

The history of IKEA

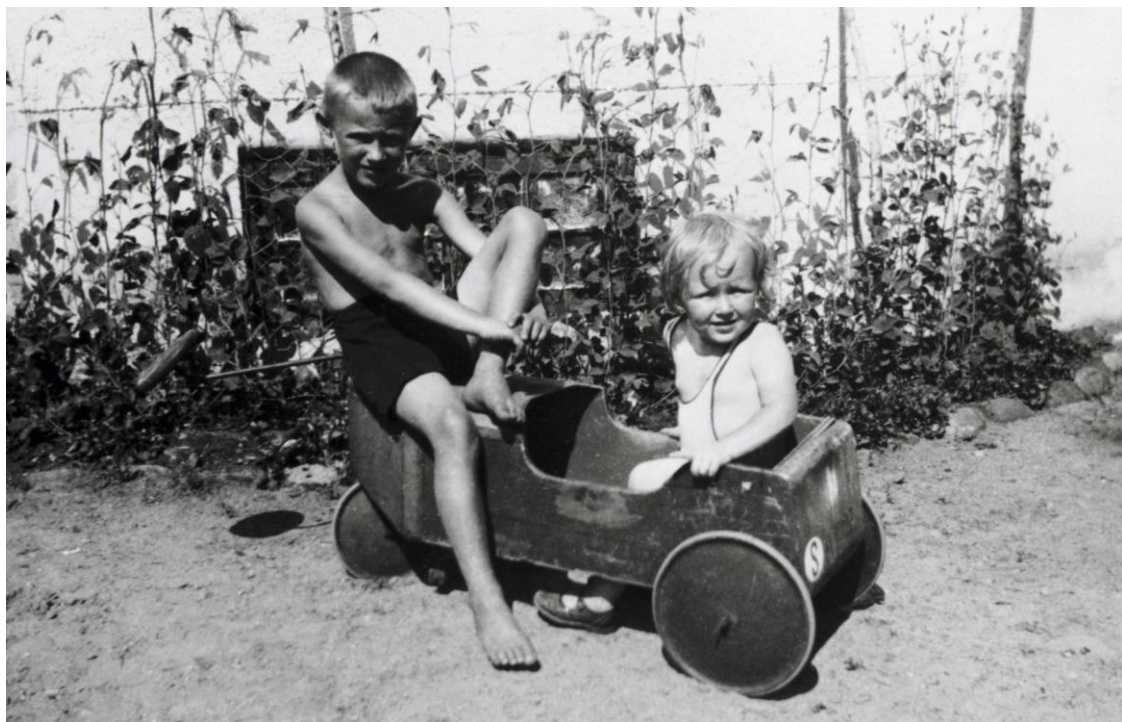
We've come a long way since our early days in Älmhult, Sweden, but IKEA founder Ingvar Kamprad's dream to create a better life for as many people as possible – whatever the size of their wallet – is and will always be our driving force.

IKEA is named after the initials of founder **I**ngvar **K**amprad, **E**lmtaryd, the farm on which he grew up, and **A**gunnaryd, the nearby village.

[From child entrepreneur to IKEA founder: the story of Ingvar Kamprad's early years](#)

The inspiring journey of Ingvar Kamprad and how the IKEA business came about.

Like most entrepreneurs, Ingvar Kamprad's vision started with a spark – lots of them. In 1931, the five-year-old began selling matches, an essential item in every home. So how did a boy from the Swedish countryside become a teenage founder of a global enterprise?



Ingvar Kamprad (left) together with his sister Kerstin on a Swedish summer's day in the early 1930s.

[Circumstances made a smart kid smarter](#)

Ingvar Kamprad did things differently from the start. Instead of selling matches for pennies, he should've been working hard on his father's family farm in Elmtaryd. It was the depression. Poverty was widespread. People queued for food, for jobs, for everything. Everyone, children included, should waste nothing – not even time.

In the Swedish province of Småland where Ingvar lived, the stony land produced poor crops. Farming wasn't enough to survive. People had to be innovative, creative, strong and stubborn. Families were thrifty, and many became entrepreneurs to make ends meet, selling homemade goods or preserved foods.

This was true for his family, too. His mother started a guest house. Her father owned the largest country store in Älmhult, a town 20 km from Elmtaryd. Before moving to the farm, Ingvar often spent whole days in the shop, playing and running errands (when he wanted; his grandfather was more buddy than boss).

Ingvar understood his family's hardship and wanted to help. But rather than doing farm chores, he focused on helping the family finances. Whether or not his small contributions made a difference, his family did the unconventional and supported their little match-selling entrepreneur. The future IKEA founder's first customer was his father's mother.



Christmas cards, magazines and garden seeds were just some of the items sold by the enterprising young Ingvar.

A keen eye for an opportunity

Good with numbers and a quick learner, Ingvar realised he might be able to sell more things. Farmers who didn't have fishing rights needed fish. Christmas cards, magazines and garden seeds were must-haves too. To reach as many customers as possible, he rode his mother's bicycle to farms until he earned enough to buy his own bike.

When angling for fish didn't bring a big catch, Ingvar persuaded his father to buy nets for a greater yield. He sold the fish he caught, shared the profits with his father and put his fishing earnings in a cigar box.

He figured out how to help his customers by creating low prices while still making a profit for his family.

As for matches, he figured out how to help his customers by creating low prices while still making a profit for his family. He enlisted his aunt in Stockholm to buy big, less expensive cartons and send them to him. Then Ingvar split the matches into smaller packages and resold them. Despite the cheaper cost, matches weren't a great business. So he stopped selling them after a couple of years and followed advice to save his small profit to invest later.

At 14, he moved to attend boarding school nearby. Ever the entrepreneur, he kept a stock of pens, watches, wallets and belts under his bed. (His classmates needed these!) Too young to set up the firm he wanted, his father gave legal consent and paid the registration fee as a graduation present in 1943.

So, the IKEA name was born using Ingvar Kamprad's initials plus Elmtaryd, the family farm, and Agunnaryd, the farm's parish in Småland. But the 17-year-old IKEA founder didn't sell furniture – yet.



This tiny shed in Sweden is where Ingvar stored his first lot of IKEA packages.

ikea-nytt

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1948—49

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An experiment that improved lives

Ingvar continued his business and his studies at college. His future took shape as he realised success depended on the simplest, most cost-efficient distribution from factory to customer.

For IKEA then, this meant direct import and mail order, mainly of watches and pens. But pens had issues, so Ingvar saw they didn't have a future either. Like his match money, he saved to invest in something else.

Furniture would be the something else — offered as a sensible experiment. The post-war Swedish government had built lots of housing and offered home furnishing loans. Plus, Småland had many small furniture factories.

When furniture debuted in the 1948 brochure, Ingvar wrote IKEA would offer more if customers showed "reasonable interest."

They did.



In the next brochure, the entrepreneur described his focus with the headline “to the people of the countryside.” The IKEA founder refined this into the company vision “to create a better everyday life for the many people.” Who are these many people? They’re anyone, like Ingvar and other frugal, practical Smålandians, who value products with low prices and high quality – things made from being smart with resources and never tolerating waste.

