

## **FUNCTION & FASHION A PRIORITY FOR HARDWARE**

**S**UPPLIERS ARE PLACING A HIGH PRIORITY ON EASE OF INSTALLATION FOR CURTAIN TRACKS WHILE DECORATIVE OPTIONS ADD VALUE FOR CONSUMERS. DAWN ADAMS REPORTS.

Decorative options are becoming the highest sellers for many curtain hardware suppliers as the appeal for motorised tracks also gains momentum. While several companies are advancing into higher end options, others are promoting their capabilities to respond to the new and often larger window shapes by offering choices that bend and curve.

Interior design meets window coverings with new colours added to ranges to complement an existing aesthetic, while the energy efficient features of curtains continue to add interest in the category.



### **ADVANCES TO EVO**

A new improvement to the Evo curtain system is expected to be released shortly. "We've been introducing ongoing improvement to Evo since it was released four or five years ago," says Lew Rebbeck, managing director of Kitset Manufacturing, which designs and makes the Evo system. "The system has dramatically changed since then."

Rebbeck highlights how the system was first developed to address energy efficiency with claims that a curtain installed using Evo can lead to substantial savings.

"We're finding curtains are having a resurgence due to heating costs," he says. "If you install curtains with a Peltate system, heating costs can be reduced by 47 per cent."

Rebbeck says the latest advance to the Evo system 'has just blown us away'. "It really changes the cord operation in a curtain track, making it easier and freer to operate," he says. "It's about simplifying the assembly and operation and works very smoothly."



## **LESS EXPENSIVE OPTION FROM OUTPOST**

**THE OUTPOST TRADING COMPANY** claims its decorative rods offer a less expensive way to lift the appearance of an existing track. "A lady who was refurbishing a hotel called the other day and told me the tracks at the premises looked ugly," says the company's owner Edith Brown. "I told her 'don't remove them, use our rod over the existing tracks'."

The 63 mm Vogue Decorative timber curtain rods are now available in seven ink impregnated colours that include walnut, black woodgrain, white woodgrain, cream wash, antique gold, German gold and German silver. Finials, joiners and hold backs are available to match. The firm also markets 90mm rods with 106mm pelmet fascia.

Brown says Vogue Decorative half round timber rods are unique in Australia because they can be used with any curtain track. Their purpose is purely decorative and they can be installed onto single or double, hand drawn, cord drawn, S fold and motorised curtain tracks. "They can be used as a fascia over existing curtain tracks," she says. "You can either install a track behind it or hide the existing track with the fascia. It's an inexpensive option because you don't need to replace the curtain and you can pick up the colours or the timbers in the room."

Brown claims decorators are also moving away from thin metal poles because timber brings warmth and character to a room. "The more we refer to overseas home decorating books, the more we notice bold fabrics hanging from bold timber rods," she says.

Available in the same colours as the 63 mm Vogue decorative curtain rods are the new Vogue Decorative 106 mm Pelmet Rods. They can be custom made into traditional pelmets with a brushed stainless steel or a mitred corner or can be installed in front of roller or roman blinds in a matching coloured fabric.

## **CURTRAX POWDER COATING FOR CONSISTENT COLOUR**

**DECORATIVE RODS** remain the busiest part of the Curtrax business where its 28 mm tube slider range is proving the most popular. "We have a new colour, 'champagne', in a powder coat that gives us more control over the finish," says managing director Greg Stokes. "It also has a metallic fleck through it."

The firm switched from anodised to powder coating in the past three to four months to secure a more consistent colour.

Stokes also points to the S fold curtain as continuing to provide a strong market for the company. "Our main focus, at the moment, is working on new catalogues and concentrating on modifications to product that make them a bit better," he says.

The firm's picture rails are also proving popular with a new push button adjustable hook offering an added advantage.





### **FOREST BENDS AND CURVES TO TIGHT RADIUS**

Forest Drapery Hardware has released three new products to cater for the changing demand for curtain hardware. The Ripple 100 System offers the same look as the EasyFold System, which will continue to be offered, but at a substantially reduced price with an added benefit of being easily installed. "It's as easy to install as a pinch pleat curtain," says general manager Monish George. "And it has a transparent tape that is eight centimetres wide offering more depth in the fold and a consistent fold."

Also new is a Corded Rod, with the firm responding to demand for more decorative options. "Because a lot of headings sit under the track, people like to see something decorative," George says. "It comes in 28 mm in six different colours including satin, nickel and antique bronze." This rod can also be motorised. "Our motorised track and rod sales have increased 35 per cent since the last financial year," he says. "Windows can now be over four or five metres and there is a big focus on maximising light and gaining energy efficiency. In the cases of these big windows, you need a motorised track." He notes retailers are more often automatically quoting for motorisation when they see the larger modern windows that might also have a three-and-a-half metre drop. "It's getting to be the norm, which is fantastic," he says. "We are also seeing an increase in the number of bends and curve orders coming our way. We're known to be able to bend and curve our rods to a very tight radius which is a distinct advantage."

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**MONISH GEORGE** \_  
**GENERAL MANAGER**



### **WINDOWARE ADDS HIGH END SYSTEM**

**THE M-SYSTEM** range is a new curtain track selection from Windoware that is being promoted as a high end product. "Over the past six months, we've introduced a 'good, better, best' strategy to offer something for everyone in the market," says general manager Michael Sullivan. "For a whole window, the curtain track is roughly six per cent of the cost, so why not have the best."

Sullivan points to a high attention to detail for the M-System decorator range including 28 mm and 35 mm decorator rods that permit a wide range of finials to be used. "The finials can be used on either of the rods," he says.

Sullivan describes the introduction of the M-System as a more refined product with the curtain tracks square in shape for a contemporary look. "There is also a patented bracket system that is exclusive to Windoware," he says. He describes attaching the track to the wall as simple with a 'fit position click' method with the same brackets used for the different styles of rod and track. The decorator rods are offered in 10 colours which, he claims, is by far the largest number on the market. "We've tried to introduce Dulux matching colours to go with the architraves," he says. Gliders are made from a special compounded plastic Acetyl and come in five colours to coordinate with the 10 colours.

"The M-System Range has a high level of attention to detail, specifications of plastic match the metal and aluminium," he says. "We've used very stringent manufacturing to get the whole tracking system to match in colour."

The M-System Square and M-System 28 mm can be bent while the brackets used have covers for a more finished look. "The contemporary range of finials set this selection apart," he says. Meanwhile, Windoware continues to market the original Styleline system.

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**MICHAEL SULLIVAN** \_  
**WINDOWARE GENERAL MANAGER**

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