

New, different bedding products popular

By David Perry

AT THE MARKET — Retailers shopping the plethora of mattress showrooms here are keying in on products that will help them stand out from the pack in the months to come.

New and different bedding products are getting the nod in many showrooms, producers reported.

Therapedic is scoring with its iCon \$25,000 adjustable, high-tech sleep set from its brand partner, Hollandia International, which is showing in the Therapedic showroom.

"Having this bed in the front of our showroom was like having cheese in a mouse factory," said Gerry Borreggine, president of Therapedic.

"This was a great conversation starter, and it brought in some retailers who have never darkened the door here."

Added Avi Barssessat, president of Hollandia: "We wanted to surprise the market and do something different."

Retailers shopping Englander are looking for distinctive high-margin lines, said Kevin Toman, president. And they are finding them in Englander's new two-sided latex

► Bedding

from p1

line and the Posture Support Plus line of beds for plus-sized sleepers, he said.

"The majors have gone down-market," Toman said. "Retailers are looking for higher-margin products. And they are also looking for products that are innovative."

Restonic is doing well with its \$399 and \$499 promotional beds and also with new beds at \$1,499 retail, said Ron Passaglia, president. He also noted that retailers are particularly interested in support materials, including TV commercials, banners, posters and "hot buy" balloons. Traffic in the Restonic space has been steady, Passaglia said, and a number of key prospects have come in.

Spring Air President Rick Robinson said his team worked hard to make the market successful, fine-tuning its product lines and reaching out to retailers. "I believe that market is the celebration of the work you did leading up to it," he said. The response to Spring Air's

new lines has "exceeded our expectations," he said.

Spring Air is getting good reviews on its new Passport program that is part of its Comfort Silhouette Imaging system, officials said. That pressure mapping system shows consumers how their bodies would be best supported by three comfort materials: Gel, latex and memory foam.

Park Place is attracting attention with four brands: Its own Park Place and Comfortaire brands, its new Ironman brand, launched under a license with T3 Recovery Products, and a Chinese-made Sleep Therapy line spearheaded by Stylution. Traffic in the Park Place showroom has been "beyond our expectations," said company President Jimmy Orders.

Stylution executive Ed Scott described traffic as "surprisingly good," and Richard Brass, president of T3 Recovery Products, described his company's market as "incredible."

Protect-A-Bed principal James Bell said his sleep accessory company is enjoying "great support from existing customers."