That’s how Ingvar Kamprad, the rebel-hearted, clever-minded boy, got started in business. With humble roots, useful (and affordable!) matches, and the desire to help his family, he would eventually change millions of lives worldwide with home furnishing.

Snapshots. The history of the IKEA brand at a glance.

1920 - 1959

1926 – Ingvar arrives

IKEA founder Ingvar Kamprad is born at the maternity ward “Vita Korset” in Älmhult in Småland, southern Sweden.

1933 – An entrepreneur right out of the mould

Even as a young boy, Ingvar knows he wants to develop a business. He takes his first step to becoming a businessman at age 5 when he decides to sell matches. From there he moves on to selling Christmas cards, seeds and pens to neighbours on his bike.

1943 – The first IKEA company is founded

To reward him for doing well in school, Ingvar's father gives him a small sum of money which he uses to set up a company. He names it IKEA: an abbreviation of Ingvar Kamprad from Elmtaryd (the family farm), Agunnaryd (the local parish).

1948 – Furniture is introduced into the IKEA range

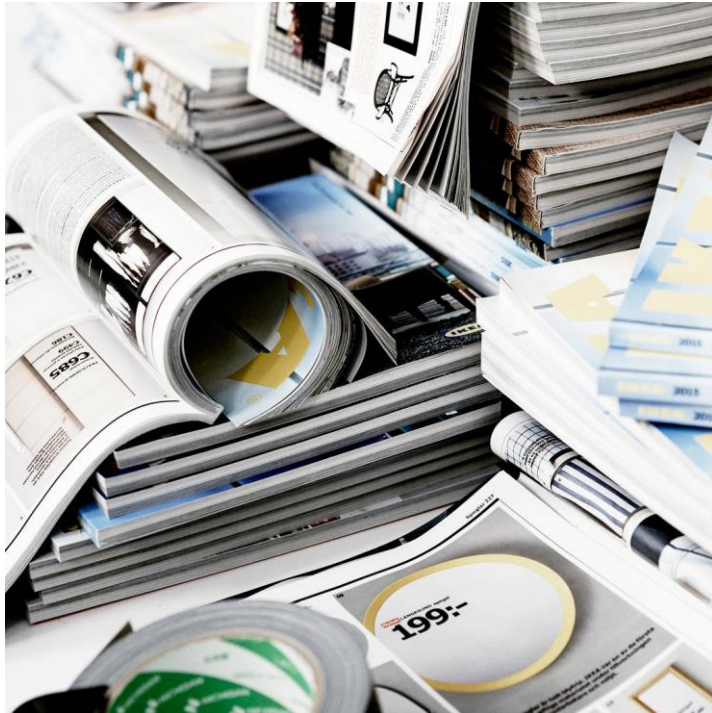


1950s – Shut out in Sweden

Many Swedish furniture retailers feel threatened by the low prices of IKEA products. They put pressure on suppliers to boycott the IKEA brand. In the 1950s, they try to prevent Ingvar from exhibiting at or even visiting furniture fairs. But every challenge has a solution – this is one of the reasons we started to look for collaborations abroad.

1950 – The IKEA Catalogue makes its debut

A future icon, the first annual IKEA home furnishing catalogue is published in Sweden.



1953 – The first showroom opens

A permanent showroom opens in Älmhult. Here customers can see and experience the quality of the products before ordering them, and Ingvar can meet customers in person and learn from them.

1953 – Say Hi to the flat pack

High costs and damage rates when transporting furniture via mail order are a constant thorn in Ingvar's side. Although flat-pack furniture already exists, it hasn't really taken off in Sweden yet. It takes a demonstration by IKEA supplier Ovendals in Hultsfred of a very stable flat-pack table for this to change. Flat-pack, self-assembly products become the solution to the transportation struggle, and the rest is history.



1960 - 1989

1960 – The first IKEA restaurant opens

In June 1960, only coffee and cold dishes are offered in IKEA stores. By the end of the year, the IKEA restaurant kitchen is fully equipped, including a microwave oven – a novelty at the time. Everything from hot snacks such as hamburgers to á la carte dishes are served. The idea comes from something Ingvar observes: people leave the store at lunchtime to eat in one of the restaurants or street kitchens in Älmhult. This interrupts the whole buying process. He realises that hungry customers buy less. Or as we often say, it's tough to do business on an empty stomach.



1963 – Hej Norway!

The first IKEA store outside Sweden opens in Norway.

1965 – The flagship IKEA store opens

The Kungens Kurva store outside of Stockholm opens its doors. It's the largest furniture store in Northern Europe at the time, and the store's design is inspired by the Guggenheim museum in New York. Its location is strategic — it's easy to reach by car and has plenty of parking spaces.



1970 – The “miracle” fire that changes everything

An electrical fault causes a sign on the roof of the flagship IKEA store to catch fire in September 1970, causing a lot of damage. It isn't all bad news though. It is also the beginning of something new. In the chaos following the fire, we open a self-service area, which turns out to be a roaring success. By the time the store re-opens in 1971, most products can be picked up in the self-service area, driven home and assembled by our customers.

1973 – Hej Europe!

The first IKEA store outside of Scandinavia is established in Spreitenbach, Switzerland, soon followed by stores in Germany.



1976 – Ingvar puts pen to paper

30 years after his business is born, Ingvar Kamprad writes “The Testament of a Furniture Dealer” with its 9 points. This is where many of his ideas are first written down, including the IKEA vision: to create a better everyday life for the many people.

Early ‘80s – A new sustainable owner structure is created

Ingvar seeks an ownership structure to create the best possible conditions for total independence and a long-term business perspective. He describes this as trying to give the IKEA brand “eternal life”. His solution is to separate the ownership of the retail operation from the IKEA concept and the IKEA brand — to keep these separate roles in independent business groups, operating under a franchise system.

1983 – Bye, bye (for now) Japan

Around 1970 exports to Japan are introduced. By 1973, our products are sold in a sort of mini IKEA store called “IKEA Corner” through a joint-venture with a Japanese retailer. However, the IKEA franchise system is not yet developed, and cooperation difficulties lead to the end of the Japanese business in 1983. Happily, our second attempt 20 years later is successful, which just goes to show that good things happen if you try and try again.



1990 - The present

1995 – “Democratic Design” is launched

The term “Democratic Design” is used for the first time during the furniture fair in Milan in 1995. “I’ll never forget the feeling of seeing that statement on the billboards and trams of Milan during the fair. I sat outside drinking Campari and watching the trams go past bearing the words ‘Il design democratico – IKEA’”, explains Per Hahn, an archivist at the IKEA Museum in Älmhult.

1998 – “Sow a seed” launches

In 1983, a forest fire destroys 18,500 hectares of rainforest in Malaysian Borneo. When Ingvar Kamprad, hears about it he wants to contribute to the rainforest’s regeneration. So, in 1998, we begin financing the “Sow a seed” project, leading to more than 12,500 hectares of rainforest being replanted.

