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Building Materials & Bathroom Fittings



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**Taiwan's Quality
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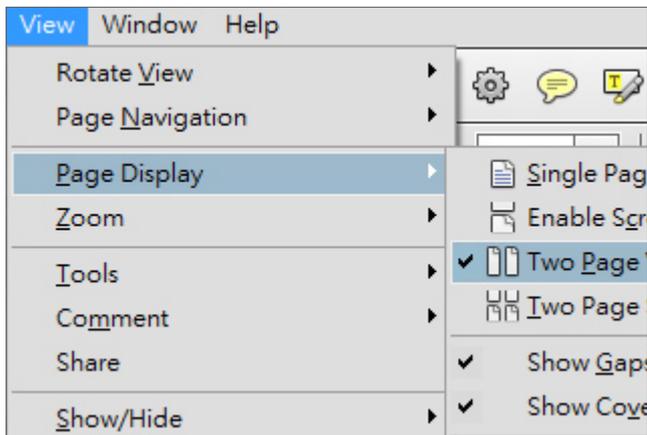
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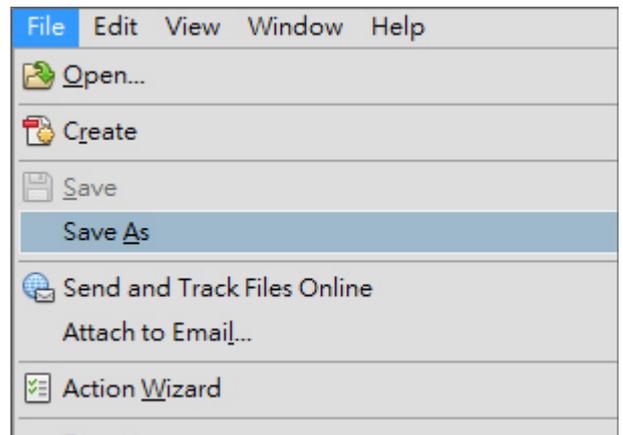
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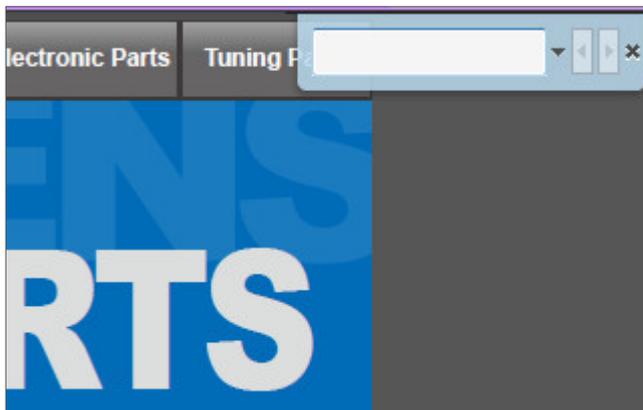
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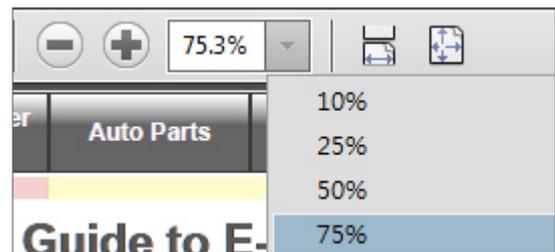
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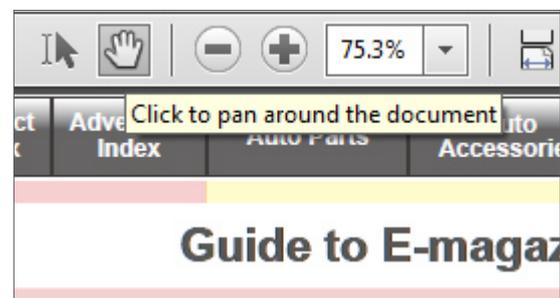


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Taiwan Supplies Wide-ranging Hardware and Fittings for Home and Garden Improvement

Plumbing hardware and locks provide striking examples of Taiwan's strong presence in the global supply chain

By STEVE CHUANG

Taiwan capably offers most of necessary hardware products and fittings for home and garden improvement. (photo courtesy of Massoud & Bros. and Kenswell Tube Forming)



To create comfortable, relaxing and lavish living spaces in homes and gardens, a wide spectrum of instruments, fittings and hardware products are needed; and Taiwan could be the best source of those products, given its high manufacturing reputation and considerable number of well-established local suppliers who have been well recognized by professional buyers worldwide for strong commitment to customer satisfactions and quality.

