



Carpenter Co.

Sells Sleep



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Leading consumer products manufacturer focuses on technological research and innovative product development for basic bedding market

RICHMOND, Va.—Carpenter Co. is helping consumers get a better night's sleep.

While many basic bedding suppliers pay lip service to the idea of educating consumers about the importance of better sleep, Carpenter Co. is actually *doing* something about it: the company kicked off a national advertising and promotional campaign in

March highlighting its line of Sleep Better™ products and its comprehensive consumer educational program.

"Carpenter is truly unique in the utility bedding business," points out Dan Schecter, vice president of sales and marketing for the Carpenter Co. consumer

Products division, a leading supplier of foam and fiber bed pillows, mattress pads and bedding accessories. "Everyone else

sells products—we sell sleep. "We are experts in sleep and sleep technology," Schecter continues. "We have the ability to take advantage of cutting-edge technology, our science-based resources, and our research and development expertise and turn these assets into superior quality products that help people sleep better. We bring tomorrow's technology to the consumer today."

Carpenter Co. has been providing pioneering products and inventive solutions for both industrial and consumer applications since the company was founded in 1948. The privately owned, financially stable firm operates more than 40 manufacturing facilities in the United States and Europe, with divi-

sions servicing the bedding, consumer products, carpet cushion, mattress, furniture, air filtration, chemical systems and polyester fiber industries. Carpenter Co. owns the single largest Polyol reactor facility in the world, located in Texas. The company's Powell Plant, also located in Texas, is a recognized leader in urethane chemistry. The company is the largest processor of high-loft polyester fiber in the world.

Carpenter Co. is continually investing in cutting-edge machinery, equipment, facilities and personnel to ensure that its products maintain the highest quality levels.

"From start to finish, ranging from the processing of our own chemicals to the final finished products, we

are committed to providing the highest quality," Schecter states. "Whether it's developing innovative designs or formulating strategic applications, our technicians work with our sales managers and our customers to identify and seize opportunities.

"Our founder, E. Rhodes Carpenter, believed we needed to be easy to do business with, while providing the highest quality products available and, above all, maintaining a high degree of integrity," Schecter points out. "Stan Pauley, our CEO and chairman of the board, has made sure Mr. Carpenter's vision is a mainstay of our corporate culture. Carpenter Co. is truly unique by virtue of the quality we control from the plants we operate to the people that make everything happen."

Carpenter prides itself on developing cutting-edge bedding products that are grounded in science. The company is well known for its proprietary products, including Isotonic®, Omalon®, Hypersoft™, Viscolux®, Qualatex®, Beyond Down™ and Richfoam®. "New solutions to problems and new product ideas are a hallmark of our success," Schecter notes. "The growth and dynamic nature of our company gives us the ability to react quickly to market conditions and meet market demands.

"We spend a lot of time understanding the science behind sleep and applying new technology that provides a higher level of comfort and assistance in allowing for a restorative sleep experience," Schecter continues, citing new Carpenter Co. products such as Ambient™ Comfort, which uses a fiber that increases the oxygen level in the body.

"Ambient™ Comfort is a prime example of how far technology has come and the obvious benefit it provides," he explains. "This pillow and pad program works with the body to restore and heal the body in a way that 15 years ago was thought to be impossible. Nanotechnology is being used in fabrics and ready-to-wear to help keep the body

cool, stop wrinkling and stain control. This is truly an amazing time."

The focus of Carpenter's Sleep Better™ campaign is developing fresh solutions to the age-old problem of getting a good night's sleep. Extensive scientific research has proven the health benefits



Isotonic
Ultra Comfort Pillow

Isotonic
Ventilated Royal Comfort
Mattress Pad

and restorative value of proper sleep, and Carpenter has incorporated this research into a range of bedding products, including bed pillows, mattress pads and bedding accessories.

"The opportunity today is being able to bring comfort advancements to the consumer," Schecter comments. "There have been many studies about the value of sleep for both adults and teenagers. The negatives of our stressful lifestyle, without the proper exercise, diet and sleep programs, can be devastating to long-term health.

"Products that carry our new Sleep Better™ seal are engineered to provide specific benefits that give a healthful and restorative night's sleep," he adds. "All of the products go through rigorous testing and qualification to make certain the claims we make are 100 percent accurate."

Carpenter Co. boasts 11 active laboratories staffed by expert chemists and other PhDs at its Reinhart Technical Center, located near the company's corporate offices in Richmond, Va. "Carpenter enjoys a resource base that is not available to any other manufacturer," Schecter states. "We bring a level of expertise to the business that no one else can match. As the world's largest processor of high loft polyester and the only vertically integrated foam manufacturer in the U.S., no one knows more about these products than Carpenter Co."

Retailers in virtually every major channel of distribution have embraced the Sleep Better™ concept, putting in products featuring the Sleep Better™ seal and in many cases, developing entire Sleep Better™ shops. Carpenter Co. sells to a broad range of retail customers, ranging from high-end boutiques and department stores to mass merchants and specialty chains.

"Our goal is to provide a competitive advantage for our customers," Schecter asserts. "Our Sleep Better™ shops and the products that carry our



Sleep Better™ seal are working well by meeting our customers' plans and generating repeat sales."

Given the competitive retail climate today, Carpenter Co. is focusing on offering its retail customers differentiated products with clear features and benefits.