2012 – The TV everyone’s been waiting for. Or not.

The IKEA UPPELVA TV is appreciated for its design and even its sound, but the actual TV part...not so much. Needless to say, UPPELVA is phased out of the product range and we are reminded of the importance of bringing in expert help.

2014 – The first Life at home report

We start using a new method of exploring life at home: a mix of our own research and interviews. The first report focuses on morning routines. We interview a total of 8,292 respondents aged between 18 and 60 in 8 cities. We find out all kinds of things – for example, we learn that 52% of Berliners interviewed press the snooze button at least

once, and 36% snooze more than once. Read more about these sleepy Berlin night-owls and other fun facts in the report [here](#).

2015 – All-in with LED

As of September 2015, halogen and energy-saving compact fluorescent bulbs are no longer available and the switch is made to light-emitting diodes (LEDs) for all lighting sold globally.



<https://about.ikea.com/en/about-us/history-of-ikea/milestones-of-ikea>

Democratic Design. Making great design available to everyone.

The five dimensions we call Democratic Design are at the heart of every product we make. Find out what they are and how we use them in our Q&A with Sarah Fager, Senior Designer at IKEA of Sweden AB.

What is Democratic Design?

“Democratic Design is a tool we use when we develop and evaluate the products we put into our range. It has five dimensions, which are function, form, quality, sustainability and low price. When there is a balance between all five, we consider that the design is democratic.”

What do the dimensions mean?

“The form is for beauty, it’s what attracts the eye, and the object has to be functional, otherwise it won’t be used. When objects and materials last over time, that’s quality. Being mindful of resources is something that has been with us since the start. We don’t like complicated solutions and wastefulness, it’s bad for everyone. Part of sustainability is about using exactly the right materials for the function, and using them sparingly, but sustainability also means taking responsibility all the way through a product’s life. It starts with how we source materials, to the people who produce the product, all the way through to our clients.”

It’s basically our culture and values boiled down to five dimensions, together with simply using common sense in everything we do.

Sarah Fager, Senior Designer, IKEA of Sweden AB

But is it possible to create a really low price for a product that lives up to all the other demands?

“This is our aim and when we don’t succeed, we don’t live up to the IKEA vision. If the price is too high, we need to work with the other dimensions to lower the price, by looking at the materials, changing the design, or going through the production process again.”

So, do all IKEA products live up to the five dimensions of Democratic Design?

“The five dimensions are always represented in the products but the balance between them is not always equal. We constantly review our range and take out or improve the products that don’t live up to our customers’ expectations.”



The five dimensions of Democratic Design.

Do you have an example of a product you designed that really captures the dimensions of Democratic Design?

“Yes, the FLISAT desk for kids. The price is fair, it can be height-adjusted so it grows with the child, and it has smart functions such as a tilted tabletop and paper holder. We hope these functions encourage children to be creative. It’s very high quality and has a classic form so that it can be loved and passed on to future generations. The material is sustainable and renewable – wood. It’s quite simply Democratic Design.”



FLISAT is made from wood, a sustainable and renewable material.

Are any of the five dimensions more important than the others?

“No, they are all equally important – it’s a question of balance. We usually notice if something is missing during the design and development phase, and then we act on that and make it right.”

How does Democratic Design work in everyday life?

“This may sound a bit odd, but Democratic Design flows through our veins. It’s basically our culture and values boiled down to five dimensions, together with simply using common sense in everything we do. So we’ve more or less always worked like

this, only it's become an actual working tool more recently. To me, that's both fair and clever.”

Without Democratic Design, we would not live up to our vision to create a better everyday life for the many people.

Sarah Fager Senior Designer, IKEA of Sweden AB

Why the future of furniture is circular

We're on an exciting and challenging journey – to become 100% circular. But what does this mean to the IKEA business and our customers? We chat to Malin Nordin, Head of Circular Development, Inter IKEA Group, to find out.

Why is it important to us to become circular?

“People are becoming more and more conscious of the impact their choices have on the planet. They no longer want to be wasteful and throw things away, and are seeking better value in what they buy. We know that resources are limited so we must find smarter ways to use them. It's about extending the life of products and materials, seeing them as raw materials for the future and eliminating waste at every level.”

What does becoming circular mean for the IKEA business?

“We want to be circular in every aspect of our business. We want to make it easier for customers to acquire, care for and pass on products in circular ways, such as repairing, reusing, reselling, and recycling them. To do this, we are committed to designing all of our products to be 100% circular from the beginning, using only renewable or recycled materials, and to developing circular capabilities in our supply chain. But we can't do this alone. To get there, we are building new partnerships and cooperations with others. Our ambition is to be 100% circular by 2030.”

We will design all of our products to be 100% circular from the beginning.

Malin Nordin, Head of Circular Development, Inter IKEA Group

Do you have any examples of collaborations?

“We investigated and followed waste streams around the world together with WWF. We wanted to find out which materials we could use and how we could introduce and set up processes to enable circularity in the future.

We also conducted the External Feedstock Project which led us to identify the 32 high priority materials in woods, plastics, papers, metals, and textiles, which have the fullest circular capabilities.”

In a circular world, recycled plastic and wood become new IKEA products.

How are circular IKEA products designed?

“We work according to circular design principles, where products are designed to generate as little waste as possible from the very beginning. They are our way of ensuring that all products within the IKEA range fulfil our ambition to become fully circular.”

Our customers will see the results of our efforts over the next few years.

Malin Nordin, Head of Circular Development, Inter IKEA Group



KUNGSBACKA kitchen doors are made from 100% recycled wood and plastic.

Do IKEA products already fulfil the circular design principles?

“Not all of the principles. While we have products that have some circular capabilities, such as the KUNGSBACKA kitchen doors which are made from 100% recycled wood and plastic, it’s still a work in progress. Our customers will see the results of our efforts over the next few years.”

Can you give any examples of how IKEA products contribute to prolonging the life of furniture today?

“One aim of circular design is to develop products that can be useful throughout the changing lives of our customers. For example, we have baby cots that transform into toddler beds, or modular products such as PLATSA storage solution or VIMLE sofa, where pieces can be added or taken away as needed, to adapt to constantly evolving needs.”

There is a growing awareness of the impact consumption has on the planet. Do you still want people to buy new furniture?

“We believe that you shouldn’t have to compromise on quality of life or products to act responsibly. People should still be able to refresh their space as often as they want to and improve their life at home, with functional, beautiful and affordable furniture of good quality, without damaging the planet. When the products are no longer needed, we encourage our customers to give their furniture a second life. This can be by repairing, reusing, passing them on, or recycling them. Today, we are already exploring future opportunities to find new solutions with many local IKEA initiatives. We are also looking for ways to turn materials from old products into resources for new ones.”

The IKEA way of retail

We are bringing IKEA closer to our customers through a diverse strategy of city-centre locations, traditional suburban stores, improved capabilities for online shopping, as well as home deliveries and services.

New IKEA meeting points

In addition to IKEA.com and big blue stores filled with home furnishing and delicious food, we're creating exciting new ways for people to shop – wherever they are.

