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Unravelling the food service equipment market



Bustling scene at FHM 2017. This year's FHM will be held for four days from Sept 24

OUR fast-paced lifestyle and increasing spending power has contributed positively to the local food service market. This has also created positive impact on related industries such as the food service equipment market.

Food service equipment is specialised industrial-grade equipment that is meant for larger kitchens. The equipment is usually utilised in the final steps of food making and delivery of meals to patrons.

The expansion of the food service equipment market is also largely due to the rise of the hospitality industry. Data from Tourism Malaysia recorded an increase of over 80% in the number of hotel rooms in the country from 168,840 in 2009 to 308,210 in 2018.

In fact, it is expected that the Klang Valley would continue to see the opening of more premium hotels, according to news reports. Meanwhile, a total growth of 2.6% was recorded in 2018 for the food and beverage (F&B) sector.

Food and Hotel Malaysia (FHM) 2019, organised by Informa Markets, is set to take place at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre from Sept 24 to 27. It is one of the largest exhibitions of all things food, drinks, hotel, restaurant, food service equipment, supplies, services and related technology. It is open to all professionals, trade and business visitors related to the food and hospitality industries only.

Informa Markets Country General Manager – Malaysia Gerard Willem Leeuwenburgh says: "The exhibition will cover 10 halls across 22,000 sq m and feature 1,500 participating companies from 50 countries or regions. We're also expecting 28,000 trade visitors from 57 countries as well, so the exhibition is a great platform for showcasing your products and services."

Visitors can expect a rollout of exciting programmes that include live cooking demonstrations by

Datuk (Dr) Chef Wan, Battle of the Chefs in Culinaire Malaysia 2019 Competition, product launches as well as new features like the Robotic Food Zone.

In recent decades, robots have evolved in the manufacturing industry and this year, people can expect a ramping up of the incorporation of robotics in industries like food production and healthcare.

Focusing on core strengths

According to NKR Continental (M) Sdn Bhd general manager Katherine Kek, the industry is experiencing digital competition but many of the company's clients choose to work with them for their after-sales support.

After-sales service is vital for retaining customer loyalty for many products, including food service equipment that might need support in the form of maintenance or repair.

Kek says: "We started out manufacturing commercial refrigerators, freezers, refrigerated mini containers and walk-in cold rooms. We later expanded into the making of stainless steel equipment and the distribution of branded imported food service

equipment from Europe, USA and Japan.

"Like most industries these days, we face the challenges of technology disruption and are under increasing pressure from online ventures. However, many of our business partners still prefer to engage our services because we provide after-sales support as opposed to digital sellers whereby you won't be able to conveniently access consultation services if you have a problem with your spare parts or whatnot."

NKR Continental is one of the exhibitors at FHM 2019. It positions itself as a one-stop solution provider. Its services and products cover everything from planning and design to custom-built stainless steel equipment, refrigerators and the supply of high performance food service equipment. Product training is part of its services and is conducted at its in-house training centre.

Advance Hotel Supplies (M) Sdn Bhd sales & marketing manager Teo Lay Pin says: "Our products are known for their sustainability. Consumers often rave about how our products maintain their quality over time."



Leeuwenburgh: We're expecting 28,000 trade visitors from 57 countries



Kitzbichler: We value trade shows as an important platform to present our products and solutions

Advance Hotel Supplies is an importer, distributor and supplier of high-quality hotel and restaurant tableware, cutlery and crockery, flatware, holloware, glassware and other hospitality products.

For almost three decades, the company has dedicated itself to ensuring the best services, reliable and quality products at competitive prices for its customers.

New things to see

Consumers are becoming more educated on products like utensils these days and they are willing to spend more on these quality and unique products, according to FKF Hotel & Restaurant Supplies Sdn Bhd director Emily Liew.

She says: "We're constantly

trying to expand our range of products, coming up with fresh ideas and creating our own personality. We aspire to reinforce attention by becoming trendsetters in the industry with modern designs."

FKF is a hotel and restaurant supplies company that caters to both start-ups and established operations. Its product range includes bar products, glassware, kitchenware, pastry utensils, and trolleys.

Meiko Clean Solutions (SEA) Sdn Bhd MD Rudolf Kitzbichler shares: "We are presenting a colourful mix of everything for the HORECA (Hotel/Restaurant/Café) industry like undercounter dishwashers of the M-iClean Premium series, which not only work fast and minimise resources – emitting 80% less steam – but also make annoying glass polishing unnecessary. GiO reverse osmosis module is the magic word here."

"Our new Hood-type M-iClean H Series dishwashers are ergonomically designed with automatic basket detection and hood opening. The dishwasher generation M-iQ with its basket and belt autos is exemplary in terms of economy and ecology. The fact that all machines promise the highest level of hygiene in the washing results is a basic prerequisite in our developments. In addition, we present the UPSTER series – under counter, hood and basket dishwashers – which are available at fair and attractive prices.

"Meiko is above all a solution provider. We look at the whole and not just the pure machine technology. Our expertise culminates in ergonomics, water treatment (GiO reverse osmosis module), food waste solutions, comprehensive efficient planning and resource-saving innovations.

"We value trade shows as an important platform to present our products and solutions to an interested trade audience. In fact, we present new innovations at the show," he adds.

Kitzbichler hopes to attract new customers via the FHM series. "We always set goals at a trade fair. In the end, that means we assess whether the trade fair has reached our goals and what recommendations for action exist for the next one."

"It is important that the participating companies also make strong marketing to attract many visitors. We also contribute our part. We are curious to see what the FHM will bring us this year."



From left: F&B Facilities Sdn Bhd MD Rick Chee, Informa Markets group MD, Asean and senior vice-president, Asla, M Gandhi; Malaysian Association of Hotels president Kamaruddin Baharin, Primary Industries Deputy Minister Datuk Seri Shamsul Iskandar Mohd Akin, Culinaire Malaysia 2019 organising chairperson Maggie Ong, Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre executive chef Hisham Jaafar, The Malaysian F&B Executives Association president Hisham Tan, and Professional Culinaire Association president Kamaruddin Adnin at the press conference for Culinaire Malaysia 2019