

Amrapur's Goal: \$500 million

E-commerce one-stop building up bricks & mortar

BY JENNIFER MARKS

Amrapur Overseas didn't set out to specialize in e-commerce business, but having established itself in that realm and now pushing into more bricks & mortar accounts, it's set itself a significant target for growth.

The goal: \$500 million in the next five years.

"Amrapur has had double-digit growth every year for the past couple of years," said Kevin Wadhvani, ceo.

He noted the company started e-commerce "from zero" in 2009-2010. "The market was down. Orders [for stores] were being put on hold. We did it out of necessity, and it grew from there."

He is the third generation involved in the family-owned business, which was founded by his father, Harry Wadhvani, in Hong Kong in 1960 as Lachmis International Ltd. The company added the Amrapur home division in 1983, basing it in California.

Today Lachmis is among Hong Kong's largest trading companies, manufacturing fashion apparel, home textiles and décor, as well as sourcing various products for its customers. In addition to North America, it sells to Mexico and Latin America, the U.K., and parts of Europe, as well as Dubai and the Middle East.

Amrapur Overseas owns and operates its raw material sourcing, manufacturing and quality control in China, India and Bangladesh, with sourcing and manufacturing capabilities in Turkey and, more recently, Portugal. It encompasses design, product development, sales, marketing and distribution operations in the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

Last year, it moved into a new 200,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art design and

distribution center in Corona, Calif. The facility is now running two shifts and shipping most orders the same day.

"The secret is logistics," said Wadhvani. "You have to know how to move goods inexpensively. Each retailer has its own turns. You have to be able to control your skus, keep an ear to the market and stay ahead on trends."

He added: "The main thing is to control the turns. If even 10% of the skus don't turn, you're going to be in trouble."

Amrapur Overseas currently carries 3,000 skus and is working toward 10,000 by the end of next year. Its assortment includes basic comforters, fashion comforters, sheets, towels, bath rugs, show curtains and window panels. Price points range from opening price point to high-end.

As it pursues more bricks & mortar business, the company is leveraging the insights it gains from e-commerce.

"We have real-time information about what consumers are looking for. We can take the intelligence from e-commerce and go back to brick & mortar buyers with validation about what's working," said Wadhvani. "We know what's selling, what's moving and what's trending."

This summer, the company is adding Net Suite, a cloud-based ERP (enterprise resource planning) system that will allow it to track the status of every order over the system.

"As this is cloud-based, the data can be accessed from anywhere in the world," he noted. "Our China office and Hong Kong office will also be using the system, which will help track order status and shipments. We can also link this system to our retail partners, which will help our buyers see real time inventory." **H&TT**



West Coast HQ. Amrapur Overseas moved into a new facility last year, above, to support its growth. The project included an expanded West Coast showroom, top.

Room to grow. The new space includes additional meeting rooms. The company is in the process of building its bricks & mortar business.