Most IKEA customers have at least one thing in common; they like good design at affordable prices. Aside from that, they're all different. Some live in a city, others in the countryside. Some have a car, others don't. Some are too busy to go shopping, while others like to take their time. Because every customer is unique, we are creating more ways to get acquainted with our products.



Access for everyone

In the classic IKEA stores on the outskirts of cities, customers can discover, touch and try out our entire range. “Our stores are the heart of the IKEA business and still stand for the majority of our sales,” says Jon Abrahamsson, Managing Director, Inter IKEA Systems B.V. But some people aren't familiar with the IKEA brand. Others may not

be able to find the time to visit the store or maybe they just need to buy one or two things. And as a brand that's working hard to become more sustainable, we want people that choose not to have cars to also have access to our products.

Online advantages

Shopping on ikea.com means you can compare colours and patterns with what you already have, and pick shelves and wardrobes that fit your rooms perfectly, by measuring while you're shopping. Not to mention you can do it in your pyjamas and at the very moment inspiration strikes – regardless of how close you are to the nearest IKEA store. But again, to shop at ikea.com, you first need to know who we are.

We always want to be better, and we test new solutions and formats all the time.

Jon Abrahamsson, Managing Director, Inter IKEA Systems B.V.

Just like an IKEA store, only smaller

In cities like Hong Kong and Taipei, small stores have already been opened, and many more are under development in more markets. With new, small store formats, people can have access to the IKEA range in the areas where they live, move and work. Small stores can be located in shopping centres, in city centres, and also in suburban areas where it hasn't been practical to establish a full-size store.

Popular pop-ups

IKEA Pop-ups are time-limited stores designed to really connect with consumers. Each one is like a circus of furniture fun, aimed to surprise, entertain, captivate and inspire. IKEA has been working with pop-ups for several years, each time with a different theme, and they have proved very popular.

IKEA shops – small, and with a focus

“We always want to be better, and we test new solutions and formats all the time,” says Jon Abrahamsson. One of those formats is “IKEA shops”, meaning small stores that focus on a locally-adapted segment of the IKEA range. The very first IKEA bedroom shop opened in the centre of Madrid in the summer of 2017, and an IKEA shop with a small space living focus will be opening in Tokyo in 2020.

“IKEA shops” carry articles for immediate take-away. They make it possible for customers to touch our products and try them out in an inspiring environment, and to plan, order and buy in a convenient way. “IKEA shops” is a format that is currently being tested, but not yet part of the IKEA Concept.

IKEA City store in Madrid.

[IKEA Planning Studios offer expert help](#)

Another format being tested is “IKEA Planning Studio” – a meeting point where customers can get support for more complex purchases, like kitchen and bathroom projects. Today, Planning Studios have been opened in the centre of London, Stockholm and New York.

There are no articles for immediate takeaway, but customers can drop in, discover and try out products. They can also get help from planning experts to create their very own solutions on a computer, and place an order online at one of the many interactive kiosks. In addition to free one-to-one planning appointments, they can arrange delivery, finance, assembly, and installation at an affordable rate. Just like “IKEA shops”, “IKEA Planning Studio” is a format that’s not yet part of the IKEA Concept, but customer reactions have been positive so far.

[Welcome, wherever you are](#)

The future IKEA is here and constantly evolving. Today, you can meet IKEA on IKEA.com, in the catalogue, in small stores, in pop-up events, IKEA shops, Planning Studios and, of course, in more than 400 traditional, big, blue stores all over the world.

[Learning as we go – the challenges of entering a new market](#)

Country Marketing Manager, Ulf Smedberg, was involved in setting up the IKEA business in South Korea and India. He discusses what’s important when entering a new market

[How did you prepare to enter these new markets?](#)

“Our first and arguably our most important step was to understand the culture of the country and the aspirations of its people. We researched what life at home is like for local consumers and tried to get a feel for their needs, expectations, hopes and dreams. Only then could we start to position the IKEA brand and create an offer that makes sense in that context.”



A lot of research was done exploring what life at home is like for local consumers.

What did you observe in India and South Korea and how did this affect your approach?

“Well, in India we saw a lot of optimism with people believing in a brighter future, no matter how tough their current circumstances were. So, when preparing to open our first store in Hyderabad, we tapped into this by saying you don’t need to be rich to have a better tomorrow. We asked, ‘Why talk about tomorrow, when you can start today?’ Our campaign highlighted life’s simpler pleasures - like being part of a family and spending time with the kids.

“In the run-up to our Seoul launch, we heard many South Korean people saying that they were suffering from the pressure to perform – all the way from kindergarten to

university and beyond. The new president had just stated her ambition to ‘make the nation happy’. This gave us a perfect opening to talk about how, even with limited means, you could make life at home more comfortable and enjoyable... and be happier. We tapped into this ongoing cultural shift and within a year, we had won two awards - one for best employer and one for best campaign to promote a happier life.”

We wanted to help people in Korea live a better - and happier - life at home.

What is the most challenging aspect of entering a new market?

“The main one is figuring out how to pitch a relatively unknown brand to a new market. In addition to that, we may face legal or cultural barriers. For example, until 2011 there was a law preventing foreign retailers from entering the Indian market. And before opening in South Korea, we faced strong opposition from local furniture companies who were afraid our low prices would drive them out of business. Fortunately, whenever we enter a new market, there’s usually a boost in overall interest in home furnishings to such an extent that the whole industry benefits.”

It’s not enough to respect and accept a country; you have to love it and embrace its values!

Ulf Smedberg, former Country Marketing Manager South Korea and India



What did you learn from these experiences?

“One key thing is that to gain acceptance, we have to communicate our intentions clearly to all the relevant stakeholders; to prove that the IKEA brand is not after short term profit, but genuinely interested in investing in the country long term.

“Specifically, in South Korea, we learnt not to underestimate the forces working against us. We have to take people’s fears seriously and build relationships to combat them. In India, we applied this lesson and succeeded in positioning ourselves as a good neighbour – a company that would make a genuine contribution to society.

“We also learnt that face-to-face meetings are a great way to promote the IKEA brand prior to a store launch. The small meeting points we set up in malls in Seoul and Hyderabad received 300 000 and 250 000 visitors respectively. And everyone who signed up for IKEA Family was invited to a home furnishing workshop, and these were also a hit.”

And the key learning was?

“The more thoroughly we prepare, the better it goes. It’s not enough to respect and accept a country; you have to love it and embrace its values!”

Visiting homes to create better homes

We have a vision – to create a better life for as many people as possible. And we firmly believe a better life starts at home. But how can we stay in touch with what people actually need when the world around us is constantly changing?



The answer lies in being constantly curious. We want to know how people live, and what their frustrations, needs and dreams are. Each year, IKEA co-workers do hundreds of home visits around the world. The research we’re most proud of are the home visit interviews and Life at Home surveys. The two approaches complement

each other. So far, we have collected insights from over 5,300 home visits across the globe. The data and insights collected then work as input when new IKEA products and services are developed.

