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Danskin Designs New Web Store for Growth

By Cate T. Corcoran

Danskin Inc. plans to build a new online store to increase its already steep rate of growth.

"It's an opportunity for us to get a national audience for our whole assortment," said Eric Nadler, senior vice president of sales, operations and e-commerce for the New York-based company. "We're looking for a dramatic uptick in revenue flow."

The Web site can showcase Danskin's full line of dancewear and activewear, which includes several hundred styles each season. Its products are carried by more than 3,000 retailers, including mom-and-pop dance stores, department stores, and sporting goods stores, but no one can present the whole line.

"We're not looking to compete with mom-and-pop

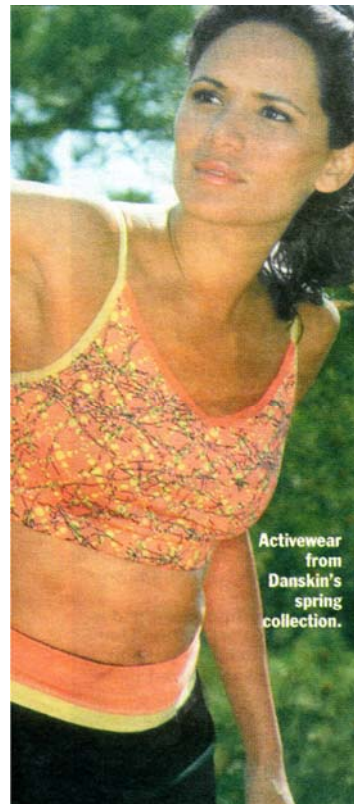
stores," Nadler said.

The company's existing e-store is based on Yahoo's tools; a planned move to Venda Inc. will give Danskin more flexibility in presentation and promotions, Nadler said.

For example, Danskin will be able to do gift-with-purchase promotions. (The company's current technology makes it appear as if the customer will be charged for the free item until after he or she hits the "buy" button.) Venda also offers zoom and color-change capabilities, he said.

Venda charges a flat fee of \$120,000 a year for all of its customers, regardless of size. The London-based company has approximately 80 customers, including Virgin Megastores, Ted Baker and, most recently, the European sites for Lands' End.

The e-commerce provider also has partnered with retail consulting firm Marvin Traub Associates Inc. "There



is no question that e-commerce is the fastest-growing segment of retailing today," said president Marvin Traub in a prepared statement. "In a short period of time, a Web site can be the largest door of any retail chain. In a period of slow growth and competition, the Internet is clearly a major opportunity."

Danskin is in the design phase of the project and expects to go live in August or September.

"My expectation is to increase our rate of growth by 50 percent," said Nadler. "We're already on a pretty steep trajectory of growth." Danskin's wholesale revenues totaled approximately \$200 million in 2005, he said.

Nadler added, "Not many people know that we are an activewear resource. That's one opportunity we have with the Web site — to enable ourselves to communicate the broader vision of Danskin."