

NATHAN

Furniture Group

COLE ASSOCIATES ADVISES UK FURNITURE MANUFACTURER ON ACQUISITION

September 2015

The newly formed Nathan Group, which already has the Nathan and Sutcliffe brands in its portfolio, has acquired Morris Furniture Brands Ltd, owner of Morris, Zone and Relaxateeze, from H Morris and Co - three well respected names, each with their own identity and proposition.

David Middleton, partner at Cole Associates, acted as lead advisor to Nathan on the transaction and secured a package of funding to support the acquisition and provide ongoing trade and working capital funding.

The new Nathan Group's combined turnover will rise to £20 million and will supply over 600 independent retailers together with multiple retailers across the UK with a collection of well-established cabinet and upholstery brands.

Each of the three brands will remain as independent operations, led by Managing Director Andrew Cochrane, who has been part of the Nathan team since 2005, but all will benefit from the Group's combined strengths of offshore sourcing and expertise in UK manufacturing. The distinctly different product and brand offering of Morris, Nathan and Sutcliffe remain unchanged.

Andrew Cochrane comments: "I am delighted to be heading up Morris Furniture Brands, which has an established presence with its extensive living, dining and upholstery offer. We intend to build on the existing successful products within the portfolio and to continue to develop the individual identities and propositions of each of the three Morris brands. The existing sales team will continue its outstanding work in representing us and use its extensive product and market knowledge to ensure that we closely meet the needs of our loyal and longstanding customer base."

Operations for the three Morris Furniture Brands will be brought into Nathan Group's base in Todmorden, which will not only secure jobs within the UK but lead to expansion in the future.

Nicholas Radford, with a long and successful track record in the industry, becomes Chairman of the new Nathan Group. He started out at his family business, Stag Furniture, and stayed until the company was sold to Spring Ram in 1992. Nicholas then launched his own successful business which became the largest importer of American furniture to the UK. In 2004 he acquired Nathan from Silentnight and with a small team successfully acquired and rejuvenated Sutcliffe in 2011. Nicholas Radford added: "The acquisition of the three Morris brands is a unique opportunity to bring together three great British names, to strengthen each brand as part of a new Nathan Group which has such heritage in the industry. Together we can provide our retail customers with the best quality cabinet and upholstery."

As part of the acquisition H Morris and Co. will take a 20 per cent shareholding in the Nathan Group. Robert Morris, who brings over 40 years' experience to the table, joins the new Nathan Group board to continue his family legacy. Robert Morris commented: "This is an exciting time and we're delighted that Nicholas and his team have acquired the business and will be continue to invest and evolve the name of Morris within British retail."

This acquisition marks the start of an exciting period of development for Nathan which next year celebrates its centenary.