

'Nobody is doing this on a mass scale - until now': Bureau Group acquires used furniture firm as part of mission to prevent millions of tonnes of waste going to landfill

4 years ago



Workplace furniture procurement expert [Bureau Group](#) has unveiled plans to create the UK's first large-scale circular marketplace for commercial FF&E following its acquisition of used furniture business assets from 2NDHND Ltd.

The move brings furniture remanufacture in-house for the first time at Edinburgh-based Bureau Group, which helps companies from startups to blue chips refit and redesign office spaces by procuring and removing furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FF&E) sustainably.

The acquisition secures five jobs at Dundonald-based 2NDHND Ltd, which entered administration on October 17, as well as the promise of further jobs down the line - including apprenticeships - as Bureau Group sets about building the UK's largest remanufacture facility for commercial office furniture.

The new roles will include design-focused positions as part of plans to ramp up the standard and expectation of refurbished FF&E.

The remanufacture facility will see furniture from large corporates, SMEs, and the public sector completely refurbished to 'Category 1' condition - almost new - and ready to be commercially resold or redistributed to charities, schools and other not-for-profits, avoiding the need for furniture to go to landfill.

Already, more than 17,000 pieces of furniture are in the warehouse ready to be redistributed.

The new arm of the business will initially operate as a direct-to-consumer e-commerce platform under Bureau Group's The Office Crowd banner, before ultimately also providing complete furniture refurbishment for B2B procurement teams – a service that has been typically challenging to date.

The Office Crowd includes the option to buy new, sustainably sourced furniture, with an innovative carbon calculator feature showing the difference between new and refurbished options.

What's more, Bureau Group and The Office Crowd will commit to managing the lifecycle of any new item of furniture purchased, meaning they will buy the item back when the customer is finished with it, refurbish it, and put it back up for sale.

Co-founders Andy and Jennifer Russell say the acquisition is a 'pivotal moment in supporting large scale decarbonisation of the commercial furniture industry' in Bureau Group's pursuit of helping prevent millions of tonnes of office furniture needlessly going to landfill every year.

Andy Russell, managing director at Bureau Group, said: "This is huge – it's exactly in line with our trajectory as a sustainable and design-led business. Our purpose is to help support companies to be as sustainable as possible, by embedding circularity within every business decision.

"The conversation around the circular economy and commercial furniture has been getting louder for some time, but the thing that makes it possible doesn't exist in a serious way. Nobody is doing this on a mass scale – until now.

"This acquisition means we can create a genuine opportunity for firms to make a different decision on the way they buy furniture that is more cost effective and also helps to save the planet.

"A sustainable approach to procurement that prevents FF&E going to landfill is one of, if not the, biggest decision a company can make to realise their sustainability ambitions and responsibilities. Our role is to help them deliver that, and the creation of this facility and marketplace is a massive leap on our road towards it."

Jennifer Russell, co-founder and Group Operations Director at Bureau Group, said: "We see huge value in this market, and are pleased to rescue the industry-leading skills and experience here in Scotland and add it to our offering as part of our plans to build a stable market.

"Our ambition is to create a remanufacturing facility where we are training people up and developing skills that would otherwise be lost. The demand for these services will not diminish and that makes the sector and marketplace sustainable in itself.

"Much like the lifecycle of a chair, we want to invest in the life cycle of these skills and ensure they are passed from generation to generation."

Shona Campbell, Partner at administrator Henderson Loggie LLP, said: "Bureau Group presented an ambitious, exciting and most importantly viable plan for the future of the business, and Henderson Loggie LLP is delighted the ongoing employment of five people has been secured.

"We wish Bureau Group and its employees the best of luck with the venture."

Bureau Group, which also has branches in Glasgow, London and US tech hub Seattle, is on course to

turnover £10 million plus next year, delivering projects for UK-based companies around the world from Shenzhen and Miami to Singapore and Barcelona.

Bureau's clients include flight comparison site Skyscanner and asset manager abrdn for whom renovation of its HQ resulted in massive carbon savings, 6,000 computers wiped and recycled and unwanted furniture donated to charity.

For more information on The Office Crowd visit theofficecrowd.com, and to find out more about Bureau Group visit bureau-group.com.