

THE DOWNLOAD

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calendar BIFMA EVENTS

BIFMA (the Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturer's Association) had scheduled the following list of meetings and events at press time. Additional events will be scheduled, so continue to watch for meeting notices on the Internet at www.bifma.org.

March 28 & 29, 2001 - Chair Standard Subcommittee Working Group
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM March 28, 2001
8:30 AM - 3:00 PM March 29, 2001
Crowne Plaza Hotel, Grand Rapids, MI

April 18 & 19, 2001 - File/Storage Subcommittee Working Group
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM April 18, 2001
8:30 AM - NOON April 19, 2001
Crowne Plaza, Dallas TX

April 19 & 20, 2001 - Engineering Committee Meeting
1:00 PM - 5:00 PM April 19, 2001
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM April 20, 2001
Crowne Plaza, Dallas TX

May 8 & 9, 2001 - Panel Standard Subcommittee Working Group
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM May 8, 2001
8:30 AM - 3:00 PM May 9, 2001
Crowne Plaza, Grand Rapids, MI

May 23 & 24, 2001 - Chair Standard Subcommittee Working Group
Toronto Canada

July 24-25, 2001 - File Storage Working Group, Grand Rapids MI

February 28 - March 2, 2002
Annual Management Conference
Coral Gables, Florida

NEW REGULAR MEMBERS:
Allseating Corporation
Helikon Furniture
Jenbrooke Manufacturing
Trillium Manufacturing

NEW SUPPLIER MEMBERS:
Arch Coatings
Indalex, Inc.
Leed Selling Tools
Multi-Wall Packaging
Temple-Inland
Ultrafabrics

NEW SERVICE MEMBERS:
MBI Software
UBS Warburg

U.S. Chamber of Commerce Economist to Address BIFMA

Martin A. Regalia is vice president for economic and tax policy and chief economist of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. He will be the speaker at BIFMA's Annual Membership Meeting on June 20, 2001 during NeoCon.



Martin A. Regalia

Before joining the Chamber in April 1993, Dr. Regalia was the director of research for the Savings and Community Bankers of America (SCBA). Prior to that post, in June 1992 when the group was founded, Dr. Regalia was executive vice president of policy development and chief economist for the National Council of Community Bankers – one of SCBA's predecessor organizations.

He has served as the principle analyst in the Fiscal Analysis Division at the Congressional Budget

Office, as an economist for the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System in both the Banking and Capital Markets Sections, and as financial economist for the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. Additionally, Dr. Regalia served as a consultant to the Thrift Institutions Advisory Council to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and was a visiting instructor in the School of Government and Business, The George Washington University.

Continuing BIFMA's practice of providing annual meeting attendees with economic reports and industry analysis, the association is pleased to host Marty as this year's keynote speaker. He has appeared on national television news and debate programs, has testified before Congressional committees, and has authored articles on a variety of economic topics. He holds a B.A. with honors in economics from the University of Santa Clara and an M.A. in economics and a Ph.D. in monetary economics from the University of Wisconsin.

As always, the annual meeting will be held in the Sauganash Ballroom of the Holiday Inn Mart Plaza Hotel in Chicago from 8 to 9:15 am. Register for this event by calling BIFMA at 616.285.3963. The cost of the breakfast meeting is \$30 per person.

BIFMA Releases Ergonomics Guideline

By Lucy Hart, CCPE, The Global Group, Downsview, Ontario

Historically, BIFMA has supported and referred to the voluntary USA standard "ANSI/HFS 100 - 1988 American National Standard for Human Factors Engineering of Visual Display Terminal Workstations" as a guide on ergonomics in the workplace. Since the mid-1990's, this standard has been under revision to reflect changes in hardware and the expansion of relevant research.

Meanwhile ISO, the International Organization for Standardization, published a 17-part international standard known as ISO 9241 "Ergonomic requirements for office work with visual display terminals (VDTs)". "Part 5: Workstation layout and postural requirements", published in 1998, is of particular interest to the furniture industry. It contains ergonomics guiding principles and design requirements, but no dimensions or ranges, for office work with visual display terminals. "Part 3: Visual display requirements", published in 1992, also contains some relevant design requirements and recommendations that apply to positioning the display.

