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CRAFTCIL

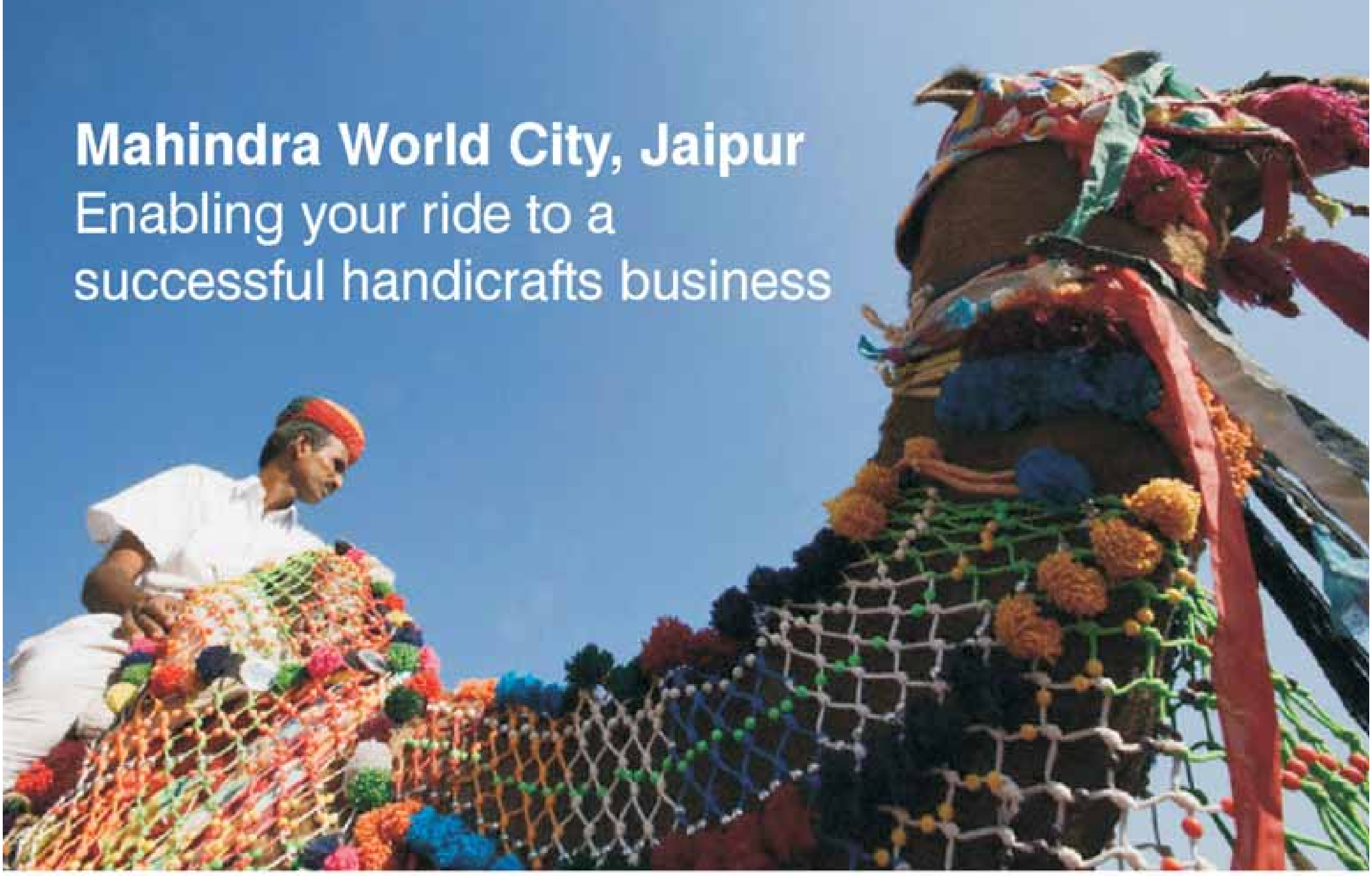
Monthly in-house journal of the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts

TOP 100
US Furniture Stores

Workshop for women entrepreneurs on Challenges & Opportunities in Handicraft Exports

Fashion jewellery & accessories from India appreciated in prime Hong Kong trade event

Wood Trends



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Inside this issue...

Chairman's Message

Dear Fellow Exporters,

I take pleasure in sharing that recently I chaired a meeting between exporters in Moradabad and representatives of PMO and FICCI. Many issues concerning the trade were discussed and an appropriate action plan to solve the problems was deliberated upon. The foremost points highlighted were aimed at infrastructure development, packaging, labour, taxation and research & development for metalware.

An eminent delegation of your Council met the DGFT for discussions on measures to be taken by the Govt. of India to facilitate as well as increase growth in exports of handicrafts. The DGFT has taken keen note of our recommendations and assured proper examination of the same for probable implementation in the near future.

EPCH recently initiated a program for encouraging & supporting women entrepreneurs. A workshop for women entrepreneurs on Challenges & Opportunities in Handicraft Exports was organized with support from O/o DC (H). The response was very heartening as many from the sector turned up to attend. This workshop featured informative presentations by senior experts and all sessions culminated with interactive brain storming.

EPCH led India's participation in Asia's Fashion Jewellery & Accessories Fair - a prime Hong Kong trade event. The Council set up the India Pavilion with 18 member exporters who showcased an impressive array of fashion jewellery & accessories to a discerning clientele.

Our foray into specialized product segment trade shows has been acknowledged well by overseas trade visitors. The recently concluded Indian Fashion Jewellery & Accessories Show is a certain testimony to this. More than 400 buyers from all over the world visited to network and conduct business with over 200 exporters participating in the show. Craftcil's next issue would feature a detailed coverage on this.

I look forward to your valuable suggestions. Please write in to me at chairman@epch.com.

(Arvind Vadhera)
Chairman, EPCH

US Furniture Stores

2010 was a rebound year for Top 100 US furniture stores as they posted their first combined sales increase in two years and stemmed the tide of store closings. Furniture, bedding and accessories sales for the group increased 5.7% to $26.4 billion, reversing the course of the Top 100 companies on the list over the last two years. Those groups' sales had declined more than 8% in each year. The combined store count for this year's top 100 declined only slightly in 2010 - by 0.1% or by seven stores to 8,536 units at year's end. The companies on the previous year's list had shed 130 stores for a 1.5% decline. While last year's Top 100 reflected a scaling back and right-sizing by the industry's largest furniture stores in response to tough economic times, this year's list suggests a stabilizing and rebuilding - at least of the top line, as per a survey by 'Furnture Today', USA.

Top 100 rebound to 5.7% sales growth

Ashley leads pack for 5th consecutive year

"We had some majors actually grow last year," say industry analysts. Among them were *Bob's Discount Furniture, Raymour & Flanigan* and *Art Van*. No. 15 *Bob's*, based in Manchester, Conn., added five stores in 2010 for a total of 40 at year's end as its sales grew nearly 15% to $584.6 million. It has already opened its first two stores in the greater Washington D.C. area.

No. 17 *Art Van* is continuing its aggressive expansion plans this year with the recently announced acquisition of the 28-store *Mattress World*, which also gives the Michigan giant its first stores outside its home state, in Indiana. The Warren, Mich.-based retailer's 2010 sales rose 11.7% to an estimated $430 million. More so than perhaps some smaller players, Top 100 companies saw improved access to capital last year and took advantage of some great real estate opportunities to open new stores or move showrooms to better locations. Indeed, the Top 100's growth significantly outpaced the furniture, bedding and accessories sales growth of US furniture stores overall, which posted a 2.4% increase last year to $42.4 billion. (The US furniture stores' performance was still a vast improvement from their 10.7% decrease in 2009.)

The Top 100's share of all furniture store FBA sales, meanwhile, jumped two percentage points to 62%. It also was four percentage points higher than the 58% share held by the Top 100 companies on last year's list. A solid 71 retailers on this year's list posted sales increases compared with just 18 on last year's list, and only 25 stores saw decreases compared with 80 on the Top 100 a year ago.

Although this year's Top 100 lost a handful of showrooms during 2010, the results were skewed by big losses at a few players, including No. 67 *Jennifer Convertibles*, which trimmed 70 stores, the largest cut among the Top 100, as it consolidated under bankruptcy

protection. Thirty-seven companies added stores this past year, most of them growing cautiously by one or two units while 26 companies cut stores. That's fairly comparable to the 35 increases and 29 cuts for last year's Top 100, but the size of the cuts was nowhere near as extensive with this year's group.

Another sign that things appear to be improving: The cutoff for making the Top 100 went up instead of down this year to $38.4 million in sales for No. 100 *Gardiners Furniture* from $35.2 million for *Verlo Mattress* on the previous list. *Ashley Furniture Home-Stores* continued its reign of sales supremacy, topping the list for the fifth consecutive year with sales up 12.4% to $2.39 billion. The combined HomeStores, licensed and corporate owned sported the greatest increase in net sales (up by $264 million) and opened the second greatest number of stores (a net 21for a total of 422 units at the end of the year).

Ashley's strength was apparent in the results of many of its licensees on the list, including No. 62 *Regency Furniture* of Brandywine, Md., which had the second best percentage sales increase in the Top 100, up 26.2% to $82 million. *Regency* operates both *Regency Furniture* stores and HomeStores.

Broad River Furniture of Charlotte, N.C., a Home-Stores licensee and No. 86 on the Top 100, had the ninth greatest increase, up 17.1% to $50.7 million. No. 37 *Hill Country Holdings*, with HomeStores in Texas and Washington, had the fourth greatest increase in units, adding a net six stores for a total of 21 at year's end. And No. 69 The *Spencer Group*, a Saltillo, Miss.-based retailer operating HomeStores and Stash stores, tied with No. 97 *Pilgrim Furniture City* and No. 92 *Miskelly Furniture* for the greatest percentage gain in store count, up 50% among the Top 100. Furniture Today adjusts combined sales and store count information to avoid double counting of figures in cases such as *Ashley's*, where both dedicated networks and smaller licensees make the list. As it did in 2009, the combined Top 10 on the list outperformed the Top 100 as a whole, growing sales 7.2% to $12.7 billion while holding their store count at a steady 3,353 units. No. 4 *Williams-Sonoma* switched spots with No. 5 *Berkshire Hathaway* furniture division. And No. 9 *Sleepy's* jumped ahead of No. 10 *La-Z-Boy Furniture Galleries*.

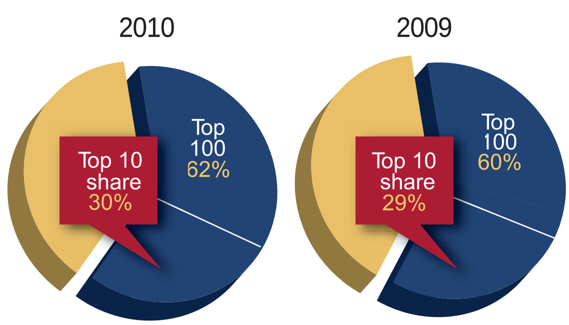
Growth in sales and units, 2009-2010

Sales in billions			Units		
2010	2009	% chg	2010	2009	% chg
All Top 100					
$26.4	$25.0	5.7%	8,536	8,543	-0.1%
Top 10					
$12.7	$11.9	7.2%	3,353	3,353	0.0%
Top 100 conventional furniture stores					
$16.5	$15.7	4.6%	3,032	3,003	1.0%
Top 100 specialty stores					
$10.0	$9.3	7.4%	5,504	5,540	-0.6%

Sales of furniture, bedding and accessories

Source: Furniture/Today's Survey of Top 100 U.S. Furniture Stores

Share of furniture store sales
of furniture, bedding & accessories



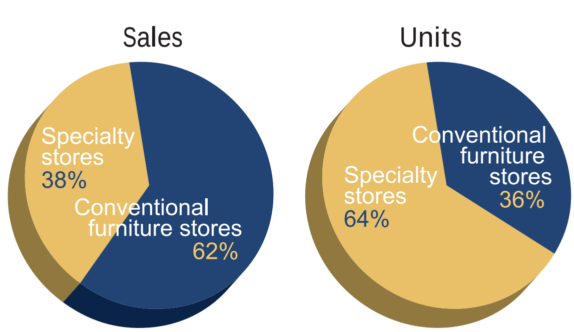
Estimated furniture, bedding and accessory sales through furniture stores in the U.S. were $42.4 billion in 2010, up 2.4% from $41.4 billion in 2009.

