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41 Winks and a Nod

Designer bedding site targets dorm, first-apartment dwellers

Cecile Corral -- Home Textiles Today, July 20, 2015



The 41 Winks team: From left, designer and advisor Natalie Kathleen; brand and business development manager Morgan Hoffman; and Olivia White, ceo and creative director.

As its name suggests, 41 Winks is about more than power napping.

Under the new guidance of Olivia White, ceo and creative director, the recently re-launched online bedding and accessories retailer is entering the back-to-college/school season with a fresh design direction that calls for new products and collections and "a whole new brand."

The company — www.41Winks.com — was originally launched in 2008 by White's aunt, who got the idea for the business while shopping — unsuccessfully — for dorm bedding for White's sister.

"They went shopping and it was such an unsatisfying experience for both of them," she explained to H&TT. "There was nothing truly fashionable or that truly fit a dorm bed."

What to do? Make her own bedding collection.

And not just for her niece. Recognizing a void in the marketplace, White's aunt got to work. She hired a designer, they drafted new fabric patterns that were then made in a South Carolina mill, and she had the finished product made by a Dallas-based manufacturer.

"We started out as a true bedding brand," White said. "My aunt worked with a designer to create patterns, source fabrics and manufacture and sell her own products."

Since then, the company has gone through a few transitions, including buying products from other vendors and expanding to add queen sizes for a broader market reach.

But before White joined the business in 2013, 41 Winks "went dormant briefly," she said. She was a recent college graduate of the University of Southern California with a double major in Spanish and international relations. "My aunt had inventory and product, and she certainly needed help to get the business up and running again.

"When I came in, the idea was to start running on the inventory and the brands we already had and get the website back up and try to sell the products," she said. "And I soon realized there was a lot of potential for 41 Winks."

White said she felt "inspired and motivated" in taking on her new role "because there is still truly a market for fashionable and high-quality dorm room bedding."

Soon into her job, White decided to take the company to the next level. But to accomplish that, "a few things needed to happen," she said. That included identifying the target market.



The Ink collection, part of the Fall 2015 program, combines a traditional navy floral with contemporary patching.

"First, we found that we really didn't have a direct competitor selling this kind of bedding to the Millennial shopper," she said. "It makes for an interesting dynamic because I'm targeting people like myself, and that helps in my work."

This spring, 41 Winks debuted its newest line, which White developed with designer Natalie Kathleen.

"In creating the new line, our goal was to design product to match our new, fun, fashion bedding brand using materials we already had in inventory," White said. "With every new collection, we up-cycled fabrics from previous collections, and maintained a metallic linen theme throughout."

41 Winks' new Fall 2015 line includes several bedding collections: Deco, Paprika, Bond, Ink and Bailey.

"This new product line intends to be traditional-meets-modern," she went on. "For example, for our patchwork duvet covers our inspiration comes from bold colors and sharp lines for a contemporary-modern take on a traditional product."

41 Winks' assortment is anchored by top-of-bed, including duvet covers, matching euro shams and blankets. Duvet covers come in twin XL and full/queen.

Products can be bought individually, but sets are also available.

"The dorm room is a student's space for her own expression, the one place on campus she feels at home and can be at home. We know that having the right bedding is an important part of that, so we make sure to fill that need with our new collection for back-to-school."

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