With ANSI/HFS 100 under revision, there were no documents to guide BIFMA members in the application of relevant ISO principles and requirements to the dimensions and adjustment ranges of VDT furniture. Consequently, in July 1999 the Ergonomics Subcommittee of BIFMA voted to develop a guideline for furniture intended for computer use in the USA and Canada.

On January 1, 2001, BIFMA released the provisional version of "Ergonomics Guideline for VDT (Visual Display Terminal) Furniture Used in Office Work Spaces". Intended users include furniture manufacturers, suppliers, dealers and their

clients; Interior Designers / Architects / Specifiers / Industrial Designers; Facility and Material Managers; Purchasing Managers; Ergonomists; Testing facilities; and other professionals involved in the design, manufacturing, specifying, qualifying and purchasing of office furniture for VDT work spaces.

BIFMA adopted NATICK/TR-89/044 "1988 Anthropometric Survey of US Army Personnel" as their sole source of data. While the population measured by Natick does not precisely reflect the actual office working population of North America, it is the most comprehensive database available at this time. The measurement methods are consistent with the anthropometric measurements described in ISO 7250 "Basic human body measurements for technological design". If another more relevant database is or becomes available, the user of the guideline is encouraged to apply such information.

The recommended work space dimensions and ranges are based on meeting the requirements of the relevant 5th percentile female through 95th percentile male body dimensions in an upright posture. BIFMA acknowledges, however, that there is no uniquely correct working posture that would fit any user for an extended period of time and/or accommodate every personal working habit. Alternate typical postures may result in dimensional requirements that differ from those contained in this guideline.

Guideline Format:

Section 1 - The guideline begins with a Foreword in Section 1, followed by Sections 2 through 6, which contain, respectively, the Scope, Conformance Criteria, Limitations, Definitions & General Considerations.

Section 7 "The Work Chair" and Section 8 "Work Surfaces" are sub-divided by parameters. The format for each parameter is as follows:

Sub-Section Title (for example, Seat Height)

ISO Related Quote and Reference

Relevant Body Dimension (name of anthropometric measurement, for example Popliteal Height)

– What is it and how is it measured

(direct quote from Natick)

– Relevant NATICK/TR-89/044 Data

Why is Parameter "x" (for example,

Seat Height) Important

Discussion

Recommended Dimensions/Ranges

Ultimate Test for Fit

The last part, the Ultimate Test for Fit, contains the final criteria for determining if a given parameter fits an individual user without involving physical measurement of that parameter. This test evolved from BIFMA's acknowledgment that the application of ISO principles to specific user/work space combinations may result in dimensional conflicts. Section 9 contains additional information including relevant quotes from ISO that may influence comfort, performance and safety. Section 9 also contains a table of the relevant Natick data and a table of the recommended dimensions and ranges for each chair and work surface parameter.

Section 10 lists recommended reading.

The provisional version of the guideline has been released for a six-month public comment period extending from January 1, 2001 to June 29, 2001. Any comments received will provide the basis for a revision, which will be released as soon thereafter as possible. BIFMA will review the guideline every five years, or earlier if new

Guideline Released, continued

technology, research or an update to the relevant ISO standards dictate.

The guideline may be ordered at www.bifma.org/secure/orderform.html (\$20 USD for a paper copy) or by contacting BIFMA at email@bifma.org for more information. A summary of the Ultimate Tests for Fit can be downloaded free of charge at www.bifma.org.

Parts 3 and 5 of ISO 9241 may be downloaded at the Electronics Standards Store at www.ansi.org. Be sure to order ISO 9241-3 and 5 without any prefixes such as BN.

One final note; in conjunction with the revision to CSA Z412, Guideline on Office Ergonomics, CSA International adopted several parts of ISO 9241 (including 3 and 5) as National

Standards of Canada. In addition, the dimensions and ranges in CSA Z412-00 are derived from the Natick database. Every effort was made to ensure harmonization of the dimensions and adjustment ranges in the BIFMA ergonomics guideline with those in CSA International's 2000 edition of Z412 "Guideline on Office Ergonomics", released in December 2000.