Total U.S. furniture store sales from all product categories were $47.7 billion in 2010 and $46.6 billion in 2009. The 2009 sales figure was revised from $48.3 billion in last year's report.

Year-to-year comparisons are made to the same group of Top 100 companies ranked in both years.

Source: Furniture/Today's market research based on data from the U.S. Dept. of Commerce.

Share of total Top 100, 2010
of furniture, bedding & accessories



Sales of furniture, bedding and accessories

Source: Furniture/Today's Survey of Top 100 U.S. Furniture Stores

No. 31 *Room & Board* of Minneapolis had the greatest percentage sales increase, up 30.5% in 2010 to $227 million, followed by *Regency* and then No. 97 *Pilgrim Furniture City*, a newcomer to the ranking with sales up 24.9% to $39.6 million. *Ashley* garnered the greatest net dollar volume growth but other strong performers included No. 4 *Williams-Sonoma*, which grew furniture, bedding & accessories sales by $185 million, No. 2 *Ikea*, up by $120 million, and No. 14 *Mattress Firm*, up $96.3 million.

Houston-based *Mattress Firm* left all comers in the dust with the greatest net increase in store count, adding 117 stores for a total of 677 units at the end of the year. The growth was due largely to its entry into *Wisconsin* through a new franchise arrangement and the acquisition of Mattress Discounters stores in Virginia and North Carolina. Including Southington, Conn.-based *Pilgrim Furniture City*, there are four newcomers to the Top 100 this year. Capturing the highest ranking is No. 72 *The Chair King/Fortunoff Backyard Store*, the Houston-based casual and outdoor specialist.

Chair King/Fortunoff Backyard leaped from its Texas home to the Northeast in September 2009 with its purchase of controlling interest in a company that owns licensing rights to the *Fortunoff* brands for outdoor furniture and seasonal goods. *Chair King* and former *Fortunoff* executives reopened seven Backyard Stores in February 2010 in New York and New Jersey, then opened three more this February. No. 91 *Turner Furniture Holding Corp.* is new to the list with estimated furniture, bedding and accessories sales of $47 million at 11 *Ashley Furniture* HomeStores in Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi and North Carolina and two *Russell Turner's Weekend Furniture Bargain Stores* in Tallahassee, Fla., and Thomasville Ga.

No. 93 *Mealey's Furniture* joins the list for the first time with furniture, bedding and accessories sales up 8.8% to $45.6 million. The Warminster, Pa.-based company has five midpriced Philadelphia-area stores and plans to open its sixth in Berwyn, Pa., this fall. Four new companies means four retailers dropped out of the ranking, including Hendricks Furniture Group. The Conover, N.C.-based high-end discount retailer filed for Chapter 11 in June 2009, emerged as a scaled down company, but wound up liquidating the remaining stores this year. Others not making the cut this year are *Green Front Furniture*, *Johnny Janosik*, and *Verlo Mattress Factory Stores*.

In addition, there are three Top 100 companies on this year's list that are going or have gone out of business and won't be back next year, led by No. 41 *Robb & Stucky*. The 19-store upscale chain, with stores in home state of Florida and also Texas, Arizona and Nevada, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in February. The retailer tried to bring new money in to survive as a smaller company, but the court approved total liquidation less than a month after the filing.

No. 54 *Lack's* of Victoria, Texas, won't be back either. The promotional, credit-oriented chain surprised many when it filed for Chapter 11in November, saying its lenders were abruptly pulling out, and began liquidating stores almost immediately. No. 79 *Roomful Express* of Pittsburgh also called it quits near the end of last year when it was placed in receivership after defaulting on several loans. The company operated 11 *Roomful Express* stores and two *Ashley Furniture* HomeStores serving western Pennsylvania, eastern Ohio and northern West Virginia. Excluding newcomer *The Chair King/Fortunoff Backyard Store*, No. 43 *Arhaus Furniture* jumped the furthest in the ranking, climbing 12 positions by growing sales 20.4% to an estimated $130 million from a revised $108 million in 2009. The Walton Hills, Ohio-based upper-midpriced to high-end retailer added two stores last year for a total of 36 showrooms, including its first in New Jersey. It has been busy this year, too, having opened stores in North Bethesda, Md., in February and in New York in April.

Regency Furniture jumped 11 spots to No. 62, while No. 74 *Morris Furniture* and No. 59 *Gardner-White* were the next biggest jumpers, each moving up seven spots. Earlier this year the Dayton, Ohio-based *Morris* completed the opening of its *Morris Home Center* in Cincinnati, a 144,000-square-foot complex featuring an *Ashley Home-Store*, *Morris Home Furnishings*, *Better Sleep Shop*, *The Home Theater Store* at *Morris* and *The Morris Outlet*.

Lurking in the shadow of Art Van, the Warren, Mich.-based *Gardner-White* continued to post impressive numbers with sales up 15.6% last year to an estimated $89 million. The impressive part is that this is entirely a samestore sales increase. Median sales per square foot for the Top 100 was $210 based on 45 companies reporting, a number that continues a multi-year slide, even though total sales volume rose this year. This performance measure is down from $218 for last year's group of Top 100 stores, which was down from $233 the year before and $276 three years ago.

The sales-per-square-foot champions are perennial leaders in the performance measure. This year No. 16 *Select Comfort* took the top spot from No. 58 *Gallery Furniture* with sales per square foot of $873. But *Gallery* wasn't far behind at $854, and No. 3 *Rooms To Go* was also third in sales per square feet at $750.

Select Comfort scored a triple in key performance categories, also coming out as the leader in average stock turns (13.6 times) and average gross margin(62.5%). No. 71 *The RoomStore of Phoenix*, the previous leader in stock turns, had the second best turns of 12.5 times, while No. 53 *Bernie & Phyl's Furniture* was next best at 10.5 turns. Newcomer *Pilgrim Furniture City* scored fourth highest, turning inventory 9.5 times. Median stock turns for the Top 100, with 22 companies reporting, was five times, the same as in the past two years. *Median* gross margin was up one percentage point from the previous Top 100 group to 47%, based on 22 estimates. Behind *Select Comfort* was No. 8 *Pier 1Imports* at 58.5%, followed by *La-Z-Boy Furniture Galleries* licensee *EBCO of Phoenix* at 52.2% and *Havertys* at 51.4%.

Specialists' 7.4% gain tops conventional stores' 4.6%

Specialty stores manage increase even though they trimmed units

Specialty stores outperformed their conventional counterparts and the Top 100 as a whole this past year, posting a larger sales increase despite losing some stores. Furniture, bedding and accessories sales for the 23 specialty stores on the list jumped 7.4% last year to $9.96 billion, besting the 77 conventional stores' 4.6% gain to $16.46 billion, and also the 5.7% increase of the combined Top 100.

While the number of specialty retailers on the list remained the same as the number on last year's list, the group continued the trend of losing stores — dropping 36 units to 5,504 stores at year end, or down 0.6%. Both the greatest increase in stores (117 stores at No. 14 *Mattress Firm*) and the greatest decrease (70 stores at No. 67 *Jennifer Convertibles*) belonged to the specialists.

Indeed, all but one of the double-digit declines in store count (No. 12 *Ethan Allen's* 14-store decrease to 215 stores) came from the specialty retailers. The conventional furniture stores on the list, meanwhile, grew sales at a slower pace while their combined store count actually increased by 29 units, or 1%, to 3,032 showrooms. Sales for both segments were much improved over the poor results for the companies on last year's Top 100. Total sales for the specialists were up nearly 8% from the $9.22 billion for specialists on the previous list, while total sales for the conventional stores were up 4.2% from the $15.8 billion for the previous Top 100 conventional stores.

Unlike last year's Top 100, in which the bedding specialists atypically dropped the ball and underperformed, this year's Top 100 bedding specialist found their footing again and grew both sales and units. But their 8.9% sales gain was not as stellar as the 9.2% increase to $6.27 billion for the lifestyle specialty stores on the list. The lifestyle specialists grew despite a 2% or 46-store decrease in lifestyle showrooms, largely because of the 19-store decline at No. 73 *Design Within Reach* and the 17-store drop at No. 4 *Williams-Sonoma*.

Lifestyle specialist No. 31*Room & Board* led all Top 100 companies with the greatest percentage gain in sales, up 30.5% to $227 million. No. 43 *Arhaus* had the next best percentage gain among the specialists, up 20.4% to $130 million, while *Williams-Sonoma* wasn't far behind despite trimming its store count — growing furniture, bedding and accessories sales 17.4% to an estimated $1.25 billion. *Williams-Sonoma* also enjoyed the greatest net dollar volume gain among specialists, growing sales by $185 million, followed by No. 2 *Ikea*, which grew its US furniture, bedding and accessories business by an estimated $120 million. No. 73 *Design Within Reach* was the only lifestyle specialist to post a sales decline, dipping $13 million from previous year to $68 million.

The living room specialists — a three-company group comprising No. 10 *La-Z-Boy Furniture Galleries*, *Jennifer Convertibles* and No. 89 *La-Z-Boy licensee EBCO* — was the only specialty subgroup with a sales decline. Sales of the trio dipped by a combined 7.9% to $815.6 million, and store count was down for both *Jennifer*

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Convertibles and *La-Z-Boy*. But it was Jennifer that did most of the damage. Woodbury, N.Y.-based retailer consolidated under bankruptcy protection, cutting its store count by 42% as sales decreased 33.3% to $76 million.

No. 1 *Ashley Furniture Home-Stores* once again was a driving force for the conventional stores as its $264 million net sales gain to $2.39 billion led all Top 100 companies. Other standouts included No. 62 *Regency Furniture*, the full-line and HomeStores dealer in greater Washington, D.C., which grew sales by 26.2% last year to an estimated $82 million; and newcomer *Pilgrim Furniture City*, No. 97 on the Top 100 with a 24.9% gain to $39.6 million. No. 56 *Jerome's* of San Diego was another conventional retailer with an exceptional year as it grew sales 20.8% to $95.5 million and upped its store count by two showrooms to eight by the end of the year.

The biggest declines among the conventional stores came from two companies that will not be on the list next year. No. 41 *Robb & Stucky* had an estimated 30.3% decrease in sales to $140 million and ultimately filed for bankruptcy and liquidated this year. No. 79 *Roomful Express Furniture* started a total liquidation in greater Pittsburgh late last year. Sales for the 13-store retailer declined 20.1% to an estimated $63 million.

The conventional retailer with the greatest net volume growth behind was fast growing *Bob's Discount Furniture*. No. 15 on the Top 100, the Manchester, Conn.-based retailer added five stores and grew sales by $75.7 million to an estimated $584.6 million.

