



THE ASSOCIATION & VOICE OF THE US SEWN PRODUCTS INDUSTRY

**SEAMS' Member Spotlight:
Unifour Finishers, Inc.**

Note: Each edition of our newsletter, SEAMS features one of our esteemed members. In this edition of SEAMS Member Spotlight, Unifour Finishers, Inc., Hickory, N.C., is featured. Rick Setzer, co-owner and operational manager, responds to questions submitted by Devin Steele.

Year founded: 1979

Ownership: Mr. Rick Setzer and Mrs. Harold Setzer

Primary specialties: Commission finisher of woven and knit fabrics

Number of employees: 26

Brief history: Unifour Finishers, Inc. began as a commission finishing facility servicing the apparel market. As needs grew, a second facility was opened in 1986 to finish tubular knit goods. Due to changes in markets, the company moved away from tubular knit finishing in 1997. It modified and updated the facility, reopening it in 1998 to finish woven fabrics and service the home furnishing market. In 2008, again due to market changes, Unifour consolidated all finishing operations into one facility. All knit and woven finishing is now serviced from its production facility on 29th Street in Hickory, N.C.

Markets served: Outdoor furniture, industrial, apparel, medical, transportation, military fabrics, indoor furniture

Processes: Water/stain repellent, back coating, napping, shearing, pre-shrink, calendaring

Adaptation to remain competitive:

- Unifour has succeeded over the years by watching and reacting to changing markets and trends
- Streamlining and consolidating operations to maximize productivity and efficiency
- Diversifying to new markets and expanded its process offering to new industries (at its beginning, it serviced only the apparel industry)

Made in America: "Since our inception, Unifour Finishers has proudly promoted and participated in the made-in-America movement."

Differentiators: "Unifour takes great pride in our customer relationships. We have customers that we have serviced for 35-plus years. We are a smaller operation that works one on one with our customers. We work directly with our customers on fabric finishes, scheduling and processing needs. Our size and structure have been instrumental in being continually efficiently able to meet and exceed customer expectations."

Challenges: "I would have to say the two significant challenges we face are labor and rising costs. We, like a lot of other companies, face the challenge of finding dedicated employees. The second challenge



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is rising costs – increases in everything from raw materials, insurance, utilities and freight, as well as labor costs, including healthcare insurance, impact us as a small business.”

Effect of coronavirus: “The coronavirus impacted the majority of the businesses in the U.S., and few small businesses were immune to the market reactions. Because of our business structure and size, we have been fortunately able to fine-tune operations as needed to match the markets’ residual fluctuations. We have a crucial role in the supply chain. Many of the fabrics we process are used in safety, military, medical and healthcare industries; therefore, we were deemed essential. We have and continue to finish fabrics that are being made into PPE.”

Business outlook: “We are optimistic about the future. Demand for performance finishes is on the rise and is a process we are proud to offer to our customers. And with our diversification, we can accommodate a variety of finishes to varying types of materials. We have 41 years of experience in napping fabrics. Napping has been a mainstay for Unifour and continues to be an integral part of our business.”

Year joined SEAMS: 2014