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FOOTWEAR

New Customer And Consumer Based Focus Takes Leading Slipper Company In Fresh, New Direction



Dearfoams, the slipper category leader owned by R.G. Barry, debuted its fresh new strategy and brand look for the Fall 2005 Market in New York. "Dearfoams is poised for renewed growth and retail dominance after implementing significant operational changes during 2004," says CEO Thomas Von Lehman.

The company's new growth strategy focuses on providing superior retail customer service and innovative consumer products. Changes include re-focused product design and retail selling strategies, along with expansion of the company's Hong Kong-based quality and sourcing team as all manufacturing has moved to Asia.

Beginning with Fall 2005, consumers will see and experience the new Dearfoams Company first hand. Dynamic new packaging and merchandising vehicles will begin shipping to retail in June. Consumers will see a new, softer, more personal Dearfoams logo, and contemporary, eye-catching packaging—color coded by usage category for easy identification and incorporating new lifestyle photography. This dramatic new look and feel for the Dearfoams brand clearly communicates the emotional connection that consumers feel with the product and will visibly differentiate the Dearfoams brand at point of sale.

Over the last six months, the Dearfoams Company has conducted extensive proprietary consumer research, which serves as the foun-

ation for its new brand positioning and consumer marketing efforts. "Dearfoams has nearly 40% of the upper tier slipper market and is the #1 brand among consumers who have purchased slippers in the past 18 months. We are determined to leverage our very strong brand awareness and strength in the marketplace with fresh and innovative new products and marketing programs designed specifically to meet all of the at home footwear needs of our consumers. And our retail partners are responding very positively to our relaunch and our new product efforts," says Von Lehman.

Results from the company's proprietary consumer research studies have revealed extraordinary insights about consumer attitudes, usage behavior and shopping preferences, and that research forms the basis for Dearfoams' new "lifestyle at home" brand positioning platform.

The consumer research, brand positioning and marketing initiatives were developed in conjunction with Agility Consulting, LLC—specialists in strategic business development based in Greensboro, North Carolina. Advertising and public relations agencies have also been retained to fully leverage and effectively communicate the enormous strides the Dearfoams Company has taken in the past year.

Dearfoams has corporate headquarters located in Pickerington, Ohio and a new showroom location in New York City.

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