The greatest net volume decline among conventional stores, behind the $61 million decline at *Robb & Stucky*, came from No. 21 *Badcock Home Furniture* & more, which was down $37.5 million to $314.9 million in furniture, bedding and accessories sales. Like last year, the specialty stores outperformed their conventional counterparts in two of three other performance measures. Though only a handful reported average sales per square feet, the median for the specialists was $290 vs. $201for the conventional stores reporting the information. The median gross margin was

Top 10 conventional furniture stores

Ranked by sales of furniture, bedding and accessories

		Estimated furniture, bedding, accessory sales in $ millions		Percent change	Number of units	
Rank	Company	2010	2009	2009 to 2010	2010	2009
1	Ashley Furniture HomeStores	$2,394.0	$2,130.0	12.4%	422	401
3	Rooms To Go	$1,410.0	$1,350.0	4.4%	123	120
5	Berkshire Hathaway furniture division	$1,145.7	$1,097.6	4.4%	32	32
6	American Signature	$1,013.9	$964.8	5.1%	128	128
7	Raymour & Flanigan	$972.3	$942.6	3.2%	96	92
12	Ethan Allen	$657.2	$586.6	12.0%	215	229
13	Havertys	$620.3	$588.3	5.5%	118	121
15	Bob's Discount Furniture	$584.6	$508.9	14.9%	40	35
17	Art Van	$430.0	$385.0	11.7%	36	32
18	Slumberland	$370.1	$348.2	6.3%	117	118

Source: Furniture/Today's Survey of Top 100 U.S. Furniture Stores

Top 10 specialty stores

Ranked by sales of furniture, bedding and accessories

		Estimated furniture, bedding, accessory sales in $ millions		Percent change	Number of units	
Rank	Company	2010	2009	2009 to 2010	2010	2009
2	Ikea	$2,095.0	$1,975.0	6.1%	37	37
4	Williams-Sonoma	$1,250.0	$1,065.0	17.4%	576	593
8	Pier 1 Imports	$937.4	$875.0	7.1%	967	973
9	Sleepy's	$765.0	$700.0	9.3%	694	696
10	La-Z-Boy Furniture Galleries	$739.6	$772.0	-4.2%	278	281
11	Crate & Barrel	$717.6	$634.8	13.0%	174	174
14	Mattress Firm	$597.3	$501.0	19.2%	677	560
16	Select Comfort	$546.7	$478.6	14.2%	386	403
22	The Sleep Train	$313.4	$297.7	5.3%	231	231
23	Cost Plus World Market	$310.0	$305.0	1.6%	263	268

Source: Furniture/Today's Survey of Top 100 U.S. Furniture Stores

52% for the five specialists reporting, compared with 46% for the 17 conventional stores reporting. Median stock turns were the same for both groups at five times.

Bedding specialists' sales increase 8.9%

The 8 specialists on this year's Top 100 pivoted back to their winning ways after an awful 2009

The companies, down one in ranks this year without *Verlo Mattress Factory Stores*, which fell off the Top 100 — combined for an 8.9% sales increase to $2.8 billion. They also added more stores than any other subcategory in the Top 100 — 76 units for a total of 2,829 — but they owe it almost entirely to No. 14 *Mattress Firm*, which grew by 117 stores. Conventional furniture stores on the Top 100 were the only other subcategory to post an increase in store count.

Single-source networks' sales top $5 billion

While Ashley Furniture HomeStores still dominated the singlesource store networks several other brands rebounded last year

The seven dedicated store networks on this year's list grew sales 7.4% to $5.11 billion in 2010 from $4.76 billion for the same stores in 2009. This year's list didn't include *Verlo Mattress Factory Stores*, which was No. 100 on the previous Top 100 and didn't make the cutoff this time. Combined, the store networks grew their share of furniture, bedding and accessories sales at all US furniture stores by one percentage point, to 12%. Single-source store networks are a mix of company-owned, licensed and, in some years, franchised stores, dedicated to a single home furnishings brand and operating under a single retail banner. For the Top 100 a year ago, *Ashley's HomeStores* was the only network that managed to grow sales and store count, but it wasn't enough to save the group of then-eight dedicated networks from disastrous combined result with sales down 11.3% in 2009 from the year before. 2010 was another story. While *Ashley* was still the only network growing its store count in 2010, four of the brands grew sales and three by double digits. Bedding specialist No. 16 *Select Comfort* led the group with a 14.2% increase to $546.7 million despite cutting its store count by a net 17 units to 386 stores.

Ashley Furniture Home-Stores posted the next best increase, up 12.4% to $2.39 billion, but No. 12 *Ethan Allen* wasn't far behind, growing 12% to $657.2 million. Growing at a clip closer to the Top 100 as a whole was No. 28 *America's Mattress.* Sales for the *Hoffman Estates*, Ill.-based bedding chain grew 5.2% to $249 million.

The four sales increases compare to four double-digit decreases for single-source networks on last year's Top 100. *Ashley's* $264 million net dollar volume gain this past year led all Top 100 companies. Five of the single-source networks trimmed their store counts in 2010 — ranging from three-store drops for No. 10 *La-Z-Boy Furniture Galleries* and No. 27 *Bassett Home Furnishings* to the 17-store decrease for *Select Comfort*.

All told, the single-source networks lost 24 stores, ending the year with 1,893 units. *Bassett Home Furnishings* posted the biggest percentage sales decrease (down 6.9% to an estimated $277.4 million) while *La-Z-Boy Furniture Galleries* had the largest net volume decrease (down $32.4 million to $739.6 million).

Many Top 100 stores stay on expansion track

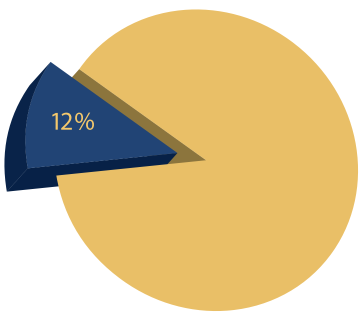
After two painful years, many Top 100 retailers found the bottom and started rebuilding in 2010

This year is shaping up to reflect a continuation of that trend if not movement at a faster clip. Nearly 40 Top 100 companies have opened or said they'll open new stores this year and next year. That's the same number as last year, when, sure enough, 37 retailers on the previous Top 100 did just that, as per latest numbers; growth plans seem to be coming from all directions.

Top 100 single-source networks

Growth in sales and units, 2009-2010

Share of furniture store sales, 2010



The top single-source networks accounted for 12% of total sales of furniture, bedding and accessories in furniture stores in 2010.

Total furniture store sales for all product categories in 2010 was $47.7 billion; of that, an estimated $42.4 billion was for furniture, bedding and accessories.

Source: Furniture/Today's market research based on data from the U.S. Dept. of Commerce.

Some dedicated-store dealers on the Top 100 have indicated that they are toying with expansion into other formats. A couple of primarily full-line retailers are moving into the bedding specialty shop arena. Some continue to pick up the pieces of fallen retailers or are expanding their reach and market share in other ways.

Here are a few of the highlights:

- Sleep shops are hot. The first *Art Van PureSleep* opened in Canton, Mich., in July 2009. Since then the retailer has added three more, including the Brighton, Mich., store and incorporated *PureSleep* concept in all full-line stores.
- No. 35 *HOM Furniture* was among retailers opening a version of a low-frills weekendsonly format last year with its *Dock 86*. The *Coon Rapids*, Minn.-based company is following this year with plans to open as many as six *HOM Sleep Express* stores over the next 12 months.
- Established bedding chains are growing, too. No. 9 *Sleepy's*, which was relatively quiet on the expansion front last year and actually closed a net two stores, will resume expansion this year and in a big way.
- No. 54 *Lack's Stores* is gone but its stores live on. At least three Top 100 companies have snapped up *Lack's* locations after the Victoria, Texas-based retailer filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in November and subsequently liquidated. No. 3 *Seffner*, Fla.-based *Rooms To Go* took the *Lack's* stores in Corpus Christi and Midland, Texas, and said it could eventually pick up two or three more. No. 19 *RoomStore* of Richmond, Va., acquired the leases on the two *Lack's* in San Antonio and opened them in March, while *Lacks Valley Stores,* the Pharr, Texas retailer unrelated to *Lack's Stores* - just reopened the *Alice*, Texas, location.
- No. 13 *Havertys* is taking possession of a 48,000-squarefoot store in Boca Raton, Fla., that No. 78 Carls is liquidating, and No. 49 *Baer's* is taking Carls' 38,000-square-foot store in Kendall, Fla.
- Dedicated store dealers are moving beyond the format. Last year, No. 69 *The Spencer Group* not only expanded its *Ashley Furniture HomeStores* business but opened two new concept *Stash* stores, in Memphis, Tenn., and Oxford, Miss., selling eclectic and name brand goods at medium to upper price points and promoting high-style at bargain prices. This year, HomeStores licensee No. 86 *Broad River Furniture* of Charlotte, N.C., plans to make a similar move.
- No. 89 *EBCO*, a Phoenixbased *La-Z-Boy Furniture Galleries* licensee, plans to open a store in Glendale, Ariz., that focuses on the bedroom and dining room categories.
- No. 77 C.S. *Wo & Sons* of Honolulu will go the other way with plans to convert its two *Rooms Hawaii* stores to *Ashley Furniture HomeStores*.
- No. 15 *Bob's Discount Furniture* is expanding into new territory. The Manchester, Conn.-based retailer, which has steadily expanded and increased sales even during the worst of the recession, opened a 672,000-square-foot distribution center in Perryman, Md., last year and will begin expanding into metro Washington, D.C.
- No. 30 *Mor Furniture for Less* got aggressive last year with the opening of four stores — two in Portland, Ore., and one each in greater San Diego and Mesa, Ariz. - which helped push its sales up 8.4% to an estimated $230.9 million in 2010.
- After filing for bankruptcy protection in 2009 and paring its operations back significantly, *Z Gallerie* moved back onto a growth path in 2010. This year the lifestyle specialty chain plans to step up with five new stores.

