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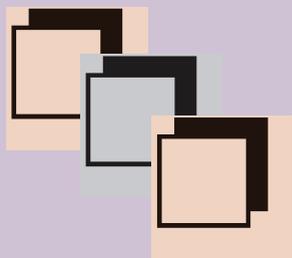
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Comment

Well, soon in three months time, we will know. No! Not what a disaster Brexit is going to be for the country, that is pretty much a foregone conclusion. I mean THE Fit show. This will be the first event in the series that is under new management. That was what finally did for the late and not much lamented Glassex. The move from an organisation with deep associations with the window industry and glass trade to one that was simply running exhibitions eventually was its undoing.

Initially it bloomed but that was on a tide of a booming PVC-U industry. Systems companies were hungry to recruit fabricators and there was a lot of redundancy money about as firms came and went. Today's sacked sales manager became tomorrow's start-up entrepreneur. It just didn't survive the downturn that came with consolidation as the industry settled down.

The first FIT Shows were organised by people who know the industry. The deals done in the early days were possible because of the empathy that existed between the organisers and the exhibitors. Not exactly 'old mates' but you get my drift. Now we have to see whether the new organisers are at all empathetic with the, sometimes eccentric, demands of the window industry.

Already rumours abound about optioned space not taken up and even cancellations at this late stage. And this is before Brexit wreaks havoc with the UK economy.

I cannot see, at this late stage how leaving the EU can be anything but a complete disaster. Brussels has no need or reason to give us anything. The stubborn Mrs May believes that sticking to her plans whatever the consequences shows strength. She should appreciate that the ability to change one's mind can, at times, show true strength. But then she isn't, and never was, in control of the situation. I wrote a year ago that she is simply a puppet of the European Research Group. You might recall the efforts that went into keeping parliament out of things. It was only after high court intervention that our elected representatives had a say in things. Of course if parliament had been kept out of things it would be a done deal by now and we would be on our way out on ERG terms. Though it has been said that that group would have objected to everything other than a no deal – which is what they campaigned for with falsehoods, misinformation and downright lies.

The problem for industry – ours and every other industry – is that, if consumers are in fear for their jobs, then what we have to offer them is going to slip way down the wish list, well behind feeding their families and paying the mortgage. That in turn will lead to window firms closing leading to more job losses and the chain reaction of less cash in the economy, fewer sales and more redundancies.

Of course some people will be totally unaffected: the politicians that are causing this. Their parliamentary salaries will be secure, at least until there is a general election. And the rich kids will be moving their trust funds abroad – maybe even into the EU – while the rest of us are left struggling.

John Roper