

Indian PU foam mattress maker Shree Malani using Milliken colorants to stand out in a crowded market

Long-standing partnership yielding innovative products, market growth.

Shree Malani Foams Pvt. Ltd., already a leading player in India's fast-growing polyurethane (PU) foam mattress market, is aggressively expanding its position.

The Hyderabad-based company, known for its Centuary mattress brand, says the country's PU foam mattress sector has been growing at double-digit rates for many years with no sign of abating. Shree Malani said that it expects to improve its national market share to 13-14 percent, up from the current 9-10 percent, on the back of new product launches and the expansion of its distribution network.

The company is expanding its portfolio via the long-standing partnership it formed with Milliken & Company's Chemical Business in 2008. About four years ago it began focusing on using Milliken's Reactint® liquid polymer colorants to develop deeper, darker shades of PU foam to help further differentiate its products in the competitive mattress market. The strategy is working.

Milliken – the market leader in India for colorant sales for the PU slabstock industry – chose Shree Malani as its partner for "Dark Color" initiative, recalls Tushar Bhardwaj, Country Manager - Polyurethane



for Milliken Chemicals in India. Using Milliken's novel Reactint technology, Shree Malani has already launched multiple new and vibrant shades that not only capture the attention of consumer but also help Shree Malani to communicate differentiation in a crowded Market place.

The company says both its CenFlex slabstock foams and Resilia high-resilience foam products have benefited from unique dark shades of colors that were amongst the first such foam grades to hit the market.

"These were possible only with using Milliken's blend-on-the-fly capabilities, which enabled us to play with shades and not just primary colors, giving us capabilities nearly matching that of the paint industry," noted Managing Director Siddharth Malani. "Our latest development project with Milliken is to bring in a fresh look to our mid- and high-range foams and develop deeper colors across various foam densities, keeping in line with our brand strategy of being a valued-added player. We love Milliken's annual color forecasts," he added.

The company also says it benefits greatly by using Milliken's digital Reactint Color Studio, which allows users multiple ways to find a Reactint formulation for any Pantone shade.

"Our development team is actively using the online Reactint Color Studio for continuously coming out with fresh shades and bringing out different colours not seen in the market," Malani said. In addition to offering virtually unlimited color choices, "we found it extremely easy to use with a simple interface that can be adopted by absolutely anyone."

From time to time, he added, "we have



sought help from the local Milliken technical center for color matching. We have sent color samples varying from coasters to foams and have always been delighted by a quick turnaround and accurate match."

Shree Malani's Centuary Fibre Plates Pvt. Ltd. has the capacity to produce 600,000 mattresses annually at its three plants that together cover some 500,000 square feet. The Centuary brand has a presence across 18 Indian states with more than 4,500 dealers and over 450 exclusive brand stores. Today, Shree Malani notes, nearly all the foams that go into the core and comfort layers on its branded mattresses are colored, underscoring a strong trend in the industry.

Since its launch 13 years ago, Shree Malani says it has used Milliken colorants exclusively. The resulting strategic partnership between the two firms has ensured continuity in all new development projects.

And the companies are well positioned to continue playing a leadership role in developing innovative and colorful new foam and mattress products for the Indian market and beyond.

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