Top 100 U.S. Furniture Stores

Rank (last year)	Company, home base and notes	Estimated furniture, bedding, accessory sales in $ millions 2010	2009	Percent change 2009 to 2010	Number of units 2010	2009	Selling space all stores sq. ft. 1000s	Furniture, bedding, accessories percent of selling space	average sales per sq. ft.
1	Ashley Furniture HomeStores	$2,394.0	$2,130.0	12.4%	422	401	NA	100%	NA
2	Ikea	$2,095.0	$1,975.0	6.1%	37	37	NA	NA	NA
3	Rooms To Go	$1,410.0	$1,350.0	4.4%	123	120	NA	100%	$750
4	Williams-Sonoma	$1,250.0	$1,065.0	17.4%	576	593	3,609	NA	NA
5	Berkshire Hathaway furniture division	$1,145.7	$1,097.6	4.4%	32	32	NA	NA	NA
6	American Signature	$1,013.9	$964.8	5.1%	128	128	NA	100%	NA
7	Raymour & Flanigan	$972.3	$942.6	3.2%	96	92	NA	100%	NA
8	Pier 1 Imports	$937.4	$875.0	7.1%	967	973	7,610	NA	$166
9	Sleepy's	$765.0	$700.0	9.3%	694	696	3,400	100%	$225
10	La-Z-Boy Furniture Galleries	$739.6	$772.0	-4.2%	278	281	4,119	100%	$180
11	Crate & Barrel	$717.6	$634.8	13.0%	174	174	NA	NA	NA
12	Ethan Allen	$657.2	$586.6	12.0%	215	229	3,440	NA	NA
13	Havertys	$620.3	$588.3	5.5%	118	121	4,230	100%	$148
14	Mattress Firm	$597.3	$501.0	19.2%	677	560	NA	100%	NA
15	Bob's Discount Furniture	$584.6	$508.9	14.9%	40	35	NA	100%	NA
16	Select Comfort	$546.7	$478.6	14.2%	386	403	582	100%	$873
17	Art Van	$430.0	$385.0	11.7%	36	32	NA	100%	NA
18	Slumberland	$370.1	$348.2	6.3%	117	118	NA	100%	NA
19	RoomStore	$329.5	$323.1	2.0%	146	145	NA	100%	NA
20	Mathis Brothers	$320.7	$317.5	1.0%	8	9	663	100%	$490
21	Badcock Home Furniture & more	$314.9	$352.4	-10.6%	315	318	5,258	NA	$73
22	The Sleep Train	$313.4	$297.7	5.3%	231	231	NA	100%	NA
23	Cost Plus World Market	$310.0	$305.0	1.6%	263	268	NA	NA	NA
24	American Furniture Warehouse	$300.0	$297.0	1.0%	11	12	1,300	100%	$230
25	Restoration Hardware	$292.0	$290.0	0.7%	104	107	NA	NA	NA
26	Haynes Furniture	$285.0	$245.0	16.3%	15	13	1,400	NA	NA
27	Bassett Home Furnishings	$277.4	$297.8	-6.9%	99	102	NA	100%	NA
28	America's Mattress	$249.0	$236.7	5.2%	385	385	NA	100%	NA
29	Thomasville Home Furnishings Stores	$248.0	$260.0	-4.6%	108	116	NA	100%	NA
30	Mor Furniture for Less	$230.9	$213.0	8.4%	20	16	NA	100%	NA
31	Room & Board	$227.0	$174.0	30.5%	12	11	360	100%	$631

32	City Furniture	$216.7	$207.7	4.3%	24	24	1,073	100%	$202
33	Mattress Giant	$205.0	$230.0	-10.9%	360	360	NA	100%	NA
34	Macy's Furniture Gallery	$195.0	$188.0	3.7%	67	67	NA	100%	NA
35	HOM Furniture	$193.4	$183.5	5.4%	15	14	NA	100%	NA
36	Farmers Home Furniture	$170.0	$159.5	6.6%	168	165	NA	NA	NA
37	Hill Country Holdings	$167.7	$146.6	14.4%	21	15	752	100%	$225
38	Living Spaces	$164.0	$145.0	13.1%	7	5	NA	100%	NA
39	The RoomPlace	$160.0	$180.0	-11.1%	23	23	NA	100%	NA
40	Levin Furniture	$145.9	$151.2	-3.5%	14	13	845	100%	NA
41	Robb & Stucky	$140.0	$201.0	-30.3%	19	20	NA	100%	NA
42	El Dorado Furniture	$131.5	$126.1	4.2%	12	11	826	100%	$158
43	Arhaus Furniture	$130.0	$108.0	20.4%	36	34	NA	100%	NA
44	ABC Carpet & Home	$125.0	$120.0	4.2%	4	4	NA	NA	NA
45	Furnitureland South	$123.5	$123.0	0.4%	2	2	1,220	100%	$101
46	Z Gallerie	$121.0	$115.0	5.2%	55	54	NA	NA	NA
47	Kane's Furniture	$120.0	$132.0	-9.1%	17	17	1,000	100%	$120
48	Big Sandy Superstore	$112.0	$121.0	-7.4%	24	26	835	NA	NA
49	Baer's	$111.0	$98.3	13.0%	14	14	NA	100%	NA
50	Furniture Outlets USA	$110.9	$105.0	5.6%	31	28	NA	NA	NA
51	FAMSA	$110.2	$108.1	1.9%	51	53	1,324	NA	NA
52	Grand Home Furnishings	$105.6	$100.7	4.9%	17	17	NA	100%	NA
53	Bernie & Phyl's Furniture	$103.4	$96.7	6.9%	7	6	317	100%	$330
54	Lack's	$100.0	$101.0	-1.0%	36	36	NA	NA	NA
55	Steinhafels	$99.1	$93.6	5.9%	14	12	495	100%	$200
56	Jerome's	$95.5	$79.1	20.8%	8	6	427	100%	$212
57	Stickley, Audi & Co.	$94.0	$92.3	1.8%	14	15	368	100%	$255
58	Gallery Furniture	$91.5	$95.0	-3.7%	2	2	112	NA	$854
59	Gardner-White	$89.0	$77.0	15.6%	7	7	225	100%	$395
60	Walter E. Smithe Furniture	$85.4	$85.0	0.5%	11	13	NA	100%	NA
61	Sit 'n Sleep	$82.8	$79.9	3.7%	24	22	286	100%	$290
62	Regency Furniture	$82.0	$65.0	26.2%	12	9	600	100%	$137
63	Lacks Valley Stores	$79.7	$77.1	3.3%	11	10	NA	NA	NA
64	Darvin Furniture	$78.0	$70.0	11.4%	2	2	120	100%	$642
65	Wolf Furniture	$76.7	$76.7	0.0%	12	11	518	NA	NA
66	JCPenney Home Store	$76.0	$78.0	-2.6%	31	30	NA	NA	NA
67	Jennifer Convertibles	$76.0	$114.0	-33.3%	95	165	NA	100%	NA
68	Crest Furniture	$75.5	$68.4	10.4%	12	11	NA	100%	NA

69	The Spencer Group	$73.8	$64.2	15.1%	12	8	375	100%	$210
70	Kittle's	$73.2	$63.6	15.1%	14	14	582	100%	$122
71	The RoomStore	$72.1	$76.3	-5.5%	11	11	360	100%	$200
72	The Chair King/ Fortunoff Backyard Store	$70.0	NA	NA	25	18	NA	100%	NA
73	Design Within Reach	$68.0	$81.0	-16.0%	49	68	NA	100%	NA
74	Morris Furniture	$67.0	$60.0	11.7%	14	13	480	96%	$165
75	Sam Levitz Furniture	$66.9	$63.3	5.7%	5	5	250	100%	$268
76	Schewel Furniture	$66.0	$66.0	0.0%	52	52	1,000	90%	$80
77	C.S. Wo & Sons	$63.0	$63.0	0.0%	16	16	275	100%	$230
78	Carls	$63.0	$74.0	-14.9%	9	9	NA	100%	NA
79	Roomful Express Furniture	$63.0	$78.9	-20.1%	13	13	NA	100%	NA
80	Louis Shanks of Texas	$62.3	$63.4	-1.8%	4	4	NA	NA	NA
81	Linder's Furniture	$60.1	$63.9	-5.9%	11	10	NA	NA	NA
82	Hudson's	$58.0	$57.0	1.8%	18	18	NA	100%	NA
83	Furniture Factory Outlet	$57.0	$51.0	11.8%	29	27	NA	100%	NA
84	Home Furniture	$56.5	$62.3	-9.3%	8	8	208	100%	$270
85	Easy Life Furniture	$55.0	$58.0	-5.2%	19	19	NA	100%	NA
86	Broad River Furniture	$50.7	$43.3	17.1%	12	11	375	100%	$135
87	Kimbrell's	$50.4	$46.9	7.4%	54	54	NA	NA	NA
88	Conlin's Furniture	$49.0	$47.0	4.3%	18	17	NA	100%	NA
89	EBCO	$48.8	$51.4	-5.0%	9	9	130	100%	$375
90	Weekends Only Furniture Outlet	$47.9	$45.6	5.1%	4	5	185	100%	$259
91	Turner Furniture Holding Corp.	$47.0	$42.3	11.2%	13	13	415	100%	$120
92	Miskelly Furniture	$46.7	$45.7	2.1%	6	4	208	100%	$225
93	Mealey's Furniture	$45.6	$41.9	8.8%	5	5	249	100%	$190
94	Walker Furniture	$45.4	$40.6	11.8%	25	25	261	100%	$174
95	Belfort Furniture	$44.3	$37.4	18.4%	5	5	105	100%	$422
96	KHF Holdings	$44.0	$40.0	10.0%	4	5	180	100%	$245
97	Pilgrim Furniture City	$39.6	$31.7	24.9%	3	2	210	100%	$188
98	Marlo Furniture	$39.1	$45.4	-13.8%	4	5	320	100%	$122
99	Bedding Experts	$39.0	$44.8	-12.9%	72	96	NA	100%	NA
100	Gardiners Furniture	$38.4	$37.2	3.1%	5	5	220	100%	$175

Note: All sales information, except for that supplied by publicly held companies that break out furniture sales, are Furniture/Today market research estimates. In cases where companies have identical sales of furniture, bedding and accessories, the one with the fastest sales growth is ranked first. In the notes, stock turns and average gross margin are for furniture, bedding and decorative accessories, including lamps and area rugs. Estimated sales for manufacturer gallery store networks reflect their dedicated-store sales only and exclude sales from in-store galleries. All data for calendar 2010 and 2009 unless otherwise noted. Average unit size in notes refers to selling space. NR = Not ranked NA = Not available/not applicable.

This column is compiled by Consultant [EXIM Policy] of EPCH. It contains recent Public Notices, Notifications and Circulars of DGFT, CBEC and Department of Revenue. If a handicraft exporter has question[s] to ask on Foreign Trade Policy, he/she may please write / e-mail to EPCH at policy@epch.com

Impex # 1

DEPB Scheme extended upto 30-09-11

DGFT issues Public Notice to extend the DEPB Scheme till 30-09-11

DEPB Scheme is quite a popular scheme of DGFT at present. It was introduced in 1997 and became very popular soon on account of very high rates of DEPB (more than 20% in many cases) compared to low rates of duty drawback (less than 10% in most cases). Added advantage was that CENVAT credit could also be availed in addition to DEPB.

This was not possible in case of exports under duty drawback. Another advantage under DEPB was that when the custom duty was paid from DEPB payment of SAD of 4% was also not required to be paid.

All the advantage of DEPB Scheme enumerated above, made the DEPB Scheme much popular than duty drawback scheme. For some years the Ministry of Finance had been insisting upon the Ministry of Commerce to discontinue the DEPB Scheme on the ground that DEPB Scheme was incompatible as per WTO norms & that the DEPB scheme conferred under advantage to some sectors of exports like engineering, chemicals and automobiles.

The Ministry of Commerce took the stand that DEPB could be discontinued as soon as a new equally beneficial scheme was formulated for which the Ministry of Commerce was on the job. However, even after the best of efforts of Ministry of Commerce for a long period no alternative scheme could be finalized. Finding that if the things continued the way as detailed above, the DEPB could not be ended in the near future, the Ministry of Finance announced unilaterally last year that the DEPB Scheme could end on 30.06.11.

The announcement of discontinuation of DEPB on 30.06.11 by the Ministry of Finance was opposed by exporters and their organization. Representations were made by them to the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Commerce & Industry to continue the scheme till an alternative scheme which was equally beneficial was formulated and announced. It was also pleaded that the scheme should be continued till the implementation of the GST Scheme (Goods & Service Tax Scheme). The Ministry of Commerce & Industry & EPCH also wrote to the Ministry of Finance to let the DEPB Scheme continue. Ministry of Finance has not agreed to continue the Scheme indefinitely but agreed to extend it up to 30.09.11.

Now DGFT has issued a Public Notice No. 54 dt 17-06-2011 extending the DEPB Scheme till 30th September, 2011. The extension has been done by making an amendment in para 1.1 of the H.B. of Procedure of Vol. 1 (RE-2010). Extracts from the above Public Notice are given below:

2. The concluding phrase of Para 1.1 of HBP v1 reads "……except DEPB Scheme, which shall continue to be operative till 30th June, 2011". Government has now decided that the DEPB Scheme would continue to remain operative for another 3 months, i.e. till 30.9.2011. Accordingly, the words "till 30th June, 2011" would get replaced with the worlds "till 30th September, 2011".

