

PEOPLE

come  
first

*Building a customer- and employee-friendly atmosphere has brought continued growth and expansion to Madsen Fixture & Millwork.*



*Madsen Fixture & Millwork was recently named Select Comfort's 2004 Supplier of the Year. Along with providing fixtures and cash wraps, Madsen also incorporates Select Comfort's pressure-mapping technology into the store headboards.*

By Sam Gazdziak

**W**ith more than 50 years' combined experience in the woodworking industry, Jeff Trippe and Chet Morgan understand what makes a happy employee. They know that having a varied workload with state-of-the-art machinery is important, but so is being able to leave early and see a son's grade-school play. So when they decided to start their own company, they also made the decision to treat their employees the way they always wanted to be treated.

"We had all worked for other companies," says Trippe. "Basically, we didn't like the way people got treated at most of the places where we worked, and we felt we could do a better job at that and make people want to come to work."

Trippe and Morgan, who serve as owners and project managers, started Madsen Fixture & Millwork in Forest Lake, MN, on January 1, 1998. They give their employees tremendous freedom, working under the assumption that "a highly motivated crew can do a great job," Trippe says.

"We have very flexible hours; we've never had that in other places where we worked," he adds. "There may be times where we'll ask the guys to make the time up if we're really busy, but if it's important to somebody, then they should go."

Madsen employs 45 people between the office and shop. Not surprisingly, finding employees hasn't been a problem. Neither has finding work; the company has been expanding steadily ever since it opened.

"We started with 4,000 square feet, just in a little corner [of the building],"

*The cash wrap for the Creative Kidstuff, along with the rest of the fixtures, feature curves and bright colors and graphics.*

