

*As seen on January 6, 2006 on...*



## Fire Gets New Showrooms and Corporate Office

Fire, a Los Angeles–based juniors denim, dress and sportswear manufacturer, is in the middle of a bicoastal growth spurt. The brand, which sells in Nordstrom, Charlotte Russe, Belk, Anchor Blue and Stage Stores, opened a new 1,900-square-foot showroom in New York at 1466 Broadway, Suite 1201, in Times Square. “It’s a real step up for us,” said Jay Heidhues, president of Fire’s jeans division. “The building and the showroom are quite impressive.” A new Los Angeles showroom at the California Market Center opened in time for the October market. The 1,800-square-foot space is triple the size of the brand’s previous showroom, which was also in the CMC. New corporate offices, at 3539 Motor Ave. in Los Angeles, give the growing company 35,000 square feet of space for its staff of 35 full-time employees.



Fire’s place: Los Angeles–based Fire opened a showroom in the California Market Center.

Founded in 1981 by Andrew and Barbara Strasmore, Fire was acquired in 2002 by Topson Downs of California, a Los Angeles–based global sourcing corporation. The company added jeans and dress divisions in 2003. “Topson Downs’ production capabilities allow us to be much more competitive price point–wise,” Heidhues said. The majority of the company’s manufacturing takes place offshore. Producing 85 percent of its dress and sportswear apparel and 100 percent of its denim and constructed bottoms apparel overseas, Fire uses factories in various countries, including China and Vietnam. “We have eight quality-control people who travel all over the world keeping an eye on everything,” he said. “I’d love to have their frequent-flier miles.” Denim shorts wholesale for \$10–\$11, non-denim gauchos for \$12.50–\$13.50; jeans, \$14.50–\$16.50; skirts, \$11–\$13; and tops, \$6–\$13.

Heidhues credits Fire’s recent growth to a variety of factors but mainly to healthy business. “We’re really maximizing business from all [of the company’s] three divisions. In the past it could be that the jeans division was doing really well, for example,” he said, “but I think we’ve really enhanced all three product lines, and they complement each other well.”

—Erin Barajas