3. The amended para 1.1 of the Handbook of Procedures, v1 would now read as under:

1.1 "In pursuance of the provisions of paragraph 2.4 of FTP, the Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) hereby notifies the compilation known as HBP v.1, HBP v.2 and Schedule of DEPB rates. These compilations, as amended from time to time, shall remain in force until 31st March, 2014, except DEPB Scheme which shall continue to be operative till 30th September, 2011."

4. Effect of the Public Notice:

DEPB Scheme gets an extension of 3 months from 30.6.2011 to 30.9.2011.

The Department of Revenue has also issued a custom Notification No. 51 dt 22-06-2011 in this regard. Extracts from the above notification are given below:

In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (1) of section 25 of the Custom Act. 1962 (52 of 1962), the Central Government, being satisfied that it is necessary in the public interest so to do, hereby makes the following amendment in the notification of Government of India in the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue), No. 97/2009-Customs, dated the 11th

September, 2009 published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 3, Sub-section (i), vide number G.S.R. 663(E), dated the 11th September, 2009, namely:-

In the said notification, -

(i) For para 2, the following para shall be substituted, namely:-

"2. This notification shall be valid in respect of the Duty Entitlement Pass Book Scrips issued by the Licensing Authority against exports having Let Export Order up to and inclusive of the 30th day of September, 2011"

(ii) after Explanation (iv), the following Explanation shall be inserted, namely:-

"(v) "Let Export Order" means an order which permits clearance and loading of the goods for exportation by the proper officer in accordance with section 51 of the said Customs Act."

Impex # 2

Question - Answer

Q. Is it possible to pay custom duty from Status Holders Incentive Scrip (SHIS) on import of second hand capital goods?

Ans. The objective of this incentive (SHIS) is to promote investment in upgradation of technology and it is quite a debatable point if upgradation of technology can be achieved with second hand capital goods. In any case the word used in para 3.16.3 of FTP of 2009-14 (RE-2010) is 'capital goods' and not capital goods including second hand capital goods.' In the absence of the words 'second hand capital goods' in para 3.16.3 referred to above, it should be taken that custom duty cannot be paid from SHIS on import of second hand capital goods.

Q. Is it possible to pay custom duty from Status Holders Incentive Scrip (SHIS) on import of second hand capital goods imported under EPCG Scheme in terms of provision in para 3.17.5 of FTP (RE-2010) reading as under: "Duty credit Scrips under Chapter 1. 3 of FTP can also be utilized for payment of duty against imports under EPCG Scheme provided the item is important against the scrip?"

Ans. Does not appear to be possible on account of reason given below:

In chapter-3 of FTP incentives are given on a number of schemes as detailed below:

Name of the Schemes	Nomenclature of incentive
Served from India Scheme	Duty Credit Scrip
V.K.G.U.Y. Scheme	Duty Credit Scrip
Focus Market Scheme	Duty Credit Scrip
Focus Product Scheme	Duty Credit Scrip
Market linked Focus Product Scheme	Duty Credit Scrip
Status Holders Incentive Scrip Scheme	Status Holders Incentive Scrip Scheme (SHIS)

From the perusal of the above table it will be seen that the name given to the incentive to the Status Holders is 'Status Holders Incentive Scrip Scheme (SHIS) and not 'Duty Credit Scrip'. Because of its different & distinct nomenclature as SHIS, Custom may refuse to treat it as equivalent to 'Duty Credit Scrip'.

2. Unless specifically provided the words 'capital goods' does not cover second hand capital goods.

Q. Customs is not allowing debit of CIF value in freely convertible currency as the CIF value in rupee has been exhausted.

Ans. Paragraph 9.2.1.1 of Hand Book is clear that no enhancement in rupee value shall be necessary if remittance of foreign exchange is covered by CIF value of authorization shown in freely convertible currency. Therefore, imports should be allowed as per the balance CIF value in freely convertible currency irrespective of the fact as to whether CIF value of imports had exhausted in the said authorization in terms of rupee.

Q. We want to send goods free of cost for product promotion abroad. What is the value, if any, up to which goods can be sent free of cost?

Ans. Exporters are allowed exports of goods free of cost up to 2% of the average annual exports of previous three years subject to a ceiling of Rs. 5 Lakh, whichever is higher. For Status Holders, the limit is up to 2% of the average annual exports of previous three years subject to a ceiling of Rs. 10 Lakh, whichever is higher.

Business Opportunities

VIKINGSTONES U.K., 55, COTTIMORE AVENUE, WALTON/THAMES, SURREY KT12 2AE, **ENGLAND**
Contact : Phil Jackson; Telephone: (44) 1932-222 752
Telefax : (44) 1932-222 752
Email : info@vikingstones.co.uk; URL : www.vikingstones.co.uk;
INTEREST: **Candles Holders**

YONGETEX LTD., 1259 CALEDONIA ROAD, TORONTO, ON M6A 2X6, **CANADA**
Contact : Frank Attardo
Telephone : (1) 416-256-3555; Telefax : (1) 416-256-3998
E-mail : info@yongetex.com; URL : www.yongetex.com
INTEREST: **Linens, Towels & Blankets**

TURTLE KING CORP., TURTLE KING CORP., 3288 EAST VERNON, VERNON, CA 90058, **U.S.A**.
Telephone : (1) 323-583-5882; Telefax : (1) 323-583-5668
E-mail : rogert@turtleking.com
URL : www.turtleking.com
INTEREST: **Giftware & Decorative Home Accessories**

OSCARDO, INC., 14-1145 BELLAMY ROAD NORTH, TORONTO, ON M1H 1H5, **CANADA**
Contact : Eduardo Lulka; Telephone : (1) 416-785-8618; Telefax : (1) 416-785-4531
E-mail : amigo@oscardo.com
URL : www.oscardo.com; INTEREST: **Giftware and Souvenirs**

C. & F. ENTERPRISES, 819 BLUE CRAB ROAD, NEWPORT NEWS, VA 23606, **USA**
Contact : Frank Fang; Telephone : (1) 757-310-6100; Telefax : (1) 757-873-0358
E-mail : sales@cnfei.com; URL : www.cnfei.com
INTEREST: **Antiques, Collections and Art**

OCEANIC ARTS, 12414 WHITTIER BLVD., WHITTIER, CA 90602-1017, **U.S.A.**
Contact : Robert Van Oosting
Telephone : (1) 562-698-6960; Telefax : (1) 562-945-0868
E-mail : oceanicarts@earthlink.net; URL : www.oceanicarts.net
INTEREST: **Giftware and Home Accessories**

The above information is recieved by EPCH from various sources. EPCH does not take responsibility of the creditworthiness or financial standing of these companies.

Orissa to have
Asia's 2nd handloom park

In consideration of the decreasing number of skilled weavers, Orissa government has decided to establish a handloom park in the state's Bargarh district. The new handloom park is being created with an aim to train people from non-weavers community who are willing to learn the art and engage in weaving.

The Sambalpuri Ikat Handloom Park that is being set up at Katapali village of the Barpali block in Bargarh, will be at a distance of around 400 km from the State's capital Bhubaneswar. The Sambalpuri Park would be Asia's second handloom park, next to the one in Kochampalli near Hyderabad in Andhra Pradesh.

It is proposed to set up the handloom park in 25 acres under public-private partnership mode. 10 acres of land has already been acquired for the park which would house 2,000 looms and would provide employment to around 3,000 workers.

Besides imparting training on tie-dye processing, manufacturing and finishing of the goods, the willing persons would also be trained to work on looms, so that the output is in tune with market demands.

With over 35,000 weavers and allied textile workers, Bargarh is Orissa's largest handloom cluster. Artisans at this handloom cluster, which houses 12,500 looms, are involved in weaving napkins, lungis and tie-dye cotton saris. ■

Source : fibre2fashion

Consumer Trends
influence marketers approach

New consumer trends are influencing marketers need to understand & master certain aspects over the next 10 years. The most important trends to impact the consumer market over the next decade and beyond are starting to emerge; they're heavily grounded in technology and predict a consumer that craves relevancy, personalization and a platform to be heard. Savvy marketers need to be poised to meet the demands of this unique new force in the marketplace. Here are some basic things marketers should consider :

- Continually familiarize with new technology.
- Track changes in how consumers are using technology to interact with brands.
- Pay attention to consumer preferences; especially how they are interacting with new technologies across multiple industries and devices.
- Understand the brand's customer base; who they are, how they shop, where (in-store and/or online, via mobile, etc.), what they like and motivations affecting their decision making.
- Anticipating the needs of the customer base will help brands develop products, services and communication methods that fit consumer trends. This is not a new marketing concept, but one rarely put into practice.

Once a plan is in place for keeping up with the technology itself as well as the customer's use of it, here are some considerations for strategic marketing of the future:

Deep and True Integration (Singularity)

The concept of singularity better describes future marketing integration. Already, consumers are piecing together their experiences with a brand, across all channels, to form one continual and cumulative idea of that brand. They'll continue to move in this direction towards one interface, one digital platform for their media needs.

Evolution of Targeting & Segmenting Methods

Similarly, traditional ways of segmenting sets of audiences and the categorization of consumers for marketing will be defused. If social media has taught us anything, it's that everyone wants to be included and counted. Marketers will need to find a different way to speak to audiences - audiences that may not have a defined demographic or socioeconomic makeup.

Data and Measurement as the New Creative

All this being said, the collection, handling and deciphering of consumer data and campaign success data will fundamentally change. Programs that measure campaign performance and traditional sets of data, that are used to segment audiences will have to become more intelligent and sophisticated. New types of data will be important to consider. However, things that cannot be measured in quantifiable terms will most likely become stronger factors in making decisions. The CMO of the future is a cross between a philosopher and a mathematician; a master of logic and a devotee of irrational abstraction.

Staying on top of all the technologies while keeping an eagle eye on how consumers are responding to shifts in the market place is the key to building success well into the future. ■ *Source: business2community*

Macy's goes international

launches shipping services to 91 nations worldwide

The international assortment includes apparel, jewellery and home among others. Product categories exempted from international shipping include cosmetics, fragrances, furniture, mattresses, appliances and some accessories.

Macy's has launched international shipping on its e-commerce site, macys.com, to 91 countries in Africa, Asia, Australia, the Caribbean, Europe, the Middle East, North and South America. With the commencement of overseas shipping, macys.com's international customers will be able to shop a broad assortment of apparel for him, her and the kids, as well as jewellery, home products and more. To offer this frequently requested service for customers, Macy's has partnered with FiftyOne, the leading provider of international e-commerce services and infrastructure to US retailers.

"International shipping will enable Macy's to build upon its existing customer base beyond the United States by exposing our product offerings abroad," said Kent Anderson, president of macys.com. "In 2010, non-US- based shoppers accounted for 36 million visits to macys.com; the prospect of satisfying the demands of this consumer is an exciting business opportunity for us. It also provides Macy's with a global platform on which to build our reputation as a source for great fashion and value."

Macy's, the largest retail brand of Macy's, Inc., delivers fashion and affordable luxury to customers at more than 800 locations in 45 US states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Guam. ■

Source: Macy's

Ethnic themes

forecasted for 2012 fashion accessories

Earthy and floral elements, weaves and tassels, plus ethnic themes are all forecasted for Spring/Summer 2012 accessories, as are other fabulously luxurious, dainty and evolved retro elements. In jewellery, there would be ball beads, bold flowers, charms, chokers, circular metal, dangling geometrics, dripping chains, enamel bracelets, ethnic pendants, glittery, holy crosses, layered necklaces, leather cuffs, multi-finger rings, oversized, rock candy, seaside pendants, shiny crystals, stacked bracelets, stringy, wood and wovens.

