



THE SINGLE-LARGEST EXPANSION IN THE HISTORY OF DOWNSVIEW

In 2008, Downsview underwent the single-largest expansion in the history of the company. That year, a new 110,000 square foot building was added, bringing the overall square footage on both sides of Rena Road to over 300,000 square feet. The new plant made Downsview more efficient by consolidating all of the company's production in one facility. Moving the assembly department into the same building as manufacturing ended the previous practice of cutting material on one side of the street and then bringing it over by truck to the

other side to assemble it there. The incorporation of new equipment and machinery into the production lines further streamlined operations at the same time.

DIVERSIFICATION INTO THE CLOSET MARKET

Growing demand for high-end cabinetry not only for kitchens but for all parts of the house, combined with increased manufacturing capacity following the 2008 expansion of the Downsview facility prompted the decision to diversify into the closet market. Claudio explains: "We had added the new production space and wanted to expand our manufacturing. That's how we went into closets and wardrobes. 2007/8 was when we really started getting into that market."

Downsview diversified into closets and wardrobes at a time when homes were getting bigger and, as a result, closets were significantly increasing in size as well. There was a growing trend in the premium home design, redesign and renovation industry to incorporate the most elaborate cabinetry into walk-in closet designs in particular. Adding a closet product line allowed Downsview to satisfy that demand and truly become a single source manufacturer for designers working with the most discriminate customers.

Diversifying into the closet market was a natural progression as Downsview was already doing a lot of custom work for its dealers. At the same time, it was a manifestation of Mike's desire for the company to truly be that 'one-stop shop' where designers did not need to look anywhere else to have a bathroom, closet or wall unit made. Gianni Casiraghi explains: "Downsview has always put a lot

of care in the selection of material and creation of its finishes. Because of that, it was pretty easy for us to get into other parts of the house.

Diversification started almost naturally because the designers who were working with our kitchen finishes would start asking us 'can you do this, can you do that?' for other parts of the house. We already had the capability of finishing a product so the basis for diversification into other furniture was already there. It was kind of a two-way street—there was the demand from the clientele and, at the same time, there was the need of keeping our dealers able to grow with and through our company." "We were able to meet that demand without having to change the manufacturing process because we are very versatile," Claudio adds.