



## BEDDING TODAY

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EXECUTIVE EDITOR

### Industry sees positives for 2015, opportunities in consolidation

As the bedding industry prepares to turn the calendar and welcome in a new year, breezes of good business prospects are blowing briskly.

There are many reasons for optimism. The economy is getting stronger. The housing picture is growing brighter. The political climate is calmer and more settled than it was during the height of the election season. Unemployment is down. Gas prices are coming down.

Looking inside our industry, leading bedding producers say innovative products will spark sales in the new year, and believe retailers will be doing their part to produce higher tickets. They also say higher-priced goods are selling well these days, and predict that hybrids and adjustable beds will help boost tickets next year.

CEO of OMI, says the continuing trend of consolidation is compelling retailers to look for “platforms, categories and brands” that can differentiate themselves in the marketplace. He sees OMI, an organic bedding producer, as offering unique products that can give retailers the edge they need.

Similarly, Bob Naboicheck, president of Gold Bond, says his company is “benefiting tremendously from the dizzying growth and expansion of Mattress Firm and Sleepy’s in our key markets.” Independent retailers are looking for the differentiated product lines that Gold Bond offers, he notes.

And Ron Passaglia, president of Restonic, says the retail and manufacturing consolidation offers opportunities for “companies with precision-focused and event-driven programs supported

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Those are among the positives that you will find as you read through the comments in our bedding outlook report, published elsewhere in this issue. True, the bedding bunch tends toward the optimistic side of things, but virtually every producer we surveyed offers a positive take on the industry’s outlook.

We were struck by the various comments producers made about industry consolidation, and the positives they see for their companies.

Kingsdown CEO Frank Hood says manufacturing and retail consolidation “shrinks the opportunities for our industry,” but says Kingsdown is finding success by positioning itself in “the gap between the monoliths and independent regionals.”

Kurt Ling, the relatively new

with compelling products” — such as Restonic’s ComfortCare collections.

We hear a lot of comments about the industry’s consolidation trend — both positive and negative. It’s interesting that these producers see a number of positives in the changing industry dynamics.

The new year will start with a bang. The Las Vegas Market promises to be another major bedding event, one that will launch the year on a positive note.

In this, our final regular issue of the year, I wish all of my friends in the bedding industry a safe and happy holiday season. If you haven’t already sent me your Las Vegas introductions, do that immediately. And then enjoy some special times with your friends and family.