In belts bows, chains, corsets, double-sided, elastic and stretch, embellished, inserted buckles, jumbo sashes, knots and ties, large leather, neons, neutrals, oversized obi, pouches, rope cord, statement buckles, super-skinny and tassels are expected to rule.

Headwear would see 70's wide-brim hats, cocktail hats, dramatic, ethnic, fabric headbands, floppy hats, flowers, hair pins, knit, leather, menswear straw, novelty headbands, sailor caps, straw and turbans.

In bags, accordions, backpacks, crossbody slings, day duffle, femme briefcases, metal-framed, mini purses, oversized coin purses, pillbox clutches, punching bags, rolled clutches, slouchy hobos, small flap, soft sack bags, square body bags, totes and wristlets woluld gain favour, while in footwear, 70's sandals, ankle-cuff sandals, ballet flats, block heel, chinoiserie, clogs, cross straps, espadrilles/flat espadrilles, flat sandals, hidden platforms, kitten heels, lace-up, loafers, mid-heel, mixed media, mocs, nautical, open-toe, oxfords, patterned, platform pumps, platform sandals, shoeties, short boots, sport bootie, t-straps, tennis shoes, wedges and western boots would gain popularity.

Gloves would get detailed or fingerless with opera-length. In legwear, there would be ankle socks, coloured, fishnet and lace, knee socks, patterned tights, sheer and stripes. Polka dots, voluminous collars, patterned scarves, lightweight, menswear, fringed and flowers would be most seen in neckwear. ■

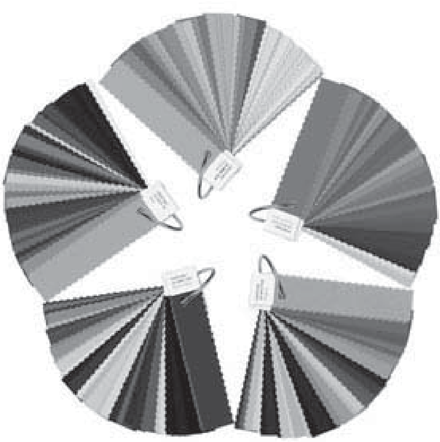
Source: Compiled from various online news sources

Pantone unveils

175 new shades

For the first time in eight years, colour specialist, Pantone LLC has amped up its Pantone Fashion + Home colour system by adding 175 new colours, bringing the total to 2,100 shades.

Its latest additions "reflect today's global colour influences across fashion, home furnishings and interior design [and] enrich the current palette and focus on areas of significant market importance and colour trend movement.



What is key here, is not just picking colours that are trend-right but that these colours are technically achievable and reproducible in the real world for all of the markets for fashion & home furnishings to interior & industrial design.

The 175 new colours are permanent additions to the Pantone Fashion + Home Colour System, and all colour families were expanded to include: a broader range of nuanced neutrals and mid-tones; an increased number of vibrant brights; many complex hues with greater depth and intensity; more subdued and smoky variations of popular colours. ■

Source: Pantone LLC

Eco-fashion retailers

walk a fine line

Clothing and accessory consumers are fickle at the best of times, and trying to nail down their desires in the growing eco-fashion niche is proving especially difficult as the industry moves towards environmental responsibility. On the one hand shoppers (especially young people in mature western markets) are increasingly aware of the environmental and social footprints of fashion and textile production. Consumers tend to be aware of sustainability issues and if they do have to pay for it, they need to know exactly what they are buying, and who they are helping, before they do. If a business says we're giving 10% of our sales to a certain cause, and it's the right cause and its trendy, it will get picked up.

With the fair trade mark, people understand that they're giving back to producers. They don't necessarily understand who's the recipient of that agreement, but it's widely recognized and compared to other labels. With organic, because it's a general word, they gravitate towards it if it's a great product and a great story. Some of the biggest markets for eco textiles and fashion will remain in developed and mature markets for the time being. The market for eco textiles and clothing will continue to grow in western Europe, in particular, in northern Europe (UK, Scandinavia, Benelux [Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg]) but also in southern Europe, such as Italy, and northern America where consumers expect brands to have an active role in the society and have social and environmental objectives besides financial ones. Because of eco textile production, small eco fashion markets may start to bloom in these regions as access becomes greater.

Another important impact will come from European and American retailers expanding into these markets and the buying models they will encourage. They will certainly be able to influence the sensitiveness of these new consumers in respect of sustainable clothing; eco awareness has been rising across Europe, and the trend is predicted to continue.

The drive for organic and sustainable textiles comes from both sides of the industry, with consumer demand driving innovation while education from the producers increases awareness. There is increased consumer awareness and consumer education. That's where a lot of the drive is coming from. When it comes to organic food, consumers already get it. With the garment side of things, it's 'I'm putting something on my body, I'm sleeping on sheets that were covered in pesticides,' and there's a lot of debate about whether it's healthy or not. As producers and retailers educate their consumers, it drives their demand for eco products.

China is an important emerging market to watch for eco-textiles, as well as India which produces a vast amount of the world's organic cotton. But there has been a noticeable shift in the US with some designers actively sourcing 'home-grown' materials. One thing to watch is not making eco-textiles more expensive than their less environmentally friendly counterparts. ■

Source: just-style.com

EPCH's Participation in International Fairs & Exhibitions 2011-12

AUGUST 2011

14-18 August, 2011
New York International Gifts Show
New York, USA
Contact Person : Mr. Vinod Negi
Tel : 91-11-26135256 Extn.: 136
Email : sl@epch.com

26-30 August, 2011
Tendence
Frankfurt, Germany
Contact Person : Mr. Sidharth Tyagi
Tel : 91-11-26135256 Extn.: 127
Email : projects@epch.com

27-30 August, 2011
House & Gift Fair
(Focus LAC), Sao Paulo, Brazil
Contact Person : Mr. Chetan Sharma
Tel : 91-11-26135256 Extn.: 135
Email : seminar@epch.com

SEPTEMBER 2011

4-7 September 2011
International Autumn Fair
Birmingham, UK
Contact Person : Mr. Sushil Agrawal
Tel : 91-11-26135256 Extn.: 110
Email : ihgf@epch.com

September 2011
BSM - Russia (Under Focus CIS),
St. Petersburg & Moscow, Russia
Contact Person : Mrs. Lata Kannojia
Tel : 91-11-26135256 Extn.: 112
Email : maiprojects@epch.com

14-18 September 2011
Intergift, Madrid (Under MAI)
Madrid, Spain
Contact Person : Mrs. Mani Gupta
Tel : 91-11-26135256 Extn.: 117
Email : intlfair@epch.com

19-22 September 2011
Asia's Fashion Jewellery & Accessories Show, Hong Kong
Contact Person : Ms. Ruchika Batra
Tel : 91-11-26135256 Extn.: 107
Email : coordinator@epch.com

20-22 September 2011
INDEXPO, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman
Contact Person : Mrs. Sreekumary
Tel : 91-11-26135256 Extn.: 123
Email : mda@epch.com

OCTOBER 2011

20-23 October 2011
Asian Gifts & Premium and Household Product Show, Hong Kong
Contact Person : Mrs. Lata Kannojia
Tel : 91-11-26135256 Extn.: 112
Email : maiprojects@epch.com

NOVEMBER 2011

November, 2011
BSM - Chile (Focus LAC)
Santiago, Chile
Contact Person : Mr.Sushil Agarwal
Tel : 91-11-26135256 Extn.: 110
Email : ihgf@epch.com

November, 2011
Central Asia Houseware Show
(Focus CIS),
Almaty, Kazakhstan
Contact Person : Mr.Chetan Sharma
Tel : 91-11-26135256 Extn.: 135
Email : seminar@epch.com

November, 2011
BSM - Argentina (Focus LAC) Buenos Aires, Argentina
Contact Person : Mr.Sushil Agrawal
Tel : 91-11-26135256 Extn.: 110
Email : ihgf@epch.com

DECEMBER 2011

3-11 December 2011
AFL Artigiano in Fiera
Milan, Italy
Contact Person : Mrs. Lata Kannojia
Tel : 91-11-26135256 Extn.: 112
Email : maiprojects@epch.com

JANUARY 2012

January 2012
BSM, South Africa (Focus Africa)
Contact Person : Mr. Pankaj Saw
Tel : 91-11-26135256 Extn.: 114
Email : taxation@epch.com

January 2012
MACEF-Spring
Milan, Italy
Contact Person : Mrs. Mani Gupta
Tel : 91-11-26135256 Extn.: 117
Email : intlfair@epch.com

January 2012
PRET-E-PORTER
Paris, France
Contact Person : Mr. Siddharth Tyagi
Tel : 91-11-26135256 Extn.: 127
Email : projects@epch.com

OTHER EVENTS

8-11 September, 2011
Macef
Milan, Italy
Contact: Fiera Milano
Tel.: +(39) 2 49971
E-mail: macef@fieramilano.it

18-20 September, 2011
Gifts & Premium Dubai
Dubai World Trade Centre, Dubai, UAE
Contact in India: Ms. Dimple M, DEventers India
Email: dimple@deventers.biz
Tel : 022 42648521, 09820812134

Consumerism in Japan

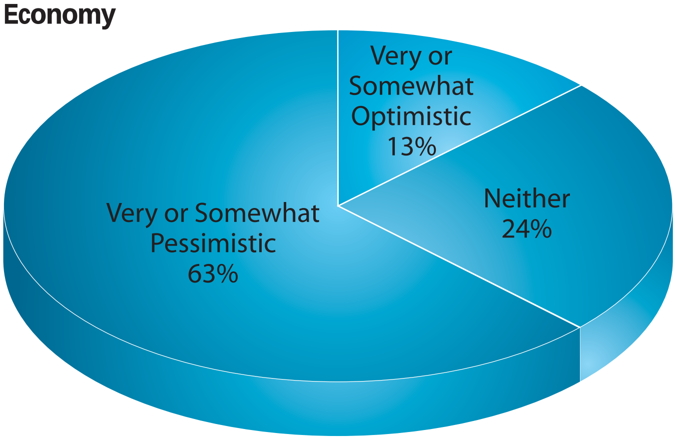
trends towards value

Since the record-breaking earthquake and devastating tsunami, Japan has been on top of mind for concerned citizens across the globe. Even before this disaster, though, savvy Japanese consumers were held in high esteem by designers and retailers looking to woo this trendsetting group. Where they once equated higher prices with higher quality, more and more they are spending less to achieve their look.

Japanese consumer expenditures on clothing have been falling for years, dropping 5% from 2008 to 2009, according to Euromonitor International, before dropping 9% from 2009 to 2010. Euromonitor projects further show declines of 4% in 2011. In Japan Real Time, the Wall Street Journal blog on Japan, Nicole Fall, co-founder of Tokyo-based consumer research agency FivebyFifty and new Asia consumer goods and retail tracker Intapac.com, writes that Japan is in a state of 'post consumerism' and quite frankly people no longer get the same satisfaction and thrill from designer purchases as they once did.

A reluctance to spend on extravagant items stems from the fact that 63% of Japanese consumers are "very" or "somewhat pessimistic" about the Japanese economy, according to the Cotton Council International and Cotton Incorporated Global Lifestyle Monitor survey. That is no wonder, considering an economic slump that has stubbornly persisted since 1991.