"There are two businesses in utility bedding," Schechter explains. "The commodity business is what it is. It is about price and volume, with little concern given to the quality. The value-added end of the business must define quality through benefits, which are enhanced by available technology. Not all polyester fibers are the same—in fact, there are significant quality differences from fiber type to fiber type. We believe the value-added end of the business must define quality in every form. The product must meet consumer expectations, which of course defines the 'real' value.

"There really is no magic," he continues. "In

retail signage and other point-of-sale materials. The company also is making substantial investments in consumer advertising, including a consumer-oriented Web site, www.sleepbetter.org that offers consumers information about sleep research and suggestions on how to achieve a better night's sleep.

The company began its first major consumer advertising campaign three years ago, and ramped up this year with the continued focus on the Sleep Better™ program, which kicked off by introducing the National Sleep Better™ Night on March 31, coinciding with the switch to Daylight Savings Time. "The results of this campaign have been amazing," Schechter declares. "The calls we get and the visits to our www.sleepbetter.org Web site are confirmation that people want information on better sleep and the products that help them achieve that. We know we are on the right path and will stay on that path."

"The greatest challenge is answering the question, 'What's next?'" he continues. "Making a polyester or foam bed pillow and mattress pad is no big deal. Making products using the latest in sleep technology while being able to qualify and quantify benefits is where the magic is and where the future should be going."

Carpenter's corporate devotion to the Kaizen principles of eliminating waste, just-in-time delivery and continuous improvement ensures that the company will maintain its leadership position in the consumer products field.

"The growth and dynamic nature of our company gives us the ability to react quickly to market conditions and meet market demands," Schechter avows. "Our philosophy is to build relationships with customers and suppliers, responding to their needs with greater sensitivity and expediency.

"Our consumers are intelligent," he adds.



IsoPerfect
Ultra Comfort
Side Sleeper Pillow



Isotonic
Zoned Comfort
Mattress Pad



IsoPerfect
Ultra Comfort Pillow



Isotonic
Ultra Comfort
Mattress Pad

this business you get what you pay for. It makes no difference if it is foam or fiber. The quality differences are demonstrated over time by how well the products work and how durable they are—these are the differences that consumers can feel and appreciate. We believe there is a void for these types of products in the market and we believe consumers will spend what they can for as much real benefit as their dollars will allow. There is good growth in this business and there is room to grow even more."

Even greater growth opportunities exist in the upscale market, particularly for better products. "Certainly, visco-elastic foam sales remain strong," Schechter points out. "New fibers and foams, and combinations of fibers and foams, are doing very well at significantly higher price points. I think the reason for this is the emergence of a much smarter and technology-savvy consumer. We have never seen a consumer that is this well rounded and aware of newness and advancements in all of its forms. We view this shift in awareness as a positive step. We believe this technologically-savvy consumer represents an unexploited demographic in our business."

Retailers targeting this educated consumer are racking up the greatest sales gains. "I think that consumers in general are bored with malls because of the sameness; therefore, retailers who are making bedding departments a destination and offering real solutions to the consumer are increasing in popularity," Schechter remarks. "This includes major chains who are dedicating space to science-based bedding products, as well as boutiques and true specialty stores. Retailers such as JC Penney, who have remade themselves and have a clear vision of what they want to be and who they want to sell, will continue to do well. I think it is all about thoughtful planning and brilliant execution."

Carpenter is continually expanding its efforts at consumer education, providing detailed packaging,

As part of this ongoing consumer education campaign, Carpenter Co. joined forces with a nationally known sleep expert, Dr. Michael Breus, a clinical psychologist and diplomate of the American Board of Sleep Medicine. For the past eight years, Dr. Breus has served as the sleep expert for WebMD, the world's largest health information Web site for physicians and consumers. As part of the Sleep Better™ campaign, Dr. Breus has given live interviews on local and national television and radio programs, has conducted live "chat" sessions with consumers on the Web, and been featured in articles by *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *Parent's Magazine*, *Town and Country*, *Marie Claire* and *Cosmopolitan*.

"Our task is to interpret the science in terms that the consumer can understand," Schechter relates. "If we are successful at that, then the benefit is clear and the price point is justified as long as the product exceeds consumers' expectations. We are convinced that if consumers have enough information, they will make the right decisions."

Going forward, Carpenter Co. intends to expand both the Sleep Better™ product line and consumer education program. "We will keep informing the consumer of the value and benefits of a quality bed pillow and mattress pad," Schechter predicts. "We will do our best to help educate the buying community so they can make informed buying decisions with a clear understanding of what the value of a good product is and what it does. We will continue to test new technology and report our findings to the buying community. We will continue to be on the cutting edge of new science and the products derived from proven science that enhances the way people sleep.

"They understand and embrace technology and how it can and does improve one's life. It is our goal, through unique and thought-provoking initiatives, to educate the consumer and the buying community on the value of technology driven products that work.

"We have technological resources that the bedding, furniture and consumer products industries have relied upon for

years to bring innovative and beneficial products to the marketplace," Schechter concludes. "It's time for consumers to understand that the resources we offer are unlike any company in our business. There is no other manufacturer that can provide these kinds of products and marketing expertise. Carpenter Co. brings comfort and health to consumers as part of our corporate policy—we're a comfort company!" ♦