OSHA Ergonomics Rule Rejected

A resolution overturning the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) ergonomics regulation was approved by a vote of 223-206 in the U.S. House of Representatives on March 7, 2001. The action followed a similar vote in the U.S. Senate on the previous day.

The resolution will now be sent to President Bush for his signature. The administra-

tion has declared its support for repeal of the regulation that aims to curb repetitive strain injuries suffered by some one million American workers, calling the rule burdensome and costly for business. The President is expected to approve the repeal and the new administration claims it will develop a "more reasonable" ergonomics position.

This action in the U.S. Congress is not related to development and distribution of the BIFMA Ergonomics Guideline. The BIFMA Guideline references ISO principles as they relate to furniture and was developed to fill the void created by the absence of a current Human Factors & Ergonomics Society (HFES) standard for computer workstations.

Allsteel's John Felt to Chair Association's Government Affairs Committee

John Felt has agreed to accept the position of chairperson of BIFMA International's Government Affairs Committee and succeeds Phil Todd of Haworth, Inc. in that position. The Government Affairs Committee continues to be a highly regarded advocate for Industry perspectives and John has been a longtime member of the committee with experience testifying on the association's behalf before the United States Congress.

John is currently Manager of GSA Accounts at Allsteel, Inc. and for the past 8 years, he has been Marketing Manager of Government Accounts with responsibilities that have included

recommending, developing, and implementing overall sales and marketing programs for HON Company products to all federal agencies. In that capacity, he has established effective business



John Felt

contacts with key federal agencies and personnel. He knows how the government works and has coordinated all contracts to federal agencies, through the receipt, cost/profit analysis, quotation and processing of bid solicitations.

John was born and raised in Los Alamos, New Mexico in 1951 and has always been comfortable working in the public sector. He has a BFA in Environmental Design (specialty in Commercial Interiors) from ASU and began doing work in Contract Furniture and Commercial Interiors in 1973. He is married to an Interior Designer and has three sons ages 18, 21 & 26.

E-Business / E-Commerce Problems

By Thomas Faranda (Tom was the keynote speaker at BIFMA's Management Conference in Puerto Rico this winter. He is a CEO who speaks and consults on growth and profit. As a follow up to the conference, Tom has offered this and another article in the future on E-Commerce.)

There are four main problems in electronic commerce. First: Global Language Translations. English may be the "lingua franca" of the world, but translations are often incorrect on web sites. Your web site must be a multi-language site and your translation must be in the most commonly used dialect of that language. For example, Italian must be translated using the Florence dialect and not one of the many other Italian dialects. One B2B corporation, FreeMarkets, has a call center staff of translators for 30 languages.

Second: Relationships. Trust and personal relationships will always be a key to business--traditional commerce or electronic commerce. Dealing with an auction or exchange situation means having to trust that the other party has both the ability and the will to deliver what is promised, when it is promised, and in the form it is promised. The "buyer beware" situation is often in effect as few marketplaces will take

responsibility for the transactions. Chemdex, a B2B marketplace for life sciences company VENTRO takes actual ownership of all transactions, an unusual act. In most cases, you must develop a relationship of trust that makes it possible to buy and sell

in an electronic commerce situation. Remember the Faranda Maxim: "B2B trust is more important than B2C trust". B2C trust is driven by 'brands' that imply trust. B2B trust is not quite as 'branded' and therefore more suspect.

Third: Lack of Standards. Integration today is poor as technology has not succeeded in connecting marketplaces or computers-to-computers either directly or through the web. Faxing and phone calls supplement much of E-Commerce. New technologies, such as XML and Bluetooth are

helping. Bluetooth, named after a Viking explorer, is a radio frequency technology that allows equipment to interconnect and communicate wirelessly with each other. It is a technology standard for the future.

Fourth: Price Competition Resisters.

Many organizations compete on reputation, relationships, competitive advantages, geographic locations and other factors rather than only on price. E-Business forces price to be a main consideration. Without price competition most E-Business will fail. Remember the Faranda Maxim on Price. "Price is the final determinant when everything else is equal--and seldom is everything else equal!"

Electronic commerce is another complete channel of distribution. Make is an important one but do not forget to fortify your other channels as well. The firms with the most balanced and powerful channels of distribution will rule the 21st century.

