

Furniture Today

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Business Intelligence for the Furniture Industry

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To market, to market

Disrupted tradeshow schedules require creative alternatives to showcase products. See what leaders in the industry are doing to adapt, adjust and forge ahead.

Q&A on [pages 12-24](#).



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Las Vegas Market product highlights

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How have you adapted to the shifting tradeshow schedules and what is your market strategy for 2021?

COMPILED BY FURNITURE TODAY STAFF



Chuck Reilly,
executive vice
president
AICO

AICO remains committed to the market and our showrooms. However, the uncertainty of whether our customers are willing to attend all markets is the challenge.

High Point Premarket has only recently been attended by our team, driven by dealers deciding they will go to a Premarket but not the main High Point show. Our current strategy is a

concerted effort to reach out to our top customers and determine what shows they are going to. We will be open in Vegas and High Point.

However, our marketing spend will be driven by attendance approaching some form of normalcy. From a product standpoint, we feel it appropriate to focus on products we are flowing as our customers need product now. We will continue to develop new goods from our factories that can provide realistic delivery dates.



Doug Rozenboom,
president
A.R.T. Furniture

I feel that market cycles are more heavily influenced

on current product shipment status than ever before. Customers that are successful in expanding sales while maintaining back-order service levels are finding ways to increase open-to-buy and are definitely looking for something new for their stores.

There is a clear message from our customers: They want to safely get back to an exuberant and inspiring shopping experience in our showroom. ... We will have customers in our High Point showroom in March, April, May and June. We expect April Premarket and June market to be more heavily attended vs. September and October of 2020.

We at A.R.T. have not slowed down new product development, and we expect to have a strong summer market season.



Hank Little,
president
Attachment Co.

Let's face it, trade shows will continue to be

important when the business world returns to normal, but our industry — indeed, the whole business world — is rapidly going virtual, and the pandemic sped up this transformation. Participation in the virtual world has become a necessity for all industries, especially ours.

As a leading supplier of capital equipment for bedding and furniture manufacturers, it is important for our customers to see our products from all angles to better understand the automation processes and the overall footprint the equipment will take up on the production floor.

To aid our customers with this, we developed a dynamic and interactive virtual tour of our product showroom located at our manufacturing facility in Lawrenceville, Ga. Available in both a 3D and in a virtual reality

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In the past, we've leaned heavily on trade shows like the Las Vegas Market to showcase our new product to buyers, but now we have a more intimate, safe and individualized experience to take our partners through.

Deena Gardner, vice president of marketing, Reverie

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ing on location for photo shoots. This innovative technology has come a long way and is virtually (pun intended) indistinguishable when compared with actual photography.

These videos and 3D models have been a great addition to our marketing initiatives because they have longevity and allow us to curate a variety of digital content for our retail partners to access 24/7.



Scott Tesser,
CEO
Precision Textiles
Like many companies, we are conducting much of our

product previews and new business initiatives virtually. We recently developed a more dynamic corporate PowerPoint that we are able to present virtually via a live Zoom call or email to our customers.

For the first time, we have a more compelling visual presentation that represents the depth of product and experience we have. This tool has been invaluable as a sales call leave-behind and corporate overview of our products and capabilities, especially considering that our sales reps aren't traveling to meet in-person with our customers as much these days. We also promote our new product introductions and marketing initiatives on social media, especially on B2B-focused platforms such as LinkedIn.

Recognizing that the tactile element of our textile products in particular is incredibly significant, we are also continuing to introduce new products through more traditional methods, including product samples and direct mail campaigns. Our recent direct-mail campaign for our IQ-

Fit Natural line of fire-resistant (FR) barriers that included a swatch card with product samples, a mini foam bun with an IQFit Natural FR sock applied to mimic how the product would fit around a mattress, and a product brochure was a tremendous success.

Following a similar approach, we have also developed a "Tool Kit" mailer that includes product samples and brochures for our entire product line because even in this technology-driven business environment, our customers still need something they can see and feel.



Deena Gardner,
vice president of marketing
Reverie
Due to the cancellation and

postponements of in-person events over the last year, our team at Reverie has made adjustments to our product introductions for both consumers and retailers.

On the consumer side, we have taken this shift as an opportunity to ramp up our virtual content and offerings as an experience. Working with consumers directly has allowed us to take on a more conversational approach — one on one — with more personalized content including how-to videos and 3D renderings. This also helps remove the pressure customers may experience in-person when they step foot on a showroom floor. We are meeting people with where they are at in a safe, responsible way.

For marketing to retailers and other businesses, we offer a virtual experience at the Reverie Partner Network, an online marketplace for buyers to explore our product lineup and other engaging content. If someone is looking for more

info beyond that resource, our sales team can set up a virtual meeting.

In the past, we've leaned heavily on trade shows like the Las Vegas Market to showcase our new product to buyers, but now we have a more intimate, safe and individualized experience to take our partners through.

We've also created a program, called Reverie Base First, to serve as a digital training tool for retail store sales teams with our technology and keep our products top of mind. All partners have complimentary access to this technology.



Dax Allen,
vice president of marketing
Sherrill Furniture
Our most important

strategic marketing adaptation around new product introduction at in-person events has been to focus 100% of our energy and resources on shipping customers their sold orders instead of making new products to fill our showrooms for in-person events like market. We believe it is irresponsible to divert valuable resources into manufacturing market samples with all that is going on in the industry today.

Shifting our marketing and product introduction strategy to act on this principled belief by not showing at spring 2021 market has generated an amazing emotional response from our customers. The furniture industry is a people industry. Making this decision to put customers first has touched the hearts and minds of people in a way we had hoped for but could not be certain of.

It felt like a big risk to shift strategy like this back in February, but since that announce-

ment we have received hundreds of emails, phone calls, texts, messages on social media, hand-written letters and even personal cards from the CEOs at large furniture retailers to interior designers and small, shop-local furniture store owners thanking us for doing this.

Right now, I'm looking at a letter received from the CEO of one of our Top 10 customers saying, "I just wanted to send a note of thanks for the smart decision to keep customer orders flowing. Market is certainly a necessity, but in this environment, we need to do all we can to reduce lead times. Thank you!"

Sherrill Furniture has made our customers happy and further accelerated the growth of our business. It's the type of win-win outcome you hope for and never take for granted.



Bill Hammer,
president
Shifman Mattresses
In addition to

strictly following COVID-19 protocols for those who prefer in-person showroom visits, Shifman provides virtual product tours, factory tours, lifestyle imagery, product imagery and video content, as well as swatches of materials in order to introduce new product lines to those who prefer not to attend in person.



Nick Bates,
president
Spring Air International
Our team has done an incredible job of

continuing to dialogue with our customers and train RSAs on the benefits of our mattresses

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