The life at home insights also give us knowledge about our different markets' unique needs, so that we can tweak our offer to meet the community's specific cultures and traditions. For example, when we opened our first store in India, we added more flexible seating options to our home furnishing solutions, as we found out that families often visit each other (unannounced) and need somewhere to sit.



[The IKEA Life at Home Report](#)

We also work with different sorts of research methods and partners to collate insights from global surveys, our home visits, and interviews with experts, to create the IKEA Life at Home Report. We published our first report in 2016, and last year we shared the report publicly for the first time.



64% of people that participated in IKEA Life at Home research say they would rather live in a small home in a great location than in a big home in a less ideal location

The start of a closer relationship with home

This is the Big Home Reboot, and it marks a change to our relationship with home that's being experienced across the globe. Because it's happening not in one place or to one group, but to everyone, everywhere.

While it's felt differently by people of different ages, household sizes, incomes and nationalities – and not always for the better – globally, the vast majority of us feel closer to our homes than we did before the pandemic. Now, many of us are making plans to protect this newfound closeness – and the wellbeing it offers us – in our future lives at home.

What kind of reboot does your relationship with your home need? Take the quiz to find out.



Bringing the IKEA brand closer to the people of Paris

In the summer of 2019, IKEA Paris La Madeleine opened its doors in the heart of the French capital. La Madeleine is part of a new strategy to bring the IKEA brand closer to people – but smaller IKEA stores have actually been around for a long time.

Most people associate us with large stores in the suburbs, but there are markets such as Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Canary Islands, that have had successful smaller stores for several decades. “Up until recently they were exceptions. Now we want to bring that experience to new markets around the world”, says Pär Gustafsson, Customer Meeting Point Manager at Inter IKEA Systems B.V.

Up until recently they were exceptions. Now we want to bring all that experience to new markets around the world.

Pär Gustafsson, Customer Meeting Point Manager at Inter IKEA Systems B.V.

More people than ever before are moving into city centres, and more are doing their shopping online. In order to stay accessible, affordable and sustainable we need to adapt.

“We’re testing a number of different formats that increase customer convenience, make home delivery more cost-efficient and much more. Stores like IKEA La Madeleine are a way to bring IKEA products and services closer to our customers. That way we give people a chance to get inspired and to try out our products without having to travel so far”, says Pär.



More than 2 million people live within a 20-minute public transport ride of the IKEA store at Place Madeleine.

In Paris more than 2 million people live within a 20-minute public transport ride of the IKEA La Madeleine store, which is situated next to a metro station and just a short walk from the Champs Elysees avenue. During the first four months the store had nearly 1.3 million visitors.

New IKEA meeting points

In addition to IKEA.com and big blue stores filled with home furnishing and delicious food, we’re creating exciting new ways for people to shop – wherever they are.

Most IKEA customers have at least one thing in common; they like good design at affordable prices. Aside from that, they’re all different. Some live in a city, others in the countryside. Some have a car, others don’t. Some are too busy to go shopping, while others like to take their time. Because every customer is unique, we are creating more ways to get acquainted with our products.



Access for everyone

In the classic IKEA stores on the outskirts of cities, customers can discover, touch and try out our entire range. “Our stores are the heart of the IKEA business and still stand for the majority of our sales,” says Jon Abrahamsson, Managing Director, Inter IKEA Systems B.V. But some people aren’t familiar with the IKEA brand. Others may not be able to find the time to visit the store or maybe they just need to buy one or two things. And as a brand that’s working hard to become more sustainable, we want people that choose not to have cars to also have access to our products.

Online advantages

Shopping on [ikea.com](https://www.ikea.com) means you can compare colours and patterns with what you already have, and pick shelves and wardrobes that fit your rooms perfectly, by measuring while you’re shopping. Not to mention you can do it in your pyjamas and at the very moment inspiration strikes – regardless of how close you are to the nearest IKEA store. But again, to shop at [ikea.com](https://www.ikea.com), you first need to know who we are.

We always want to be better, and we test new solutions and formats all the time.

Jon Abrahamsson, Managing Director, Inter IKEA Systems B.V.

Just like an IKEA store, only smaller

In cities like Hong Kong and Taipei, small stores have already been opened, and many more are under development in more markets. With new, small store formats, people can have access to the IKEA range in the areas where they live, move and

work. Small stores can be located in shopping centres, in city centres, and also in suburban areas where it hasn't been practical to establish a full-size store.

Popular pop-ups

IKEA Pop-ups are time-limited stores designed to really connect with consumers. Each one is like a circus of furniture fun, aimed to surprise, entertain, captivate and inspire. IKEA has been working with pop-ups for several years, each time with a different theme, and they have proved very popular.

IKEA shops – small, and with a focus

“We always want to be better, and we test new solutions and formats all the time,” says Jon Abrahamsson. One of those formats is “IKEA shops”, meaning small stores that focus on a locally-adapted segment of the IKEA range. The very first IKEA bedroom shop opened in the centre of Madrid in the summer of 2017, and an IKEA shop with a small space living focus will be opening in Tokyo in 2020.

“IKEA shops” carry articles for immediate take-away. They make it possible for customers to touch our products and try them out in an inspiring environment, and to plan, order and buy in a convenient way. “IKEA shops” is a format that is currently being tested, but not yet part of the IKEA Concept.

IKEA City store in Madrid.

IKEA Planning Studios offer expert help

Another format being tested is “IKEA Planning Studio” – a meeting point where customers can get support for more complex purchases, like kitchen and bathroom projects. Today, Planning Studios have been opened in the centre of London, Stockholm and New York.

There are no articles for immediate takeaway, but customers can drop in, discover and try out products. They can also get help from planning experts to create their very own solutions on a computer, and place an order online at one of the many interactive kiosks. In addition to free one-to-one planning appointments, they can arrange delivery, finance, assembly, and installation at an affordable rate. Just like “IKEA shops”, “IKEA Planning Studio” is a format that's not yet part of the IKEA Concept, but customer reactions have been positive so far.

Welcome, wherever you are

The future IKEA is here and constantly evolving. Today, you can meet IKEA on IKEA.com, in the catalogue, in small stores, in pop-up events, IKEA shops, Planning Studios and, of course, in more than 400 traditional, big, blue stores all over the world.

What's it like to be an IKEA franchisee?

The IKEA business is built on a franchise system and it is our franchisees that bring the IKEA Concept to all the IKEA markets. But what is it like to be an IKEA franchisee? IKEA Al-Homaizi Ltd operates three IKEA stores – in Kuwait, Jordan and Morocco. We asked their CEO, Marino Maganto, to share his thoughts on the franchisee's role. Here, he explains how Al-Homaizi's relationship with the IKEA business began, and highlights some of the challenges and surprises the group has experienced along the way.

How did IKEA Al-Homaizi Ltd first become an IKEA franchisee?

"Mr. Yousef Al-Homaizi had been running a successful home furnishing showroom in Kuwait for almost 25 years when his sons Yacoub and Jassim Youssef first came into contact with the IKEA brand. It was actually Jassim's Danish wife who introduced the brothers to the Swedish home furnishing brand. Shortly afterwards, they set about acquiring one of the first IKEA franchises in the Gulf. 35 years later, their Kuwait store stretches across 21,500 m² of the country's largest mall and they are also operating stores in Jordan and Morocco."

