium density fiberboard (MDF) is becoming increasingly common in "flat-pack" construction.

#### INFORMATION GATHERING

The following methods have been used to gather information for this study:

- Statistical analysis to determine market size, market potential, and growth patterns for the furniture industry and the KD category in the United States, and also to gauge the volume and changing patterns of US furniture imports.
- Controlled mailings of questionnaires to 800 retailers of the type most closely involved with KD retailing in the geographic areas selected for the study and across the US. A further mailing to 100 companies involved in the different elements of the furniture distribution system. The information obtained has been presented in tabulated form in each case.
- Individual telephone interviews with companies from the above categories together with selected personal visits to retail stores in the market areas.
- Extensive travel to European furniture fairs to examine the latest trends in KD design, production, and marketing, and consultations with European manufacturers associations and research sources on