

**FURNITURE MANUFACTURING**

International Furniture Direct opens new Houston, Arizona warehouses

Houston facility is first company-owned warehouse



Thomas Russell // Senior Editor, Furniture Today

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This is the outside of International Furniture Direct's new Houston warehouse

HOUSTON, Texas — Case goods manufacturer International Furniture Direct has built a new warehouse here that is about three times larger than its previous 20,000-square-foot facility it leased in the same area for the past four years.

While officials declined to state the dollar value of the investment, they said it is IFD's first company-owned warehouse and was built to its specifications. It will carry the company's entire line and offer quick ship on bestsellers.

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Featuring 12 loading and receiving docks, it can receive at least 10 full truckloads per week and ship out a dozen per week, said Diana Zaldivar, vice president of sales and

merchandising. Along with Texas and Oklahoma, she said, it will serve retailers in Arkansas, Kansas, Mississippi and Louisiana.

“Houston is a strategic point for IFD due to its closeness to the U.S.-Mex border and thus competitive landed freight cost on finished goods,” Zaldivar said in reference to the company’s manufacturing presence in Mexico.

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This facility has been in operation since early May, she said.

The company also has opened a newer warehouse in Phoenix that expands its operational space from 30,000 to 50,000 square feet.

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The leased facility, which begins shipping the last week in May, has 10 dock doors. This compares with the eight at the previous facility, where it had operated for about eight years.

The Phoenix warehouse serves customers in Arizona, California, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Utah, Nevada, Colorado, Montana, Wyoming and New Mexico.

The company also has warehouses in Chicago, which serves the Midwest, and Atlanta, which serves the Southeast, the Mid-Atlantic states as well as New York and New England.

The company also maintains consolidation warehouses at its two factories in Mexico.

I'm Tom Russell and have worked at Furniture/Today since August 2003. Since then, I have covered the international side of the business from a logistics and sourcing standpoint. Since then, I also have visited several furniture trade shows and manufacturing plants in Asia, which has helped me gain perspective about the industry in that part of the world. As I continue covering the import side of the business, I look forward to building on that knowledge base through conversations with industry officials and future overseas plant tours. From time to time, I will file news and other industry perspectives online and, as always, welcome your response to these Web postings.