What triggered the Al-Homaizi brothers' interest in the IKEA brand?

"What the brothers immediately recognised was a brand that provides uncompromising value for money at the same time as offering inspiring, beautifully designed solutions for every home. They were struck by its freshness and simplicity. The IKEA business model and values also lined up perfectly with Al-Homaizi's belief that home is the most important space in the world."

Home is the most important space in the world.

Marino Maganto, CEO of IKEA Al-Homaizi Ltd

What is your main task as an IKEA franchisee?

"We implement the IKEA concept and develop the brand in the markets where we operate. In order to grow successfully in climates and cultures which are so far from Sweden, a certain amount of adaptation is needed. For example, before opening the store in Morocco, we did over 100 home visits to help us understand how the IKEA range could be made relevant to local consumers. We ended up building room sets with walls of multicoloured mosaic tiles and joining the sofas together in the style of a Moroccan salon. It looked great! Service expectations also vary from one market to another. People here are not so keen on DIY, so about 80% of our sales include home delivery and assembly. We have around 300 people dedicated to these tasks."



Over 100 home visits were done to help us understand how the IKEA range could be made relevant to local consumers.

How much freedom do you have as a franchisee?

"Inter IKEA Systems B.V. owns the IKEA Concept. As a franchisee, we can sell the IKEA Product Range, use the IKEA trademarks and operate according to proven working methods, following the IKEA values. Within this framework, we have the freedom to make certain decisions about what to sell and when. Of course, the majority of the products are part of the standard range, but we also select about 20% of them with local tastes in mind. For example, we stock more of the darker wooden furniture our customers prefer. We also adapt the timing of seasonal launches to match the local lifestyle and climate. That means we don't put outdoor furniture on display until the winter months in Kuwait, when it's cool enough to sit outside."

In the IKEA store in Kuwait, outdoor furniture is put on display in the winter months when it's cool enough to sit outside.

What are the main challenges of being an IKEA franchisee?

"Being a franchisee is both a great privilege and a great responsibility. We represent a well-known brand that is very dear to many people around the world; one that lives by a great set of values and conducts its business in an ethical way. Our challenge is to protect the brand and develop the business in accordance with these values. That means, for example, continuously monitoring the online activities of organisations or individuals who want to use the IKEA trademark illegally. It happens about five times per week!"

Being a franchisee is both a great privilege and a great responsibility.

Marino Maganto, CEO of IKEA Al-Homaizi Ltd

“But perhaps the biggest challenge of all is affordability – not only for us but for all IKEA markets. We have to work together to put the products within reach of even more people in the future. That means constantly striving to optimise all aspects of the business, from supply set up to customer fulfilment, so that we can generate savings that translate into better prices for the customers... and better business for us.”

What, if anything, has surprised you?

“I have often been pleasantly surprised by how much people love IKEA! It’s a breath of fresh air to introduce both the brand and the IKEA way of working to new markets; to guide people through the range and offer solutions which solve their day-to-day, home-related problems.”

What is your view of the future?

“Together, we are exploring how best to expand the business – with a view to developing in new and growing in existing markets. Being an IKEA franchisee is a long-term commitment.”

The IKEA franchise system

Being able to offer IKEA products to as many people as possible is a challenge we love. To ensure the long-term growth and development of the IKEA business we use a franchise system. This provides financial stability, while allowing franchisees to challenge, test and explore new markets and ideas. Together, we continue to develop the IKEA brand.

From the very start, our aim has been to create the greatest possible financial security for employees and for the various groups of IKEA companies.

Ingvar Kamprad, IKEA Founder

The quest for the best system

As the IKEA business was expanding in the early 1980s, IKEA Founder Ingvar Kamprad was looking for a way to grow the company internationally while maintaining its entrepreneurial spirit and safeguarding the underlying IKEA Concept. He wanted to find a system that would serve the best interests of the IKEA Concept and the people in IKEA markets. After researching the subject thoroughly, he came to the conclusion that a franchising system was the best alternative.



How it works

Potential IKEA franchisees are evaluated by Inter IKEA Systems B.V. If chosen, an agreement is signed that grants the franchisee the right to operate an IKEA store and/or other sales channels in accordance with the IKEA franchise systems and methods. IKEA franchisees pay Inter IKEA Group an annual fee of 3% over their net sales. In return, they get access to the IKEA trademarks. They are also authorised to market and sell the IKEA product range and operate IKEA stores and other sales channels.

Today, all the IKEA stores (except the IKEA Delft store in the Netherlands, which is owned by Inter IKEA Systems B.V.) operate under franchise agreements. Inter IKEA Systems B.V. is the owner of the IKEA Concept and worldwide IKEA franchisor.

[What is it like to be an IKEA franchisee](#)



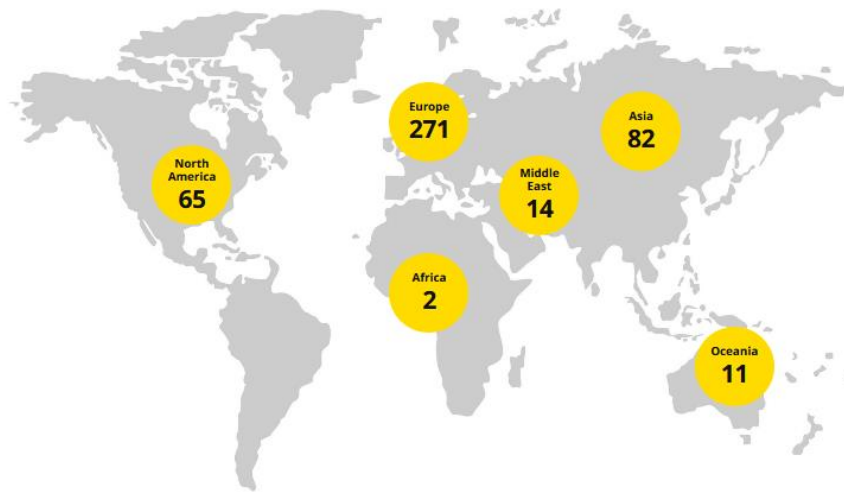
In return for a fee, the franchisee gets access to the IKEA trademarks, IKEA product range and to the products and services from Inter IKEA Systems B.V.

Improving the IKEA brand and offer together

The franchise system enables the IKEA business to grow steadily while developing our concept and laying a solid foundation for the IKEA Brand. Thanks to our continuous growth, we can increase sales and thereby enjoy greater economies of scale. This makes it possible to keep prices low and ultimately, to reach many more people around the world.

Franchising is a system that encourages everyone to contribute and collaborate. While Inter IKEA Systems B.V., is responsible for continuously developing the IKEA Concept and ensuring its implementation in new and existing markets, franchisees provide valuable input based on their consumer and market insights. Together, we improve and develop the IKEA brand making it more relevant and inspiring.