Tom resides in Paradise Valley(Phoenix), Arizona and can be reached at 480.443.1593 or 'tomfaranda@aol.com'.

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Tom Faranda Addressing the 2001 BIFMA Management Conference



Chuck Saylor of Superior Furniture and other BIFMA Conference Participants Tour Old San Juan

FACET (Giza) & 20-20 Technologies One

Otto Buchholz of FACET, Inc. spoke at BIFMA's Management Conference on Technology in February.

HOLLIS, N.H. & MONTREAL, QUEBEC, 3/8/01 – 20-20 Technologies Inc., with headquarters in Montreal, Quebec, is merging its existing contract furniture business unit with FACET Inc., the creator of Giza®, to create 20-20 Giza Inc., continuing its operation out of Hollis, N.H. and Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

"Both 20-20 and FACET have long recognized the need for a comprehensive set of integrated software tools for the furniture industry, revolving around a parametric database supporting rich intelligent data," said Jean Mignault, president and chief executive officer of 20-20 Technologies. "This merger of two industry leaders combines tremendous corporate strength that will allow 20-20 Technologies to sustain its high growth by continuing to provide enabling desktop and Web-based technology to a \$108-billion industry of configurable residential and commercial furniture and interior design products."

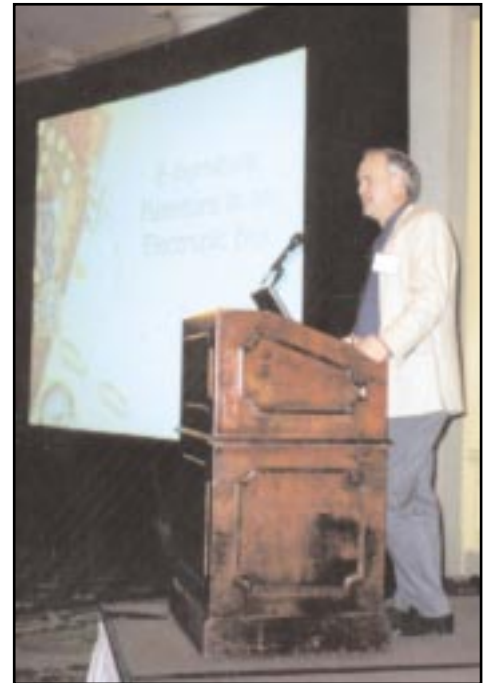
20-20 Giza will continue to provide intuitive and innovative solutions to its existing users, maintaining its tradition of forward compatibility that is key to its success and a significant continuity commitment to all existing and future customers. "Both 20-20 and Giza platforms will continue to be available," said Richard Carruthers, president of 20-20 Giza. "In addition, the merger will enable the deployment of new technologies in untapped and emerging markets worldwide, representing significant growth potential for the company."

20-20 Technologies has been active in the contract furniture industry since

1997 with success in establishing its solution at office furniture dealer sites in the United States and Canada, and with some of the industry's top manufacturers. Following 20-20 Technologies' acquisition of Intellicon Inc. in 2000, also an important player in the furniture software, 20-20 Technologies and FACET's merger is the latest strategic transaction aiming at creating a worldwide software and service organization that offers the most advanced technology and is capable of serving the most demanding manufacturers, retailers and dealers in the office industry.

20-20 Technologies' unique technology, including parametric database and rule-based design software resulting from its long-term investment in research and development, and Giza's vast database of furniture libraries and intuitive office furniture interface, will now benefit both companies' users.

"This is a truly 'win-win' situation for all concerned. I am excited about merging the strength of 20-20's technology with the overwhelming acceptance of the Giza sales tool to bring our customers a vast, new array of functionality and



Otto Buchholz

value," said Otto Buchholtz, original co-founder of FACET and 20-20 Giza's executive vice president.

20-20 Technologies Inc. is a world-leading provider of interior design visualization and selling software. The company, with more than 48,000 installations in 13 languages in 90 countries, is also the world leader in EDI and Web-based tools for residential interiors and offers electronic catalogs from more than 1,000 industry manufacturers.

