

SAUDER®

Sauder Worship Furniture Adds Auditorium Seating

Leader in Pews and Upholstered Chairs
Plans Introduction of Innovative Seat

ARCHBOLD, Ohio, December 16, 2004 – Sauder Manufacturing Co. today announced plans to add auditorium seating to the Sauder line of worship furniture.

The country's leading producer of worship seating, Sauder Manufacturing already serves the worship market with a comprehensive line of pews, upholstered wood chairs and chancel furniture. The addition of auditorium seating will enable the company to serve congregations looking to explore new options in worship seating.

“We are pleased to add a significant new product to our line of quality seating for the worship environment,” said Virgil Miller, president, Sauder Manufacturing. “We have seen a growing interest in auditorium seating for the worship environment. The new product will let us respond to a segment of the market that we have not been able to help.

“The new product is a marriage of smart design technology with Sauder expertise to meet the needs of diverse worship styles,” added Miller. “The new seating has been specifically designed to address the needs of the worship market.”

Miller said the product has been developed in the past year and will be available beginning in April 2005. The new product will be assembled, upholstered and shipped from its facility in Stryker, Ohio, about six miles from the company's headquarters in Archbold.

Sauder executives said features and benefits of the new product include:

- Innovative, ergonomically correct design for unprecedented seating comfort
- Slim, sophisticated design maximizes a facility's seating capacity
- Few fasteners and moving parts ease the task of installation and ensure quiet and reliable use year after year
- Integrated accessories designed specifically for worship facilities

The product was developed by Sauder working with Camatic Pty Ltd., Melbourne, Australia, one of the world's leading producers of innovative auditorium-style seating. Camatic will produce the major components including the seat lift mechanism. Sauder will assemble and upholster the seats and provide seating layout and installation services.

“Camic is a great partner for us,” said Miller. “The company has a reputation for creating and manufacturing seating to the highest possible standards. Their engineers,

Sauder Worship Offers Auditorium Seating – page 2

designers and ergonomists have been responsible for many major projects around the world including the recent renovation of Soldier Field in Chicago, the Olympic stadium in Atlanta and the Sydney Opera House.”

Sauder officials said the addition of auditorium seats is the latest step in the company’s ongoing evolution to serve the worship market.

“Sauder started making pews when they were almost the exclusive style of seating for religious facilities,” said Bob Borchardt, national sales manager for the worship market at Sauder. “We introduced upholstered wood chairs to the market in the early 1970s when congregations expressed a desire for more flexible seating. And now we are able to serve congregations for whom auditorium seating is the best choice.

“Sauder is known for helping communities of every faith achieve their vision,” he continued. “Since our beginning we’ve worked closely with designers, architects, committees and clergy. Our ability to help them with the selection and interior layout process is often the most important benefit for our customers. To continue to do this effectively, it is important that we have an intimate knowledge of and be able to provide all of the major seating styles.”

“When Sauder decided to expand its line to include auditorium seating, we embarked on a mission to find the best solution for our company,” continued Borchardt. “We wanted to honor our tradition and commitment to offering innovative and value-added products. We are proud of the innovations Sauder has brought to pews and flexible seating, and our new auditorium seats will enable us to continue that tradition.”

Borchardt said there are a number of factors fueling interest in auditorium seating for worship environments. One is the move to larger sanctuaries or worship centers. Another factor is that congregations are open to non-traditional seating to create inviting worship spaces.

“Worship seating styles continue to change to meet the varying needs of congregations and their seating decisions are often based on their style of worship and the image they want to portray in the community,” said Borchardt. “At Sauder, we feel it is important to have products that can help our customers achieve their vision and accomplish their mission. Having auditorium seating in our product offering gives us the opportunity to serve congregations that we might not have been able to serve before with our pews and chairs. Our goal is to serve the worship market, and the new seating strengthens our ability to accomplish that mission.”

Sauder Worship Offers Auditorium Seating – page 3

Sauder Manufacturing was founded by carpenter and craftsman Erie Sauder, who made his first pews in 1934. Sauder Manufacturing was incorporated in 1945. Today, Sauder pews, chairs and chancel furniture can be found in more than 25,000 houses of worship nationwide. The company also makes commercial seating for colleges and universities, hospitals and nursing homes, and government facilities.

“Sauder has earned an enviable reputation for making quality products and providing exceptional service to the worship market,” added Miller. “This new seat is a worthy representative of the Sauder brand and is a product we can offer to our friends with confidence.”

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