Japanese Consumers' Feelings about the Japanese Economy



Source: CCI and Cotton Incorporated 2010 Global Lifestyle Monitor Survey

Men are significantly more likely than women to be "very" or "somewhat pessimistic" about the Japanese economy (67% versus 58%), and it is unclear how the devastating earthquakes and tsunami will have a further impact on their outlook.

This pessimism, though, is not unfounded; a fourth-quarter downturn limited the size of Japan's economy to its current level of $5.47 trillion, according to the Japanese Cabinet Office. Unemployment held steady at 4.9% in January, but consumer spending dipped for the fourth straight month. Consumer confidence rose to a higher-than-expected 41.1 in January, from 40.1 in December, though anything below 50 is still considered "pessimistic".

These gloomy numbers continue to have tangible effects at the register; Global Lifestyle Monitor data reveal that 48% of Japanese consumers say their outlook on their financial situation has kept them from purchasing certain items and services, including apparel (65%). Women are also more likely than men to have given up purchasing new clothes (72% versus 58%).

The percentage of Japanese consumers who buy clothing & accessories on sale at least some of the time, has increased over the last decade (from 77% in 2001 to 86% in 2010), along with the percentage who are willing to sacrifice a little garment quality to get a better price (from 48% to 56%, respectively). When they do spend money, Japanese consumers rely on a wide range of shopping channels; 23% of consumers say they buy mostly at specialty stores, followed by off-price stores (22%), department stores (17%) and chains (15%), according to the Global Monitor.

This desire for value-priced apparel led to fast-fashion & accessories brands such as *H&M*, *Zara* and *Forever 21* establishing locations in the Japanese market, with new units opening regularly. These retailers in particular have benefited from having a young target demographic with fewer financial burdens and, thus, more money to spend on fashion than older generations. Global Monitor data bear this out; Japanese shoppers aged 15-to-24 were significantly more likely than those aged 35-to-54 to say they planned to purchase more apparel in the next 12 months than they did in the previous 12 months, according to the Global Monitor survey. There are bright spots, though; the Global Monitor finds Japanese consumers of all ages shop for themselves about once every three months, on average. And women are significantly more likely than men to "love" or "somewhat like" clothes & accessories shopping (88% versus 53%). Moreover, the Global Monitor survey reveals 78% of Japanese consumers purchased more (18%) or the same amount (61%) of apparel & accessories this year compared to last year. ■

Turkey

a market overview

Turkey, known officially as the Republic of Turkey, is a Eurasian country that stretches across the Anatolian peninsula in western Asia and Thrace in the Balkan region of southeastern Europe. Turkey's location at the crossroads of Europe and Asia makes it a country of significant geostrategic importance.

Turkey is a democratic, secular, unitary, constitutional republic with an ancient cultural heritage. Turkey is an independent Turkic state which has become increasingly integrated with the West through membership in organizations such as the Council of Europe, NATO, OECD, OSCE and the G-20 major economies. Turkey began full membership negotiations with the European Union in 2005, having been an associate member of the European Economic Community since 1963 and having reached a customs union agreement in 1995.

Turkey has also fostered close cultural, political, economic and industrial relations with the Middle East, the Turkic states of Central Asia and the African countries through membership in organizations such as the Turkic Council, Joint Administration of Turkic Arts and Culture, Organisation of the Islamic Conference and the Economic Cooperation Organization.

The economy of Turkey is largely developed. The country is among the world's leading producers of agricultural products; textiles; motor vehicles, ships and other transportation equipment; construction materials; consumer electronics and home appliances. In recent years, Turkey had a rapidly growing, yet the state still plays a major role in industry, banking and communications.

In Turkey, the demand for lifestyle and furniture products has been increasing considerably due to increased urbanization, population growth, and rising living standards. Today, approximately 60,000 companies, including manufacturers and retail stores are involved in the Turkish furniture and lifestyle sector. Research data suggests that a total of 260,000 people are employed in Turkey's furniture production. Among the most important cities in the manufacturing of Turkish furniture are Istanbul, Ankara, Kayseri, Bursa and Adana. A review of the extent of the Turkish furniture sector indicates a consumption volume of over US$ 6 Billion based on retail sales prices. Turkish manufacturers export their products to approximately 170 countries. ■

Chairman, EPCH and member exporters meet senior govt. officials in Moradabad

June, 2011; Moradabad

Mr. Ashok Kumar, DIG (Police), Moradabad, being greeted by Mr. Arvind Vadhera, Chairman, EPCH

Mr. Sudhir Tyagi, Chairman, IEML; Mr. Arvind Vadhera, Chairman, EPCH; Mr. K L Katyal; Mr. Vinay Gulati & Mr. Vinod Khanna at the DIG's office in Moradabad

Mr. Arvind Vadhera, Chairman, EPCH giving a copy of the EPCH Members Directory to Mr. Chandra Bali, Additional Commissioner, Sales Tax, Moradabad

Mr. C K Patil, Joint Commissioner, Sales Tax and Mr. Chandra Bali, Additional Commissioner, Sales Tax seen during a meeting with EPCH's Chairman and senior member exporters at Moradabad

Meeting of Exporters in Moradabad with representatives from PMO and FICCI

23 June, 2011; Moradabad

In discussion: Mr. Arvind Vadhera, Chairman, EPCH; Mr. Dipanjan Banerjee, Senior Assistant Director, Science & Technology/Innovation, FICCI and Mr. Keerthi Laal Kala, Office of Adviser to Prime Minister, Public Information Infrastructure and Innovations

A meeting of exporters with representatives from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), was held on 23rd June, 2011 at Moradabad.

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Arvind Vadhera, Chairman, EPCH and attended by Mr. Dipanjan Banerjee, Senior Assistant Director, Science & Technology/Innovation, FICCI and Mr. Keerthi Laal Kala, Office of Adviser to Prime Minister, Public Information Infrastructure and Innovations.

Issues concerning the trade were discussed and it was decided to take appropriate action in solving the problems. The main points highlighted were: Infrastructure Development, I.C.D., Conveyance to Workers, Cost Reduction, Packaging, Power, Labour Skilled Development Project, Taxation Processes like Service Tax / VAT, need for an Artisan Park, Artisan Development, Product Development, Research & Development Finishers and Research & Development of Metalware. ■

EPCH delegation raises important issues with DGFT

6 July, 2011; New Delhi

Mr. Arvind Vadhera, Chairman-EPCH led a delegation of eminent members of the EPCH to the Directorate General of Foreign Trade on 6th July, 2011, for discussions on measures to be taken by the Government of India to facilitate and increase growth in exports of handicrafts. The delegation highlighted the growth in exports of handicrafts before Dr. Anup K Pujari, Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) and mentioned that the growth rate could be sustained and further accelerated by the handicrafts sector, if the govt. considers certain issues for facilitating exports.

Mr. Arvind Vadhera, Chairman-EPCH (2nd from right), led a delegation to DGFT. Also seen in the picture are Mr. Satyapal, Hony. Genl. Secretary, Moradabad Handicrafts Association (MHEA) (centre); Mr. Abdul Azim, President, Moradabad Handicrafts Exporters Association (MHEA) (4th from right); Mr. Lekhraj Maheshwari, Vice-Chairman-EPCH (extreme left) and Mr. Rakesh Kumar, Executive Director-EPCH (extreme right)

Focussed Products

Mr. Vadhera pointed out that the list of focused products already announced by DGFT presently covers handicrafts items on which 7% duty credit scrip is allowed. Exporters feel that additional handicraft items which have great potential for increase in exports need to be added to this special focus list for entitlement of 7% duty credit scrip. It was also pointed that the limit of 7% need to be raised to 10%.

Deemed Exports

EPCH also recommended that the scheme of Deemed Exports particularly in case of handicrafts should be reintroduced so that exporters can sell their products to foreign tourists against foreign exchange and add the same to their export performance.

Duty Free Import of Trimmings & Embellishments

EPCH recommended that a residual entry may be added to the list wherein any additional item recommended by the Council or O/o DC(H) may be included to this list of trimmings, embellishments and tools for duty free import in the parameters of 5% of export performance of exporters in the previous year.

Further, the issue of continuation of interest subvention of 2% for handicrafts sector beyond 31st March, 2011 was also taken up. The waiving of in Service Tax in relation to business exhibition organized in India was also sought since exhibitions organized by EPCH in India are exclusively B2B shows. Refund of VAT while participating in overseas fairs was also discussed.

Mr. Vadhera also raised other issues like removal of restricted utilization of status holders, incentive scrip, permission for import of samples of Indian origin as part of passenger baggage, continuation of GSP benefits to handicrafts items beyond 31.12.2010, withdrawal of increase in processing fees of certificate of origin for India's export under GSP, credit card as export payment mode, increase in duty drawback rates, liberalization under MDA scheme, waiving of Service Tax on Membership fees of Councils, exemption from Income Tax under Section 10BA of IT Act, 1961 for entire handicrafts sector, inclusion of Channapatna, Thanjavur, Moradabad, Mahabalipuram, Firozabad, Varanasi, Agartala, Narsapur in the list of Towns of Export Excellence (TEE). The delegation led by Mr. Arvind Vadhera, Chairman-EPCH got a very patient and encouraging hearing from the DGFT. DGFT assured proper examination of the issues raised by EPCH for implementation in near future. ■

EPCH's Export Promotion Drive in major handicraft clusters

Artisans & entrepreuners in Moradabad coaxed towards computer literacy and international marketing

Workshops conducted on 1-2, 8-9 and 15-16 June, 2011; Moradabad

The experts making their presentations at the workshops. Seen L to R top : Ms. Bosky Agarwal; Mr. Sharad Saxena; Mrs. Vaishali Dhingra; Mr. Satyendra Arya ; Mr. Paritosh Sharma from Teerthanker Mahaveer Institute of Management. Seen below :Anwar Hussain Khan, Group Leader; Mr. Rohit Sharma, Sales Oficer, Reliance; Mr. Munshi Lal, CTO and Mr. Shafaat Ahmed Khan, an Exporter from Moradabad.

As part of its workshops and training sessions on Export Marketing, Procedure & Documentation and Design Development, EPCH organized a set of three workshops in Moradabad from 1-2, 8-9 and 15-16 June, 2011. This was held at EPCH Office, Budhi Vihar, Moradabad. This time, the focus was on How to become an effective supplier and market their products, computer literacy, how to become a successful artisan and product design.

Representatives and faculty from various fields of business and academics from Reliance and Teerthankar Mahaveer Institute of Management & Technology, familiarized the participants with the growing needs of the market and how one can achieve success in this increasingly competitive business world. Mr. Paritosh Sharma, Associate Professor, from the institute provided training on 'how to become an effective supplier'. Ms. Bosky Agarwal, Lecturer from the institute, conducted a session on 'Computer Literacy for International Marketing' emphasizing on the use of internet to reach out and know the demand in international markets, while maintaining a record of production back home. She also assured that it just takes three months of training to get familiar with computer softwares & internet applications. Mr. Satyendra Arya, Lecturer from the institute gave a detailed description on 'Product Designing' educating the artisans on improving quality. Mrs. Vaishali Dhingra, Associate Professor from the institute touched upon the various stages of marketing a product in the international as well as domestic market. Mr. Munshi Lal, CTO from O/o DC (H) elaborated on the various schemes of the Development Commissioner's office. Mr. Shafaat Ahmed Khan, an Exporter from Moradabad spoke of his industrial experience. Mr. Anwar Hussain Khan, Group Leader, guided the partricipants on how to become successful artisans with incerpts of their personal experience on achieving success in business. Mr. Rohit Sharma, Sales Officer, Reliance spoke on 'artisans health cards' and facilities offered. ■

EPCH's Export Promotion Drive in major handicraft clusters

Council reaches out to handicrafts fraternity in Udaipur

13-16 June, 2011; Udaipur

Mr. Harneet Singh of M/s Rayaman Exports addressing the session

A participant raising a query

As part of its export promotion drive, EPCH reached out to the handicrafts manufacturing fraternity in Udaipur, through a training programme from 13th to 16th June, 2011. This training programme on awareness of international standards and need for quality compliance, was enthusiastically recieved by artisans, crafts persons and exporters of the city, with around 150 marking attendance, through the four days of the event.

