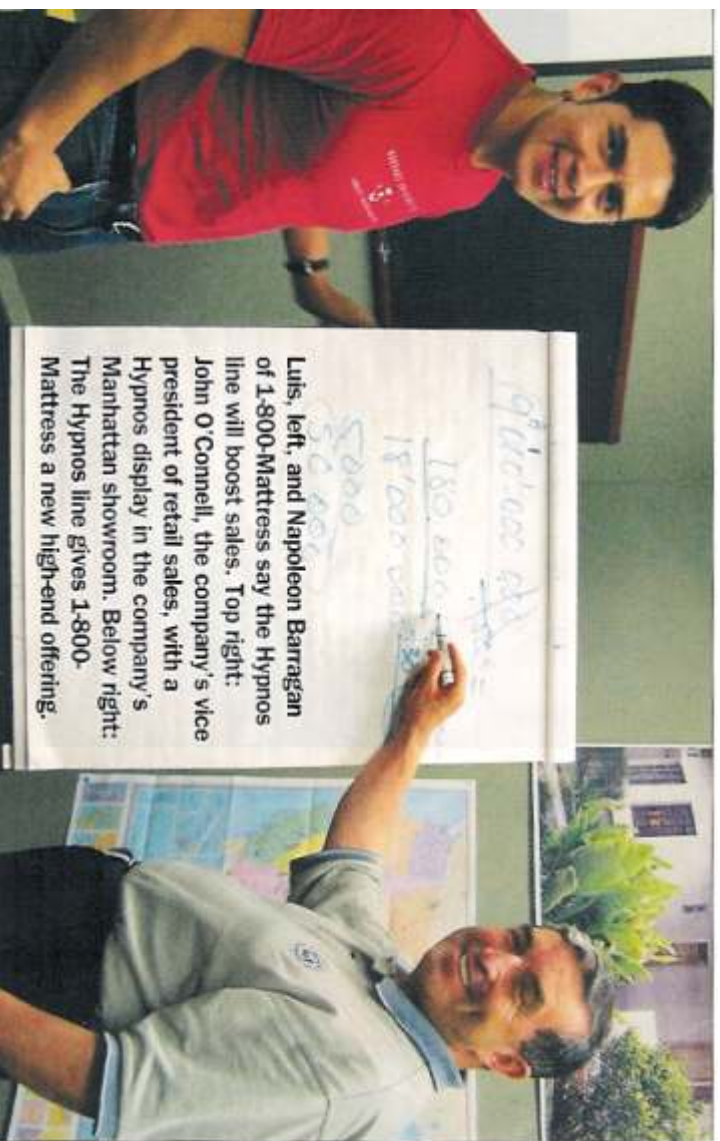


special report



Luis, left, and Napoleon Barragan of 1-800-Mattress say the Hypnos line will boost sales. Top right: John O'Connell, the company's vice president of retail sales, with a Hypnos display in the company's Manhattan showroom. Below right: The Hypnos line gives 1-800-Mattress a new high-end offering.

1-800 dials upper end

By David Perry
NEW YORK — 1-800-Mattress, which pioneered telephone sales of bedding, is now dialing into a major growth market: high-end bedding.

The company, which ranks No. 17 on Furniture/Today's latest list of the Top 25 U.S. bedding retailers, is pursuing the luxury consumer with the addition of the Hypnos line to five of its metropolitan New York showrooms.

The retailer also will be marketing the luxurious, high coil-count Hypnos line through its telephone call center to consumers in the tri-state area of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.

Hypnos bedding was launched in the

United Kingdom, where the company has two Royal Warrants, highly coveted designations that note the company's connection to the royal family. Hypnos is the supplier to the Queen of England and to Prince Charles.

In the United States, Hypnos has licensed the line to Jannison Bedding of Tennessee, which produces the line. The beds are cushioned with cashmere, silk, lamb's wool and cotton. Wool tufts are hand-stitched in place.

1-800-Mattress is selling the Hypnos beds at king-sized prices of \$8,000 to \$12,000. Company officials say they are selling well.

"Hypnos has a tremendous international

following, and we already have been experiencing

strong demand for the product as word got out that we were offering the brand," said Luis Barragan, president and chief operating officer of 1-800-Mattress.

More than a dozen New Yorkers placed orders for the line before the first advertising hit, he said.

1-800-Mattress sees an overall consumer trend toward bedding that's plusher and offers higher performance characteristics.

John O'Connell, vice president and head of the retail store division, said, "Today's consumers understand that the mattress they buy will be an investment in a good night's



sleep for many years to come. As such, they want mattresses that are comfortable and meet their taste and performance standards, which they are willing to pay the price for."

The addition of the Hypnos line represents an effort to boost the company's sales of premium bedding products. Napoleon Barragan, founder and CEO of 1-800-Mattress, has been looking for the right high-end product.

"Through our call center, Web site and retail showrooms," he said, "we have close to 10,000 customers contacting us each day, many of whom are increasingly interested in more luxurious bedding. Hypnos represents one component of our program to better service the more affluent consumer who is increasingly turning to us for high-quality bedding."