

Taking the baton

At Raymour & Flanigan, a third generation is ready to run

By Bill McLoughlin
Editor in Chief

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Seth Goldberg was multi-tasking.

The newly announced president of Top 100 retailer Raymour & Flanigan was coming from the company's regular leadership meeting, which is now his responsibility to lead, and he needed a few minutes to clean up some meeting details with his predecessor and father Neil Goldberg before sitting down for his first interview in the new role.

Making the effort to reach out and request a few more minutes while simultaneously handling follow up to the meeting, the new president demonstrated the kind of attention to detail and conscientious professionalism that has come to define the company he and his siblings are stepping up to lead.

Raymour & Flanigan, the third-generation family-owned furniture powerhouse ranked No. 11 on Furniture Today's most recent Top 100 report,



Raymour & Flanigan's third-generation leadership team: Jared Boschan, left, Shira Boschan, Seth Goldberg and Adam Goldberg

generates nearly \$1.5 billion in annual sales. Under the leadership of Neil, Steven and Michael Goldberg for the past three decades, the furniture retailer is in

the midst of a transition, both to a new generation of leadership and to new

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This master chest is part of Emerald Home Furnishings' New Haven collection. It is made with hickory veneers and is shown in its Oyster finish.



Preview of Premarket March First Tuesday sources say retailers ready to look further ahead

By Thomas Russell
Senior Editor, Case Goods
and Global Sourcing

HIGH POINT — Case goods and upholstery resources came to this month's First Tuesday event with a sampling of new product that offers a preview of what

dealers can expect at Premarket next month and market in early June.

Some of this product would normally have been shown at Premarket, which typically takes place in March, but since some of it has already arrived, resources

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FT Employees say... Workplace and COVID-19 vaccinations Poll of working Americans

52% employers should require vaccines

57% employers should offer vaccine incentives



Source: Eagle Hill Consulting survey

High-end sources turn spotlight on wood grains

By Thomas Russell
Senior Editor, Case Goods
and Global Sourcing

HIGH POINT — More often than not, high-end resources are known for their custom capabilities, particularly with finish selections that not only include many wood tones, but also different levels of distressing, sheen and even gold- or silver-leaf applications.

So when asked about finish trends, the answers can be complex, as these resources produce many custom looks for many different customers.

Yet, high-end resources interviewed for this story pointed to some finish trends they are seeing in their business, notably finishes that complement wood species ranging from oak and ash to maple, walnut and mahogany.

"It is all over the board, which is why our customers come to us: We allow them to get creative," said Andrew Crone, CEO of Chaddock Furniture Workshop, adding that the company has 70 finishes in the line and multiple distressing and sheen levels.

Noting that the company primarily uses oak and maple in its construction, he said that customers seem to be gravitating towards warmer wood tones.

"We have some of the most beautiful finishes in the industry — with 18 to 22 steps — that add a lot of depth and character," he said, noting the medium brown tones with some distressing are increasingly popular. "When those are layered into a room, it adds warmth and a comfortable feeling to a room. Those medium brown finishes are a great way to do that."

He said that while grays are still popular, the emphasis is on gray stains that showcase wood grains vs. flat gray-painted finishes.

"Gray finishes on oak turn out incredibly beautiful," he said, adding that they showcase the depth and texture of the oak grain.

Such oak grains, he said, also

appear to have a somewhat universal appeal, including but not necessarily limited to coastal areas.

More natural, less gray

Michelle Lorts, CEO of Lorts, said that she has seen a shift over the past several years away from more metallics towards more natural wood tones. These tones, she said bring a sense of comfort and nostalgia into the lives of people who have been hunkering down at home during the pandemic.

This includes, wire-brushed looks that add depth and texture to wood grains, a point the company emphasized recently during its Wednesday at Lorts videos that focused on wire-brush or wire-wheel techniques.

"People just want that type of depth and comfort and nostalgia," she said, adding that while the company produces various sheen levels, it is seeing more demand of late for lower sheen levels that emphasize both livability and comfort.

She added that while the company primarily uses solid alder, it also has been utilizing other species including walnut that works well with grain-bearing finishes.

What some have noticed is a shift from the deeper gray tones that have been prevalent in the market for so long.

"I love gray, and I think it is still important, but the grays that are doing better have a little bit of a brown undertone," said Cindy Hall, vice president, case goods merchandising at **Sherrill Furniture**.

She added that lighter tones also are coming on stronger including bleached finishes and lighter wood tones that contrast with darker browns.

"The two together can create and inviting and natural feel," she said, of the darker brown tones that are clean in nature with not a lot of distressing. "It creates this feeling of comfort, and that's what people are embracing."

She added that bleached finishes shown on species such



This Costigan dining table is part of Hickory Chair's custom Made to Measure program. The table and the Mariette cane back dining chairs are made with ash and shown in a new blonde finish.

as acacia and featuring mixed media elements such as marble tops offer "something you have known before ... but the finish is fresh, it feels new, and you can mix it with different things."

Casual, lighter tones

At Hickory Chair, there has been a visible shift from the sea of grays that have been popular in the market place for several

years, in favor of more casual lighter, sandy tones with lower sheen levels and less distressing.

"We saw the grays being popular awhile back, but we are sort of beyond that now," said Parker Goss, vice president, merchandising.

And while the company still does some light distressing, more heavily distressed finishes haven't been important in the

