

# ADJUSTIBLE BED BASES

## Market to grow

Bedding retailers say their adjustable bed sales are on the upswing, and they expect another growing year for the category this year. Those positive reports and projections come from both furniture stores and from bedding specialists, who are leading the change in the ascending adjustable bed arena. In its first detailed study of the adjustable bed category, Furniture/Today found that “attachment rates” for adjustable beds range from 10% at furniture stores to 14% at bedding specialty stores. Attachment rates reflect the percentage of sales that include an adjustable base, a key growth metric for bedding retailers, as adjustable bed bases typically add more than \$1,000 to a sales ticket.

The retail data reveals that a majority of furniture and bedding specialty retailers surveyed by Furniture/Today are carrying adjustable bed bases on their sales floors. The percentage is 65% for furniture stores (who carry a median of two adjustable bed lines) and 86% for bedding specialists (who carry a median of three adjustable bed lines).

The best-selling price points range from the lowest reported of \$799, at both furniture stores and bedding specialty stores, to a median of \$1,399 at furniture stores and bedding specialty stores. The highest reported best-selling price point for an adjustable bed is \$2,999 at furniture stores and \$1,999 at bedding specialty stores.

Furniture/Today asked the furniture and bedding retailers about their adjustable bed sales last year. Just over half of the furniture stores said

their adjustable bed sales were higher last year than in 2012, while the figure was 62% for bedding specialists.

Just 10% of the furniture stores said their adjustable bed sales last year were lower than in 2012, while 15% of the bedding specialists gave that same answer. But both types of retailers expect the category to perform well this year. Fully 75% of the furniture stores said they expect higher adjustable bed sales this year than last year, and the percentage was even higher for bedding specialists —79%.

None of the retailers surveyed by Furniture/Today expect their adjustable bed sales to be lower this year than last. The remainder of those surveyed said they expect

### WHAT CONSUMERS LIKE MOST ABOUT AN ADJUSTABLE BED

“Adjusting the head so I can sit comfortably in bed.”

“It’s a low profile and individualized for two sleepers on the same bed.”

“Many positions available for sleeping and reading.”

“That it can adjust when reading and watching TV.”

“The dual adjustments are great for reading in bed.”

“Zero-gravity setting.”

### LIKE LEAST ABOUT AN ADJUSTABLE BED

“It’s heavy.”

“Gap between the bed and wall.”

“Hard to access if you want to adjust it, but that’s more of a problem with the heavy mattress we have.”

“The mattress is so thick, it makes it awkward when I lift the head.”



their adjustable bed sales this year to be about the same as last year. Overall, 50% of the furniture stores said adjustable bed bases are the fastest-growing sleep accessory on their floors, while that was true for just over one third of the bedding specialists at 36%.

## Consumers cite back pain as top sleep concern

An analysis of consumers' mattress buying behaviour reveals that there are major opportunities for the adjustable bed category to increase its position in the market. While the number of adjustable bed bases being sold with mattresses is relatively small — one in 10 at furniture stores and one in seven at bedding specialty stores, according to Furniture/Today retail research — a look at consumer demographics finds plenty of upside potential for the category.

That's because affluent households, those most able to afford the \$1,000-plus tickets that adjustable beds typically carry, spend significantly more on mattresses than other consumer groups.

For king-sized mattresses, for example, affluent households spend on average two times more than lower-income buyers and 1.3 times more than middle-income households. While affluent households (those earning \$100,000 or more annually) accounted for 20% of all mattress buyers in 2012, those households actually generated 29% of the total dollars spent on mattresses.

That is real buying power, power that could easily be applied to adjustable bed bases. The consumer insights gathered by Furniture/Today and its consumer research partner, Apartment Therapy, also show that as consumers age, they are more likely to develop health issues that make it difficult to sleep. Adjustable bed bases could help many of those consumers find relief, bedding marketers say.

Back pain or back injuries are cited by large numbers of consumers in all key demographic groups. Forty-five percent of Millennials (consumers between the ages of 18 and 33) say they suffer from back pain/injury, while the figure rises to 51% for consumers in Gen X (those between 34 and 49), and, somewhat surprisingly, drops down to 41% for Baby Boomers (those between the ages of 50 and 68).



Shoulder pain/injury is cited by 21% of the Millennials, 22% of Gen X consumers and 36% of Baby Boomers, while leg pain/injury is cited by 7% of the Millennials, 9% of the Gen X consumers,

and 19% of the Baby Boomers. Adjustable bed bases could help many of those consumers, who may be struggling to find a comfortable sleeping position, bedding observers say.

## KEYS TO SUCCESSFULLY SELLING ADJUSTABLE BASES

### Furniture stores

"Showing the product and being convinced of the advantages in purchase."

"Getting the consumer to lie down on the bed and show the features."

"Showing the product early in the presentation."

"Displaying as many as possible and ensuring RSAs are showing and explaining the benefits."

### Bedding specialists

"Displaying them on as many mattresses as possible."

"Identify health needs in customers."

"Offering them to every customer."

"Introducing them after the consumer has chosen the mattress they like."

"Touting warranty coverage and Made in USA."

The consumer data gathered by Furniture/Today and Apartment Therapy also reveals that consumers use their beds for many more activities than just sleep. About eight in 10 consumers in households of under \$50,000, from \$50,000 to \$99,999, and over \$100,000 read in bed once a week or more. The figures are similar for consumers who say they send or receive text messages in bed once a week or more, and are somewhat lower for consumers who say they answer and receive emails in bed once a week or more. TV-watching in bed once a week or more is cited by about one in three consumers in households with annual incomes in all three groups. Sleep experts say consumers should be using their beds for sleep and sex only — and shouldn't be taking work to bed with them. But most consumers are not heeding that advice, and have turned their beds into work and text stations, the Furniture/Today research reveals.

And many of those consumers, obviously, would benefit from adjustable bed bases, which increasingly offer features designed to make it easier to read in bed and to hop on and off a laptop or tablet, bedding marketers say. ■

Source: Furniture Today