

AD FEATURE

New location translates into more variety at Wicker Emporium

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BRIDGEWATER — From unique hardwood furniture to stylish accent pieces, Wicker Emporium has taken its Bridgewater store to the next level.

Chief operating officer Raj Kapahi said Wicker Emporium had been located in the Bridgewater Mall for many years but it was time for the store to expand. He said over the past decade, the sale of its furniture has grown due to customer demand for their accent hardwood furniture and tables. To keep up with the trend, the company began importing more varieties of its solid wood furniture.

The Nova Scotia family-owned chain of stores began in Halifax in 1972. Now it has about 23 stores across Eastern Canada and Ontario. It employs about 150 people. Over its 30-year history, the company carved out its niche in tables, buffets, hutches, cabinets and chests in mahogany, teak, acacia, sheesham, mango, elm and pine.

"In the last 10 years or so, we've seen a lot of growth in our furniture sales so we've brought more in," said Mr. Kapahi.

As a result, its former 2,000-square-foot store did not have the floor space required to expand its furniture line in the Bridgewater store.

"That was the only location that we ever had in Bridgewater," said Mr. Kapahi. Although the store suited the company in the past, changing market trends necessitated a larger space to display a wider range and a larger floor space means a more pleasant shopping experience for customers.

With the expansion of its furniture line, having direct access to the outdoors means a more convenient pickup for customers.

"If you want to buy a piece of furniture, you're probably going to prefer not having to drag it through

the mall," said Mr. Kapahi.

To meet customer demands and needs, the company began looking at alternative locations and in the end settled on the former Blockbuster location in Eastside Plaza. The new 4,000-square-foot location allowed the store to expand its product lines while offering customers an easier pickup for larger furniture purchases.

"In our old store we could never showcase whole collections because there simply wasn't enough floor space and also we couldn't showcase all of our collections either so we would only send what we felt, based on historical sales information, that store would be more likely to sell. Now with the bigger floor space, we can showcase the full line," he added.

Wicker Emporium has entire style collections including Lunenburg, Halifax, Havana, Modo Rattan, Banana Leaf, Thar, Ashton, Dark Plymouth and Savannah Outdoor. In addition to solid wood, there is also a collection of bonded leather furniture.

Bridgewater store manager Jenn Rafuse is excited about the new and wider selection of merchandise now available at the store. In addition to its expanded furniture line, customers can also see a full line of draperies, baskets, table and floor lamps, mirrors, wall art and giftware.

"Everything has its own place now," said Ms Rafuse. When customers are in the market for a specific item, such as a wall mirror, to spruce up their decor they'll find it in its own section in the shoppable warehouse.

Mr. Kapahi said now that the new location is open, he hopes that people will stop by to take a look at their new and exciting store.

"I hope that the people in Bridgewater and surrounding community enjoy seeing more variety. I hope they also enjoy a more pleasant shopping experience with the additional space," he added.

"Everything has its own place now."

Raj Kapahi
Chief operating officer



PAULA LEVY PHOTOS

Wicker Emporium has expanded to provide a more pleasant shopping experience for customers. Here store manager Jenn Rafuse welcomes customers into the relocated store at Eastside Plaza.



The increase in floor space has allowed Wicker Emporium to expand its furniture lines.

wicker emporium
feel at home

Grand Opening

Brand new East Side Plaza location
 East Side Plaza, 28 Davison Drive
 Store opens at 9am, Saturday September 8th

Giveaways & prizes throughout the day

Spin the wheel and win up to 30% off on products all day.

If you purchase any product, you will be entered into our raffle to win a \$200 gift card and many more prizes.