This programme was inugurated by Mr. B L Meena, Assistant Director, O/o Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) with Mr. Omprakash Soni, National Awardee from Udaipur who was the Guest of honour of the function. Eminent exporters from the region like Mr. Harneet Singh of Ramayana Exports, Mr. Prathvi Singh of Mine Chem and Mr. Rajendra Mehta of Lariya Art Exports (Jt. Treasurer of Jodhpur Handicrafts Exporters Association), attended the event and shared their experiences with the participants.

EPCH and JHEA welcomes Mr. Rajendra Mehta, Jt. Treasurer, JHEA

Mr. Vimananyu from NIIT addressing the gathering

Full jam packed hall with participants

Workshop for women entrepreneurs on Challenges & Opportunities in Handicraft Exports

6 July, 2011; New Delhi

Mr. S S Gupta, Development Commissioner (Handicrafts)

Ms. Alka Arora, Addl. Development Commissioner (Handicrafts)

Mr. Arvind Vadehra, Chairman, EPCH

Mr. Rakesh Kumar, Executive Director, EPCH

A workshop for women entrepreneurs on 'Challenges & Opportunities in Export of Handicrafts' was organized on 6th July, 2011 at Rajiv Gandhi Bhawan, New Delhi by EPCH, with support from O/o DC (H). This was graced by Mr. S S Gupta, DC (H) as Chief Guest; Ms. Alka Arora, Addl. DC (H); Mr. Arvind Vadhera, Chairman, EPCH; Mr. Lekraj Maheshwari, Vice- Chairman, EPCH; Mr. Raj K Malhotra, immediate Past Chairman, EPCH and Mr. Rakesh Kumar, Executive Director, EPCH. This event was conducted with active participation from eminent women entrepreneurs of the sector like, Mrs. Shailja Khanna and Mrs. Sangeeta Malhotra. Divided into four sessions, this workshop featured informative presentations by senior experts from fields of international marketing, sourcing, packaging and design development. All sessions culminated with some time devoted to participants queries and their solutions.

Mr. Arvind Vadhera, Chairman, EPCH, initiated the event, giving due recognition to the growing prominence/role of women in the society as well as economy & trade. "We are here to improve those who are already doing good work. We are here to groom them in their field and so that they become more successful as entrepreneurs," he emphasized. In her presiding address, Ms. Alka Arora, Addl. DC (H) congratulated EPCH for taking up such an exercise and coaxed the participants to draw mileage from the same by absorbing valuable guidelines presented by the experts. "Though most of you are already well established entrepreneurs, we need to focus more conceptually to bring out our rich potential," she said.

Mr. S S Gupta, DC (H) expressed utmost happiness while highlighting the substantial importance associated with women in the field of handicraft exports. He shared, "I am happy to learn that 1054 women entrepreneurs are members of EPCH. Many schemes of my office are specifically for women entrepreneurs and in the 12th plan we will make a plan on gender issues also." The DC also touched upon the integral aspects affecting the trade like training, skill development, design, marketing infrastructure and compliance that are being taken up by the DC's Office as well as EPCH.

Mr. Rakesh Kumar, Executive Director, EPCH spoke of the increasing ratio of women entrepreneurs and their contribution to the handicrafts sector. Explaining the structure of the workshop, he pointed out three important areas: What to Export, Where to Export and How to Export. He also stressed on the growing demand of handcrafted products that also happen to be India's USP in comparison to nations doing volume machine-made goods.

Citing examples, Mrs. Jaya Jaitley, social activist, spoke of proper documentation related to authenticity and manufacture of craft products. She also spoke of the need to work with comfortable quantities for exports. She advised that one could use craft in introducing common utility products and educate buyers on possible interesting variations in end products.

Among the presenters, Mr. K K Jindal, International Marketing Expert and Ex-Professor - National Institution of Banking elaborated on

Mrs. Sangeeta Malhotra from Asian Handicrafts, coordinating the sessions

Mrs. Jaya Jaitley, social activist, speaks on aspects of design documentation

Mohd. Eqbal Parwez, Senior Consultant, Retail Marketing answering a question on scope of retail marketing

Ms. Shashi Bala, Assistant Director, O/o DC (H), explained various schemes

Mrs. Shailja Khanna from SKU's Unlimited, conducting the proceedings of the program

Mr. K K Jindal, expert on International Marketing and Ex-Professor - National Institution of Banking, speaks on export marketing, procedure & payment

Mrs. Sonali Bhatnagar from Sakshay International, speaks on sourcing handicrafts for the export markets

Ms. Amla Srivastava, Designer, NCDPD, makes a presentation on the importance of product designing, trends & forecasts

Mr. Rudy Rivera, International Filipino Designer, NCDPD, educates the women entrepreneurs on visual merchandising

Mr. Mayank Gupta, Associate Partner, Package Design Research & Test Laboratory, Moradabad, explains the need for up gradation in packaging technology and innovation

Export Marketing, Procedure & Payment terms. He enlightened the participants about the do's and don'ts of marketing their products and modes of payment. He also familiarized them on related terminology, among other things.

Mohd. Eqbal Parwez, Senior Consultant, Retail Marketing, encouraged the participants to use raw material that they otherwise export, to bring out finished export products by utilizing skills of artisans here in India itself. He also spoke on the urgent need for moving from the erstwhile traditional to new and attractive designs, as the old world charms like mythological figurines, etc., had gained their market share and newer products were rushing in to compete. "Mixing the skill of an artisan with the need of buyers will only increase the demand", he explained.

Mrs. Sonali Bhatnagar from Sakshay International spoke about sourcing handicrafts for the export market and the research as well as decisive factors associated with it.

Ms. Shashi Bala, Assistant Director, O/o DC (H) brought in valuable information about the various schemes offered by the O/o DC (H) and guided the participants, especially those from craft clusters, on how one can avail them.

Designers from the National Centre for Design and Product Development (NCDPD) spoke of the importance of product designing, trends & forecasts with insight into forthcoming trends as well as the significance and inevitability of visual merchandising.

Mr. Mayank Gupta, Associate Partner, Package Design Research & Test Lab., Moradabad, educated the audience on the need for up gradation in packaging technology and innovation. His presentation included the material, nature, purpose and classification of packaging.

The workshop was well received by a total of 65 participants. Each of them was presented with a Certificate of Participation at the end of the workshop. ■

Fashion jewellery & accessories from India appreciated in prime Hong Kong trade event

Asia's Fashion Jewellery & Accessories Fair; Hong Kong; 21-24 June, 2011

Asia' Fashion Jewellery & Accessories Fair (AFJ) is a prominent international trade event dedicated to the fashion jewellery & accessory industry in Asia. It has received enormous support from exhibitors and visitors and has been expanding in size since it's inception in 1998. Over 450 exhibitors from 30 countries and regions and over 4000 trade buyers from 80 countries and regions participated in the recently concluded edition, held from 21st to 24th June, 2011.

The fair featured pavilions from India, China, France, Hong Kong, Italy, Korea, Philippines, Spain and Taiwan. Products on display included base metal jewellery, bead jewellery, crystal jewellery, cubic zirconia jewellery, rhinestone jewellery, glass jewellery, plastic jewellery, hair accessories, fashion accessories like shawls, stoles, scarves, head gear, bags & clutches, fashion jewellery material, etc.

Asia's Fashion Jewellery & Accessories Fair - June was held concurrently with the Hong Kong Jewellery & Gem Fair, the biggest international midyear fine jewellery trade fair in Asia. The "One Stop", "Two Fairs" arrangement enabled buyers from both sectors to source products and keep abreast of the latest trends within these two complimentary industries.

Buoyed by the success of its previous participations in 2009 & 2010 in this show, EPCH set up the India Pavilion with 18 member exporters. They showcased a selection in fashion jewellery comprising metal, wood, bone, shell and horn, besides an impressive array of fashion accessories like fancy footwear, hand bags, purses, shawls, stoles & scarves.

The participants reported generating on the spot business orders worth US$ 2,09,000.00 and 186 trade enquiries. ■

Intricately done bags lure buyers

Shine & shimmer at a stall in India Pavilion

Business negotiations at a jewellery stall

Buyers examine traditional Indian footwear and bags faux bois, rough wood & material innovation

Wood Trends

As compiled by PJ Aranador

Filipino International Lifestyle Designer

Design Director, National Center for Design and Product Development (NCDPD), India

Trends from ICFF, Design Boom and Design Sponge

Faux bois, "fake wood" in french, is popular these days. the look of wood grain- in textiles, papers and furniture- has been popular throughout the history of interior design, but lately accessories styled to look like actual wood, or with a wood grain "look" are everywhere.

Pendant lamps, faux birch lamp, white faux birch mirror and faux bois journal.

Faux wood cat house

False wooden stools, barnwood pillows, faux birch and wood grain sheets.

Fabois table runnerux

Parquet table hand-veneered with teak veneer strips in a beautiful herringbone pattern.

Wood wallpaper veneer furniture

Material wood innovation-Designers never stop to fascinate the market with clever use of wood in contemporary fashion.

These innovations will open up more doors in modern woodworking.

Combination of ceramic and wood by british ceramic designer Andrew Beaumont. The vase series features ceramic vases in archetypal forms combined with bent wood which envelopes the vase with smooth contours as if it were moulded around. the ceramic and wood speaker set is deigned to amplify the sound from small ear bud headphones. the headphones attach to the speaker at the back and the sound is reverberated through the ceramic bell, much like a gramophone.

'50% sawdust' by Israeli-based Kulla Design Studio is a project that evolved from the development of a new design method based on material research. The combination of two different worlds of waste - wooden sawdust and plastic bags. It find new uses / purposes for sawdust and plastic bags, in which they have creating new aesthetic qualities and applications for the two materials. here, they have joined plastic sawdust with wooden sawdust, creating a homogeneous mixture to create a new product, without adhesives.

Rough Wood-The resurgence of wood in the market is an ever-constant direction of green design, mostly using the by-products into beautiful articles no matter how rustic, even crude. Primitive raw natural look is a big deal!

Burl wood bowls

Reclaimed teak swivel box

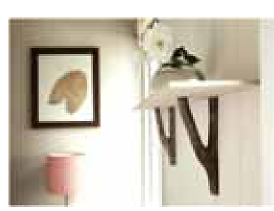
Acacia platter set

Amboyna burl vessel

Mushroom tuned wood boxes and wood stump jewellery boxes

On the onset, the form was clean and smooth design with veneers leading the pack which mimicked materials including bark, wood rings, even resin or metal. With the green movement, wood usage become more roughed-up, chunky and unfinished.The innate beauty of wood becomes the design itself. From reclaimed wood to burls to roots to twigs, the market has embraced what was before ordinary because this look embraces the warmth and beauty of natural materials as reminder of our delicate eco-system.

Twig shelf



Artisan wood vase

Guava wood coasters

Reclaimed railroad tie plinths

Wood covers for ceramics

furniture • handicrafts • textiles • gifts

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