

Cabot House
Katie Hooper
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Summary by Christine McMahon

One of the many segments of the luxury goods industry is furniture. Cabot House, a leading high-end luxury retailer in New England, falls under this category. Katherine Hooper, General Manager of Cabot House's West Warwick location in Rhode Island, presented the company's history, role, brands, clientele and other aspects that contribute to its luxurious status.

Robert Bendetson, current owner of Cabot House, is the fourth generation of this family owned business. Created in 1912 by Robert's great-grandfather, the company now has nine locations with five in Massachusetts, one in Maine, one in New Hampshire, one in Florida and one in Rhode Island, which is where Katherine Hooper reports as General Manager. Her responsibilities include managing a team of five designers, overseeing the store visuals and displays, making purchasing decisions for product line-up, overseeing the advertising and marketing for Rhode Island markets, handling customer service issues through problem solving, and maintaining the overall business generated.

Not only does Cabot House sell high-end luxury furnishings, but they offer other products and services as well. These offers consist of designer services, customization, floor coverings, accessories, window treatments, formal and casual décor and both indoor and outdoor furniture. The luxury brands of these offerings include Ralph Lauren, Baker Furniture, Century Furniture, Henredon, Chaddock, Vanguard, Hancock and Moore and Brown Jordan Outdoor Furniture. They also carry luxury fabric lines and their own private label brand of upholstery.

Katherine discussed Cabot House's clientele next, including their description and the importance of women in the marketplace. Their clients are men and women and range from 45 to 75 years old. Women are a huge part of Cabot House's market because they are usually responsible for the majority of the household spending decisions. They also work so they have less time to spend shopping on decorating. Because of this they seek out retailers like Cabot House to help them create a beautiful home despite their busy schedule. Their clients often come in to request design advice or to update their current style or existing furniture. Catering to certain clients can sometimes be tricky because Cabot House has to consider outside factors such as kids and pets and the different environments in which their clients reside. This can dictate the types of furniture they choose and Cabot House must be prepared for these special requests.

Cabot House faces a lot of competition from different levels of the furniture industry. These include local furniture stores, big box furniture stores, catalog companies, furniture chain retailers, knock-offs, Internet competitions, and other luxury products that can replace investing in costly furniture (for example, a vacation). Cabot House overcomes the competition by offering personalized service, competitive prices, maintaining strong relationships with its clients, showing customers the right product, and properly advertising and marketing the company. They do this by putting ads in the Providence Journal for the Rhode Island market, the Boston Globe for mass marketing and in *So Rhody* magazine. They also advertise on TV and through social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

Despite having a vast amount of competition, Cabot House remains prevalent in the high-end luxury furniture market by focusing on their client's wants and needs and succeeding in doing so.