For instance, Taiwan's faucet and plumbing hardware production is one of the best-known industries originating in Taiwan's central county of Changhua. Following over 50 years of development, the industry consists of more than 800 makers and related subcontractors, like surface treating companies, material suppliers, processing companies and specialized machinery makers, together forming a perfectly integrated supply chain there to not just sustain the local economy, but satisfy global buyers with top quality and value-added manufacturing services.

In fact, no other country in the world has a higher density of faucet and plumbing hardware makers within a defined area than Taiwan. At present, the island exports NT\$60 billion (about US\$2 billion) worth of faucets, bathroom ware, kitchen fittings, and related accessories annually, mostly to North America. Around 80% of the total comes from Changhua.

In addition to a well-integrated supply chain, a time-tested manufacturing capability, flexible production, and finely-honed craftsmanship

are also among the industry's competitive advantages. Most agree that the current success of the industry is the result of manufacturers' decades-long devotion to their core businesses and shared goal of boosting the industry's global status.

For consumers concerned about home security and safety, various locks made in Taiwan can also be essential items on their shopping lists, given friendly prices and exceptional quality comparable with those from Japan, Europe and North America.

Taiwan's lock industry dates back to the 1950s, when a few manufacturers in Pingtung and Chiayi Counties likely used antiquated tools to hammer out locks and components. The state of the sector has evolved significantly after some 60 years, with most operators able to match advanced rivals technologically and qualitatively outdo emerging competitors, also enjoying robust growth in exports.

The local industry has 300-400 makers mostly modestly sized and concentrated on OEM (original equipment manufacturing) and ODM (original design manufacturing). Exports total NT\$50-60 billion yearly but the total output is likely much higher, as most makers fill downstream orders, for furniture, automotive suppliers who then export finished products worldwide. The total annual output likely reaches several hundred billion New Taiwan dollars. Worth mentioning is that some insiders have been able to develop and make high-grade locks, such as EN12320 Grade 5 padlocks. [CENS](#)



"TPL" Starts up to Help Taiwan's Plumbing Sector to Explore U.S. and European Markets

By STEVE CHUANG

(from right) PAT's chairman, Y.D. Wu, IAPMO's CEO, Russ Chaney, and MIRDC's chairman, C.C. Huang, at the TPL's opening ceremony

Backed by the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Metal Industries Research & Development Centre (MIRDC), a Taiwanese government-funded R&D institute, formally started the "Taiwan Plumbing Research & Testing Laboratory (TPL)" in the Taichung Industrial Park to help Taiwanese suppliers of plumbing fittings and products to explore the U.S. and European markets.

Witnessed by dozens of guests, the opening ceremony was held October 13 and presided by C.C. Huang, MIRDC's chairman, Russ Chaney, CEO of IAPMO (International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials), a North American certification agency, and Y.D. Wu, chairman of Plumbing Association of Taiwan (PAT).

Huang indicated that TPL aims to help Taiwanese suppliers striving to continuously improve products to meet stricter quality requirements in the U.S. and Europe regarding toxicity prevention, functional safety and noise reduction.

The chairman emphasized the lab is already accredited by agencies at home, overseas and has sufficient capacity to handle material safety testing complying with NSF (National Science

Foundation) standards, as well as noise emission tests in accordance with ISO 3822. Plus, the lab also obtained NSF 61 certificate from IAPMO this June, a milestone for Taiwan's plumbing fitting and product sector.

With proven research and testing capabilities, Huang noted that TPL will pave the road for Taiwanese manufacturers to better explore the U.S. and Europe markets.

PAT chairman, Wu, indicated that Taiwan's plumbing fitting and product industry has about 600 manufacturers and subcontractors, mostly clustered in Changhua County, central Taiwan, that generate annual output value of over NT\$50 billion (US\$1.66 billion). The industry, with over 1,000 companies to turn out some NT\$100 billion (US\$3.33 billion) in products two decades ago, could again see its former glory with TPL's help.

Wu's expectation is realistic as Taiwan now commands only a 5% share of the global plumbing materials, fittings and products market, which is valued over US\$500 billion annually, implying ample room for Taiwanese suppliers to develop sales. [CENS](#)



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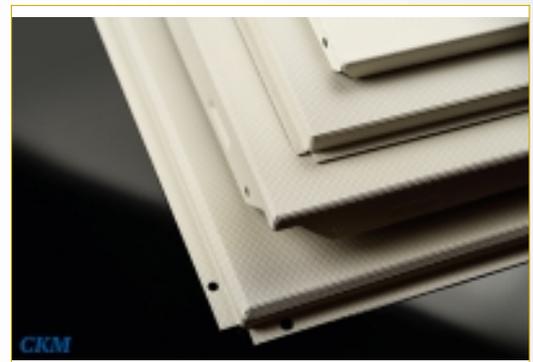
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