FACET Inc. has revolutionized the approach to furniture sales with its flagship product, Giza, a Windows®-based visualization and selling software that allows non-CAD and CAD users to efficiently create two- and three-dimensional renderings of furniture layouts as well as specifications with tremendous ease of use. FACET Inc. has supplied software, and provided training, support and complete services for symbol library creation and maintenance since 1988.



BIFMA President Jack Michaels with NAM's Jerry Jasinowski and BIFMA Board Member Steve Gane. Jerry addressed BIFMA's Management Conference and spoke on the economy, ergonomics and changes in Washington, D.C.

Shipment Growth Rates and Projections

By Tom Reardon

U.S. office furniture manufacturers enjoyed a relatively strong year during 2000. Although both order and shipment growth rates did slow during the second half of the year, the industry posted an impressive 8.5% shipment growth rate as compared to 1999.

BIFMA recently released the latest Standard & Poor's DRI forecast for the next two

years. The most recent publication predicts shipments of \$13.65 billion in 2001, a 2.7% increase over the \$13.285 billion realized in 2000. Citing stalled economic growth evidenced by real GDP growth of 1.4% in the fourth quarter 2000 and expectations of first quarter 2001 GDP growth near zero, DRI predicts more robust economic growth during the second half of 2001. Accordingly, expectations are that office furniture

shipment growth will be sluggish in the first half, but should accelerate in the second half as lower interest rates stimulate investment and as corporate profits begin to recover.

The pace of order growth should also improve during the second half of 2001, setting the stage for stronger shipments entering 2002. DRI's prediction for 2002 shipments is \$14.3 billion, or roughly a 5.0% increase over 2001.

Clean Air Assistance Workshop Planned

By Barbara A. Spitzley

BIFMA International is co-sponsoring a "Permit to Install" Workshop developed by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's Clean Air Assistance Program.

The goal of the workshop is to assist

subject businesses with the completion of a Permit to Install application. The permit is issued to allow for construction and operation of equipment or processes which may emit air contaminants. The workshop will be held on June 19, 2001 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Novi and again on June 21,

2001 at the Airport Hilton in Grand Rapids.

For further information, please contact:

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

Environmental Assistance Division

spitzleb@state.mi.us

(517) 373-9283

Mfg's. Rep Division Transitions to OPRA

By Tom Reardon

In 1994, the Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturer's Association (BIFMA) International established the Independent Manufacturers' Representative Division in response to an expressed desire from a group of independent reps and the manufacturers they represent for reps to organize and work cooperatively toward mutually beneficial objectives. BIFMA's Rep Division accomplished most of its original objectives including: publication of a rep firm directory for promotional purposes, providing access to group health insurance, establishing various discount programs, developing rep-manufacturer contract guidelines, developing a statistical benchmark report for rep firms, establishing peer group networking events, and increasing the opportunities for contact and

communication with manufacturers.

Our primary objective has always been to build a strong, vibrant and self-sufficient independent manufacturers' rep organization dedicated to promotion of the profession. During the development years, it had been suggested that the existing rep division structure could be improved upon by allowing the rep organization to operate as an autonomous entity separate from BIFMA. In a research project conducted by Chris Fonville, Contrak LLC, BIFMA examined the feasibility of operating the Rep Division as a stand-alone, autonomous group under separate management. The research results indicate that at present, there is insufficient interest among contract furniture reps to support an autonomous rep association.

However, while investigating other

options, BIFMA learned that an existing organization, the Office Products Representative Association (OPRA), is very interested and eager to serve the needs of contract furniture reps. In fact, OPRA has permanently revised their dues structure to accommodate smaller firms and is extending a temporary membership offer to existing BIFMA Rep Division members.

The Rep firms that supported BIFMA over the past several years are truly a progressive and visionary group. Those that have been around since 1994 remember that, with the exception of a Certification program, the Division accomplished every one of the objectives originally established by the first Board of Directors headed by Jim Hill. All of this was accomplished by a group of dedicated, hard-working and visionary volunteers.



***The World's Trade Fair for Interior Design and Facilities Management
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For more information or to register online, visit www.merchandisemart.com and click on NeoCon® or call 800.473.0194.

