

GIBCA FURNITURE ACQUISITION OF HUF COR'S IP

GIBCA ANNOUNCES ACQUISITION OF HUF COR®'S INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY TO STRENGTHEN
MARKET LEADERSHIP

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gibca Furniture Industry Co. Ltd. (LLC) today announced that it has acquired the rights to all of Hufcor's remaining intellectual property, trademarks, and know-how as of June 2023. This strategic acquisition reinforces Gibca's commitment to innovation and market leadership while also ensuring the preservation of Hufcor's renowned brand.

Hufcor Inc., a 125-year-old global manufacturer based in Janesville, WI, unfortunately went into receivership with the State of Wisconsin. The shutdown of Hufcor's North American and Australian operations in the previous year had a profound impact on the architectural, engineering, and construction communities. However, manufacturing facilities and sales offices continued as normal in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Europe.

Hufcor's model of mutually aligned independent subsidiaries and licensees ensured that the brand remained resilient despite the collapse of its US operations. The other operations were not only surviving but were thriving despite the pandemic. Having complete access to a supply chain that was built over several decades guaranteed that quality parts would continue to flow in to ensure continuity of production.

For more than 30 years, Gibca has maintained a long-standing relation with Hufcor Inc., under an exclusive licensing agreement. In recent years, the two companies collaborated to establish a state-of-the-art production facility in Ajman, UAE, capable of manufacturing the full range of Hufcor products, including tall partition systems. The equipment used at Gibca's UAE facility served as a model for the ill-fated Mexican facility. The idea was to have the UAE operations serve as a production source for expansion efforts in other parts of the world including Australasia.

Given their substantial investment in building the Hufcor brand in the region, Gibca recognized the need to safeguard their interests by acquiring Hufcor's intellectual property and trademark rights. "Gibca built a strong presence throughout the Middle East and North African region by adhering to high-quality standards and incorporating product enhancements and improvements in line with Hufcor Inc.'s operations in Janesville, USA. We continue to take pride in producing the same high-quality products as those manufactured in Janesville facility. This strategic move also aligns with Gibca's long-term vision of broadening its position as a key player on the global stage by expanding its capabilities in delivering high-quality products and solutions to its customers worldwide." As stated by Gibca's General Manager, Imran Khan.

According to Imran Khan, "The Hufcor brand has always been recognized for its engineering excellence and commands significant market respect. We also recognize that Hufcor at its core will always remain an American brand with global operations. The brief from our Managing Director – Sheikh Sultan Al Qassimi, explicitly wanted us to ensure that Hufcor remains a global brand with its American roots intact. He wanted us to ensure that following the purchase of IP, Hufcor products should immediately be made available to the former Hufcor home market of United States and other key North American territories. We were also encouraged to contact the entire supply chain for helping them offload any excess inventory that they might be holding for Hufcor parts as a goodwill measure."

Scott Staedter former Hufcor VP – global projects and current owner of SSC was in constant contact with Gibca helping former Hufcor US distributors complete contracts that went into jeopardy because of Hufcor US shutdown. He has been advising Gibca post-Hufcor receivership in the acquisition process and continues to help expand Gibca's geographical footprint in newer markets. He introduced Gibca to Kwik-Wall as a potential partner to work with and to revive Hufcor brand immediately in US.

"We were extremely fortunate to be able to team up so quickly with Kwik-Wall in US. The company has a strong US presence and a reputation for excellence in their manufactured product. Adding the 600 series to their range complements their existing product line. Things definitely look exciting as the Hufcor project activity builds up again in US." Imran Khan continues.

"Gibca will be a close partner in implementing the know-how and the Midwest work ethic as we collectively grow our North American footprint." Explains Kwik-Wall's, Mike Hoyle. "Our alliance with Gibca, who's manufactured Hufcor products for more than 30 years, extends our capabilities to serve customers. Since 2018, we have grown our distributor base which has experience installing large convention centers and hospitality projects. Now these distributors can market the 600 Series panels used by more than half the newly built US convention centers installed in North America since 2006."

Scott Staedter adds, "Bringing back the Hufcor 600 Series that for decades was a specified brand with Marriott and other large global chains and conference facility managers will ensure that thousands of installations are serviced with genuine parts and that general contractors can reduce risks in their supply chain when securing operable partitions. Engineering-wise, Hufcor's capabilities were unmatched. And by bringing back the time-tested 600 Series into the mix for architects and end-users, market is only set to gain."

Moving forward, Gibca looks optimistically to leveraging the acquired assets to drive innovation, enhance customer experiences, and contribute to the success of its global partners. "We look forward to collaborating with various worldwide partners in building on the recognized product excellence of the Hufcor brand." States Imran Khan.

ABOUT GIBCA - HUFCOR

Gibca Furniture Industry Co. LTD. (LLC), is a premier Space Management Solutions Provider across the MENA Region. Since their establishment in the 1990s, they have provided innovative and quality workspace solutions for over 75,000 installations throughout the Middle East, Central Asia, Africa & now, Australia.