IKEA stores worldwide



- The first IKEA store opened in 1958 in Älmhult, Sweden.
- The latest IKEA store to open is Karlsruhe, Germany.
- Germany has the most IKEA stores in the world.
- The biggest IKEA store is IKEA Kungens Kurva, Sweden.

The one-euro challenge. Stopping at nothing to make LED bulbs truly affordable.

In 2011 IKEA founder Ingvar Kamprad gave the IKEA lighting department a challenge: create LED bulbs that everyone can afford. Find out how Product Design Developer Paulina Pajak at IKEA of Sweden AB and her team tackled the seemingly impossible task.

How do you create an LED bulb that has a recommended retail price of just one euro? To Paulina Pajak, the task seemed impossible. But since it was IKEA founder Ingvar Kamprad who was looking for the impossible, she just had to find a way. But before we meet the very troubled Paulina Pajak, let's have a quick look at the environmental aspects of using LED bulbs.

Paulina Pajak enjoying the creative process.

We are always looking for ways to decrease energy consumption so, in 2011, we decided to phase out sales of all light sources other than LED. We wanted to give as many people as possible the opportunity to make more sustainable choices. And how would we do that? By offering high quality LED at really low prices, that's how. Producing expensive bulbs that only some people can afford wouldn't make any sense

at all. If we were to truly make a difference, high sales volume was key. And the key to volume was the low price.

A LED bulb uses about 85 % less energy than a traditional bulb.

Back to Älmhult, and Paulina and her team.

“We heard that Ingvar kept asking, ‘When can we have the one-euro bulb?’ and at the same time we felt it was impossible in so many ways. Technically for one, but we also felt that we lacked the inspiration to develop this light bulb. Working with lampshades and lamp bases was in our view so much more rewarding. So much more visible. We really had to work hard to get enthusiastic over this.”

We heard that Ingvar kept asking, ‘When can we have the one-euro bulb?’

Paulina Pajak, Product Design Developer, IKEA of Sweden AB

Paulina realised that they had to question everything.

“Think new. Think efficiency in production. Think new materials. Think about the whole value chain. Think. Think. Think! As I look back at this project, I think the biggest obstacle was to change our mindset, more than anything else. We were thinking traditionally as we tried to balance the tricky equation between form, function, quality, sustainability and low price. We had to think differently to solve this.”



The solution was to use fewer parts that were individually more expensive but which multitasked.

The development team struggled with every possible little detail until they were close to giving up. “We looked at everything, from parts to design and production, to see

how we could streamline and keep costs down without affecting the quality.” She sighs and continues.

As the deadline came closer, Paulina and her colleagues were very close to giving up. But before accepting defeat, they decided to look at all the small details one last time. New meetings and tests were conducted, and then... it happened.

“We found that by choosing parts with higher quality for the LED part, we could get rid of certain parts in the bulb’s power supply, and thereby end up with a lower overall cost,” Paulina explains.

Fewer, but multitasking parts, that were more expensive actually resulted in a lower overall cost. And the IKEA LED bulb did end up with a recommended retail price of one euro. I hope Ingvar was happy in the end. *Paulina Pajak, Product Design Developer, IKEA of Sweden AB*

IKEA culture and values

We have a strong set of values. They are the compass that guides us in everything we do. Our culture is formed when we put these values into action.

The IKEA values were shaped during a time in Sweden when the living conditions were harsh. People had to get by with what they had. This fostered a culture of entrepreneurship and hard work, and made people more pragmatic and mindful of resources. A lot has changed since the early days of the IKEA brand. Today we have grown into a global business with the size and reach to create positive change, not only for people but also for the planet. But on the inside, not a lot has changed.

We are straight-forward, innovative, creative and common-sense problem-solvers. We’re constantly trying to find better ways to get things done and to bring out the best in ourselves and others. We strive for a nurturing environment that encourages the entrepreneurs in us. We’re passionate about innovation and finding new solutions.

We’re constantly trying to find better ways to get things done and to bring out the best in ourselves and others.

[The 8 IKEA Key Values](#)

[Togetherness](#)

Togetherness is at the heart of the IKEA culture. We are strongest when we trust each other, pull in the same direction and have fun together.

[Caring for people and planet](#)

We want to be a force for positive change. We have the possibility to make a significant and lasting impact — today and for the generations to come.

Cost-consciousness

As many people as possible should be able to afford a beautiful and functional home. We constantly challenge ourselves and others to make more from less without compromising on quality.

Simplicity

A simple, straightforward and down-to-earth way of being is part of our Smålandic heritage. It is about being ourselves and staying close to reality. We are informal, pragmatic and see bureaucracy as our biggest enemy.

Renew and improve

We are constantly looking for new and better ways forward. Whatever we are doing today, we can do better tomorrow. Finding solutions to almost impossible challenges is part of our success and a source of inspiration to move on to the next challenge.

Different with a meaning

We are not like other companies and we don't want to be. We like to question existing solutions, think in unconventional ways, experiment and dare to make mistakes - always for a good reason.

Give and take responsibility

We believe in empowering people. Giving and taking responsibility are ways to grow and develop as individuals. Trusting each other, being positive and forward-looking inspires everyone to contribute to development.

Lead by example

We see leadership as an action, not a position. We look for people's values before competence and experience. People who 'walk the talk' and lead by example. It is about being our best self and bringing out the best in each other.

A world without waste

We are on an exciting journey - on our way to designing all of our products to be 100% circular from the beginning, using only renewable or recycled materials. And as always, making more from less.

Building a better business with IWAY

The IKEA business impacts both people and the planet, including thousands of people in our value chain. So how can we do good business while being a good business? We strongly believe that we can only achieve this together with suppliers that share our

vision and ambition. That's why we have developed IWAY, the IKEA code of conduct for suppliers.

What is IWAY?

IWAY (short for the IKEA way of responsibly procuring products, services, materials and components) is the IKEA supplier code of conduct. IWAY sets social and environmental requirements for all IKEA suppliers and service providers.

IWAY is based on widely recognised international documents and conventions for human rights, environmental protection, and worker health and safety, as well as on IKEA values and legal compliance. It is continuously being developed. For example, in the latest revision, we have brought in animal welfare and biodiversity to reflect our priorities.

International documents that IWAY is based on:

- UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs)
- Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact
- UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work
- ILO conventions and recommendations

A look at IWAY requirements

IWAY is mandatory for all IKEA suppliers and service providers. From producing home furnishing products and hot dogs, to cleaning an IKEA store, if a supplier is not able to develop its business to fulfil the requirements of IWAY, it is phased out from the IKEA value chain.

IWAY has a set of requirements, the "IWAY Must", which all suppliers and service providers need to comply with before IKEA starts working with them. IWAY Must requirements include for example no child labour, no forced or bonded labour, payment of minimum legal wages and accident insurance to all workers.

The IWAY Standard has a General Section, which is applicable to all suppliers and includes both the IWAY Must requirements and the IWAY requirements that suppliers are expected to comply with after a maximum period of implementation of 12 months.



