pallet room dividers: creating spaces in developing nations

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REUSE IN FULL FORM

INSTRUCTION MANUAL

FUNCTIONALITY

ECOLOGICAL IMPACT & LIFE CYCLE

DECORATIVE ASPECT

Pallets have a critical function in providing aid to developing nations. It is on pallets that so many medical supplies, food, and shelters have been delivered. Our goal is to reuse pallets as space dividers in developing nation schools, homes, and other structures. Dividers will be able to provide students and families with the opportunity to have their own living/working space. It is our hope that providing even the slightest individual space will encourage and foster a resident’s creative spirits.

The idea’s foundation is based on a well-known German candy called the Überraschungsei (translated to “Surprise egg”). A “Surprise Egg” is a hollow chocolate-shaped egg with a toy inside that may use the protective shell in the toy assembly. We extend this concept to room separation in developing nations by pallet reuse. School rooms in developing nations are often only separated by curtains, which lack the necessary form for actual division and detracts from a successful learning environment.

Ideally, supply pallets would ship with a post kit and assembly instructions. The same pallets used for supply delivery are used as dividers. Areas of the pallets where forks would slide through, instead slide over vertical standing posts to create dividers. The posts can be mounted in the ground in a variety of ways determined by the site. The length of the dividing wall can be adjusted by using different combinations of pallet sizes. What is unique about this concept is the modularity. Our intent is a system with easily moveable, modular dividers that can be set up in numerous layouts and adapted for societal needs without individual customization.

The functionality of our idea rests in the dividers modularity and adaptability. Even after installation, the pole layout and dividers can easily be altered/moved to accommodate changes in a developing nation’s school or home demands.

We envision the pallet dividers as blank templates that can be decorated, painted, or stylized however the user is inspired to. If a pallet is damaged or a blank pallet (canvas) is need then a replacement can easily be found.

Reusing pallets as room dividers attempts to maximize the useful life of a pallet. At manufacturing, a certain amount of value is transformed from raw natural resources to a function. In a pallet’s case, this function is to support a unit load. After an average of 1.7 uses a pallet can no longer reliably perform this function and it is disposed or reused. Disposal eliminates any residual value that may be left in a pallet from the raw natural resources, this value is then lost forever. Our idea extends a pallet’s useful life in order to extract as much value as possible from the raw materials used in manufacturing. Ecologically, this maximizes our use of natural resources.