In Review is published quarterly by BIFMA International to provide a brief update of committee and association activities.

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CALENDAR of industry events

Updated regularly on BIFMA's Internet Site: www.bifma.org

March 14 - 16, 2001 - World of Wood 2001, Condado Plaza Hotel - San Juan, Puerto Rico, IWPA's 13th International Forest Products Exhibition; Internet: <http://www.iwpawood.org>

March 15-16, 2001 - 8th Annual Workshop on Forest Products Marketing - Virginia Tech Campus, Blacksburg VA; Telephone: 540.231.5876; E-mail: rsmith4@vt.edu

March 15-19, 2001 - Furnidec 2001 - Thessaloniki, Greece; Contact: FURNIDEC Secretariat; Telephone: +3031-291.154, 291.111; Internet: www.helexpo.gr

March 18-21, 2001 - China International Furniture Fair - Guangzhou, China; www.ciff-gz.com

April 2 - 5, 2001 - International Particleboard Composite Materials. Pullman, WA; Ph: 608-231-1361.

April 4-5, 2001 - NeoCon South with Senior Housing - Atlanta, GA; Contact: Merchandise Mart Properties, Inc.; Telephone: 312.527.7083; Internet: www.merchandisemart.com

April 19-26, 2001 - Spring International Home Furnishings Market - High Point, NC; Telephone: 336.889.0203; Internet: www.furnituremarket.org

May 18-22, 2001 INTERZUM - Cologne, Italy; Internet: www.messe-koeln.de/interzum

May 22-24, 2001, General Services Administration's National Product Expo - Orlando, FL; Contact: National Furniture Center; Telephone: 703-305-6636; Internet: www.nfc.fss.gsa.gov

June 18-20, 2001, NeoCon World's Trade Fair - Chicago, IL; Contact: Merchandise Mart Properties, Inc.; Telephone: 800-677-6278 or 312.527.7599; Internet: www.merchandisemart.com

June 20, 2001, BIFMA International's Annual Meeting - Chicago, IL; Internet: www.bifma.org

August 2 - 5, 2001 -AWFS Woodworking Machinery and Furniture Supply Fair. Anaheim, California. Web Address: <http://www.woodworkingfair.org>

Sept. 11-14 - Office Furniture China 2001 - Shanghai; Internet: www.mfsinoexpo.com/furniture

September 13-14 - IIDEX/NeoCon Canada - Toronto, ON; Internet: www.iidexneoconcanada.com

September 23-25 - World Workplace 2001 - Kansas City, MO; Internet: www.worldworkplace.org

Oct. 2-4, 2001 - WorkPlace '01 - London (biannual); Internet: www.workplace-event.co.uk

October 18-25, 2001 - International Home Furnishings Market - High Point

October 31-November 1, 2001 - NeoCon New York; Internet www.merchandisemart.com

Nov. 16-17, 2001, Industrial Strength Woodworking Expo & Conference, sponsored by Custom Woodworking Business and Wood & Wood Products magazines, Portland, OR.

Nov. 20 - 23, 2001 - International Furniture Fair Tokyo (IFFT) 2001 - Tokyo Big Sight, Japan; Email: info@idafij.or.jp; Internet: <http://idafij.com>

November 29-30, 2001, NeoCon West 2001 - Los Angeles, CA; Internet: www.neoconwest.com

November 30 & December 1, 2001 - Florida Woodworking & Furniture Supply Show®; Orlando, FL; Internet: www.tsiwoodworkingshows.com.

Dec. 11-13 - National Ergonomics Conference & Exposition - Las Vegas NV; Telephone: 800.222.2596

October 24-29, 2002 - ORGATEC 2002 - Cologne, Germany (biannual); Contact: German American Chamber of Commerce; 212-974-8837; Internet: www.koelnmesse.de/orgatec

February 28-March 1-2, 2002 - BIFMA International's Annual Management Conference - Coral Gables, Florida; Telephone: 616.285.3963; Fax: 616.285.3765; Email: email@bifma.org; Internet: www.bifma.org

February 28 to March 5, 2002 - International Office Furniture Trade Show, OFITEC 2002 - Madrid, Spain; Internet: www.ofitec.ifema.es