



Araam President Farhan Chatur, left, and Chief Executive Officer Fezal Chatur show their company's new bedding line at the Calgary market.

Araam, Hypnos bedding enter Canadian market

By Michael J. Knell

CALGARY, Alberta — Two bedding brands made their Canadian debut at Market Showplace here last week, the home-grown Araam and the high-end British label Hypnos, both of which are being made in a new 75,000-square-foot factory in Edmonton, Alberta.

The new venture, Araam Inc.,

is owned by Chatur Holdings, a family-owned company that also operates Ertia Furnishings, an importer of case goods and leather upholstery with estimated annual sales of about C\$40 million.

Fezal Chatur, chief executive officer of the new bedding company, said Araam is a mainstream, innerspring bedding line compet-

ing in all the major price points. It replaces the private-label bedding line sold by Ertia but manufactured by another Canadian bedding factory.

Retailer response to both lines was quite favorable at the just-concluded market here, Chatur said. Both lines will be shown at the January Toronto market.

"We are going to offer a wide range of products — everything from promotional to the high end as well as product for the hospitality and health care markets," Chatur said, adding the factory is fully operational and ready to ship.

However, it will be six months until they are ready to ship Hypnos bedding. "This is the Rolls Royce of bedding," he said. "We have just introduced the line and are in the process of setting up dealers across Canada."

He said people must to be hired and trained to Hypnos' standards before production can begin.

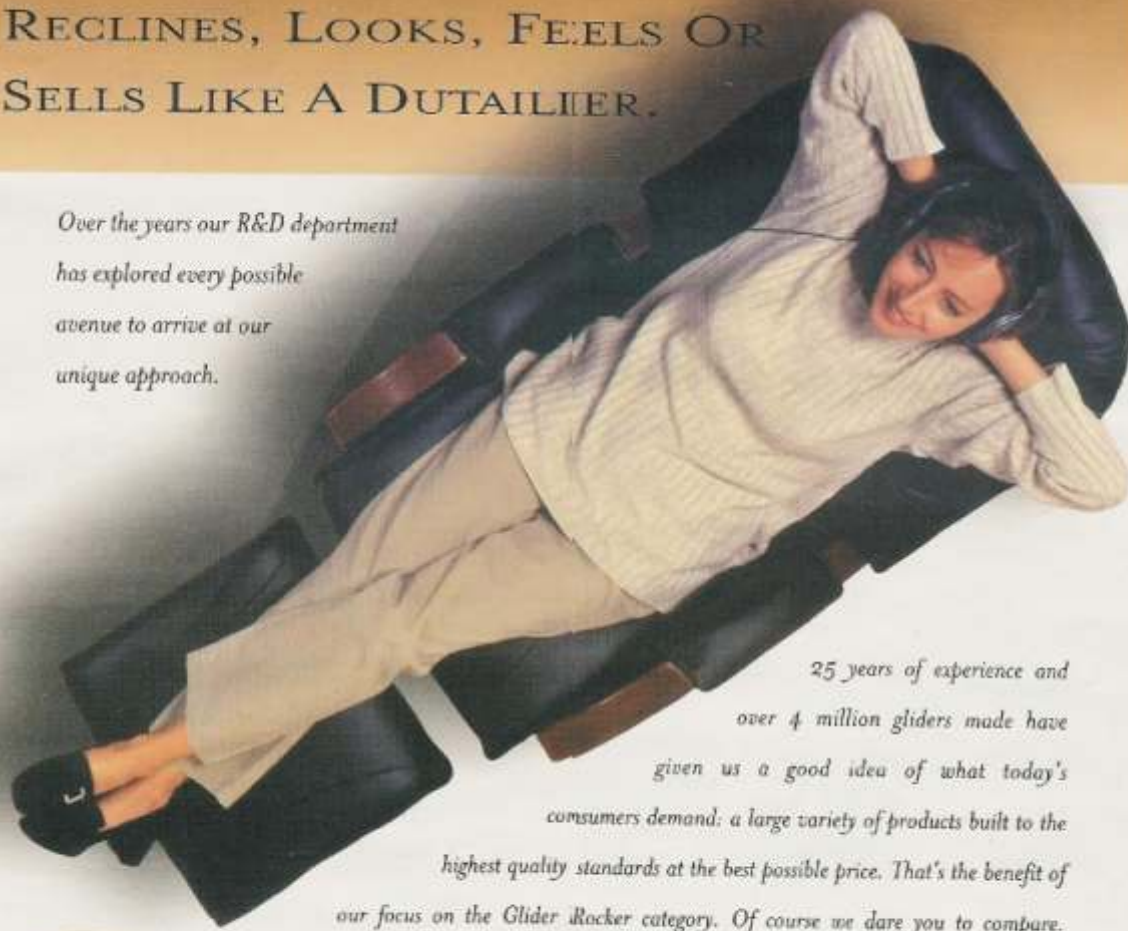
Hypnos, a 100-year-old British brand which has received the Royal Warrant, will be offered in a variety of tickings, including silk, lamb's wool and cashmere, and carry an opening retail price point of between C\$3,000 and C\$5,000 in queen.

Chatur believes that producing the Hypnos line will be a great help in establishing the Araam brand. "Hypnos will bring us a lot of credibility," he said. "If we can make the best bedding line in the world, people will know what kind of product Araam is."

Covers for Araam will be sourced from mills in Belgium and the United States.

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a little lower than anticipated, attributing that to the current state of the economy in western Canada.

The slowdown in the West has been aggravated by the recent mad-cow disease incident and two