

Taking Wholesale Drapery Supplies to a New Level

shop**ReadWindow**.com makes it easy for you to buy supplies



A **amazon.com is doing it.** Overstock.com does it. Walmart.com does it. They all provide consumers a place to shop for a large inventory of items, day or night, with a shopping cart over a secure website. So why weren't any of the wholesale suppliers in the drapery industry doing the same thing? Four years ago this was the question that haunted Read Window Products, a major distributor and fabricator for Kirsch and Levolor.

In 2003 the company had already launched elining.com. This website differed from most in the industry, in that it had an actual shopping cart, and you could pick your items, send them to your cart, and pay for them online over a secure site.

The site worked well, but you had pay for your products immediately and there was no 30 day net terms. Also several of the products including lining and workroom products were also available for the general public to buy. Other products such as hardware required a special log in to review and choose.

Read Window Products liked the site and it worked well for them, but they felt the need to take it further. So began the launch of ShopReadWindow.com. The new website takes the 9-to-5, net 30 day, black and white catalog, wholesale drapery supply industry, to a whole new level.

In order to even use the site you must first set up an account. Read Window makes this as easy to do as it is to use the site. All you have to do is fill out your information online and hit send. The accounting department of Read Windows will review your application and let you know the terms of your account in about an hour.

Once you've been approved you can get down to business. You can easily search for and order drapery lining and workroom products, add them to your cart and after checking out, have UPS deliver them to your door in a short period of time.

What really makes this site interesting and helpful though is the number of specialized sections it provides. If you've ever spent several hours fighting with a drapery hardware catalog while working on a quote you'll love the simplicity of ordering hardware on this site. After opening the decorative hardware, section the site will begin to prompt you with a series of questions which will help you narrow down your choices and make sure you order all the correct components.

On the very first page you can choose a pole diameter, pole type, width of the pole, number of rings needed and answer a couple of



other questions. After confirming your choices it shows you all the finishes and prompts you to choose, then it moves on to the brackets and finials. Once you have picked the perfect hardware you can now buy it, or you can save the quote to return to on another day.

If you want to show several choices to your customers, go through the process several times, save all the quotes then print out the pictures for your customer presentation. All the quotes will be saved on the site and you can return to them whenever you're ready to order.

This isn't the only wonderful feature of this site. Some people order a lot of decorative hardware. Someone else may order a lot of drapery lining. To easily get to your most used portion of the site, save your top categories as Hotlinks. You can choose up to 10 Hotlinks and they will show up on every page while you are perusing the site.

You can also easily create your own Favorites page. The Favorites page lets you store up to 50 of your most used items and when you need to reorder them it can be done with one click.

Finally, if you are the type of person who can never seem to remember the exact name of your favorite lining or cording you don't have to worry anymore. The bottom of the page will continually show your most recent orders and you can quickly click on them to reorder.

The products on the site are quite varied. Read Window carries drapery lining, interlining, and other workroom supplies including piping, buckram, and cord locks. The bulk of the site is drapery hardware. The company is one of eight Signature Partners for Levolor /Kirsch. About 30% of decorative and functional hardware offered on the site is from the Kirsch line. Read Windows added more decorative hardware to the site in January from lines such as The Finial Company, Paris Texas, and Gould. This added thousands of new products to the site.

All the wonderful features of this site are going over very well. The site has only had a soft launch and already Read Window is adding 50 new accounts a week. The company asked 10 regular customers of elining to review the site. It was so popular they told all their friends and the site began to take off before it was truly finished. Their official promotional site launch will be January 2008. With so many new accounts now they are really excited about the possibilities.