The 14 chapters of the IWAY General Section:

- IWAY Must Requirements
- General Conditions
- Business Ethics
- Environment
- Chemicals
- Waste
- Emergencies and Fire Prevention
- Worker Health & Safety
- Recruitment, Working Hours, Wages and Benefits
- Accommodation
- Child Labour and Young Workers
- Discrimination
- Worker Involvement
- Harassment, Abuse and Disciplinary Actions

There are also specific IWAY sections with requirements concerning certain parts of the IKEA supply chain, such as the IWAY Forestry Section and the IWAY Transport Section.

Ensuring IWAY compliance

IWAY has been at the heart of our relationship with suppliers for almost 20 years. As our expectations evolve, we provide training and support to enable our suppliers to meet new requirements, and to continuously embed IWAY into everyday business processes.

Besides implementing transparent and reliable routines to ensure, verify and report IWAY, we work with three levels of announced and unannounced audits, performed both by ourselves and third party organisations.

A better future, together

Working with suppliers is not just about making sure all production and operations are carried out in a responsible manner. By making sure our suppliers share our vision, we create strong ties for the future. When we can work together and share the same goal, we are not just buyer and supplier, but partners for growth.

Committed to sustainable cotton – and to changing the industry

Cotton is one of our most important materials, and we want it to be produced with respect for people and the environment.

“Since September 1st, 2015, all the cotton we use for IKEA products is responsibly sourced. We call it Cotton from More Sustainable Sources (CMSS) where 85% is Better Cotton and the rest is recycled cotton. This change in the supply chain took over a decade of determination

and hard work. We are pleased to have reached our 100% target, but we aren't satisfied and won't stop here," says Rahul Ganju, Sustainability Manager Textiles, IKEA of Sweden AB.

Increased benefits for cotton farmers mean better opportunities for their kids.

Cotton can change lives

The fact that all cotton used by the IKEA business comes from more sustainable sources, means lots of different things, for instance that our cotton is grown with less water and chemicals, helping areas that are subject to erosion and water scarcity. It also means increased benefits and wellbeing for the cotton farmers and a better quality of life for them and their families. It means education for their kids. In other words, any cotton choice you make when buying an IKEA product is a better one.

Seeing the difference responsible sourcing makes, being 100% committed to sustainable cotton is an easy choice. We ensure that this promise to our customers is being kept, by regularly checking that the cotton can be traced back to the spinner, the ginnery and the farmers that grew it.

The Better Cotton Initiative is a global game-changer

Since 2005, we have worked with WWF to make cotton farming more sustainable. Along with WWF, we helped set up the Better Cotton Initiative (BCI), a non-profit organisation that aims to improve the lives of cotton farmers, make the cotton production more responsible and increase demand for sustainable cotton.

Today, the Better Cotton Initiative is the largest cotton sustainability program in the world, providing training on more sustainable farming practices to more than 2,000,000 cotton farmers in 21 countries. "We started using Better Cotton to meet IKEA requirements. But seeing the benefits for the people working with it and for the environment, we want to move all our production to Better Cotton," says Venkatachalam Ashok Ram Kumar, Managing Director of Asian Fabricx.

Cotton at IKEA by numbers

About a quarter of all the cotton we use comes from Pakistan, which makes it our biggest cotton sourcing country. Other important cotton suppliers are India, China, USA and Brazil.

Sustainable cotton used by the IKEA business includes 80,5% cotton grown to the Better Cotton Initiative Standard, 14,6% recycled cotton, and 4,9% Towards Better Cotton, or other more sustainable cotton such as the e3 Cotton Program in the USA. Towards Better Cotton – on its way to becoming Better Cotton – is a standard we developed following the same principles and criteria as Better Cotton.

Each year, we use around 1% of the world's cotton supply. Despite being a relatively small number, it's enough to drive change.

Leading lasting change

As one of the leading global brands regarding sustainable cotton sourcing, our vision is that more sustainable cotton becomes a mainstream material – affordable and accessible to everyone. We continue to work in the field, expanding the scope of the initiatives to include water, biodiversity and soil management.

“We are committed to creating a positive change throughout the entire cotton industry. More sustainable cotton needs to become a mainstream material beyond our business and we continue to collaborate and work with our partners to create an even bigger positive impact on the industry, people and our planet,” says Rahul Ganju.

ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑ ΟΡΓΑΝΙΣΜΟΥ



Η ζωή είναι ωραία

- **Ίδρυση:** 1943- Ingvar Kamprad-Σουηδία
- Αρχικά πουλούσε συλλό, πορτοφόλια, καδράκια και ουσιαστικά οτιδήποτε θα μπορούσε να ικανοποιήσει μια ανάγκη σε χαμηλή τιμή
- Το όνομα προέρχεται από τα πρώτα γράμματα του ονόματος του ιδρυτή και από την αρχαία ελληνική λέξη **οικία**
- **1945:** άρχισε να σχεδιάζει εσωτερικά έπιπλα και τα πουλούσε από το σπίτι του μέσω ταχυδρομείου
- **1951:** ξεκίνησε να στέλνει έντυπα με τα προϊόντα μέσω του φορτηγού που μοίραζε γάλα και αυτό οδήγησε στη δημιουργία του πρώτου καταλόγου IKEA
- **2001:** Ο όμιλος ΦΟΥΡΛΗΣ έφερε στην Ελλάδα τη σουηδική εταιρεία IKEA ιδρύοντας την House Market AE
- Μέχρι σήμερα έχουν επισκεφθεί τα καταστήματα **IKEA** σε Ελλάδα και Κύπρο πάνω από 32.000.000 άτομα
- Τα IKEA σήμερα έχουν καθιερωθεί ως μία απ' τις σημαντικότερες και πιο δυναμικές επιχειρήσεις στο χώρο του λιανεμπορίου

ΔΙΑΦΗΜΙΣΤΙΚΕΣ ΔΡΑΣΕΙΣ

"A little fabric makes a big difference"

Διαφημιστική καμπάνια που περιλαμβάνει την κάλυψη απλών αντικειμένων στο δρόμο με ύφασμα, έτσι ώστε να γίνει εμφανής η διαφορά στους περαστικούς.



Ευχάριστη, δημιουργική και ατμοσφαιρική ανάδειξη της σημασίας των μικρών αντικειμένων

"Good design can make the everyday a little better" – New York

670 μικρές παραλλαγές ώστε να βελτιωθεί η ποιότητα ζωής και η καθημερινότητα των ανθρώπων. Καινοτόμες ενέργειες όπως:

- ♦ Άδεια λεωφορεία μετατράπηκαν σε σαλόνι με καναπέδες
- ♦ Μετατροπή των παλιών χειρολαβών στα λεωφορεία με γάντια φούρνου
- ♦ Κουβέρτες σε κλιματιζόμενες αίθουσες κινηματογράφου
- ♦ Μπόλ με νερό σε διάφορα σημεία της πόλης για τα αδέσποτα
- ♦ Εκατοντάδες πικ-νικ σέτ στο γκαζόν ενός πάρκου ένα Σαββατιάτικο απόγευμα