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## Members-only DirectBuy more than doubles its space in Rockland

Photos



DirectBuy Boston South owners John and Diana Massaria in their Rockland showroom. (GARY HIGGINS/The Patriot Ledger)

By A.J. BAUER  
The Patriot Ledger

ROCKLAND - DirectBuy Boston South in Rockland has a spacious new location. With shelves upon shelves of books filled with manufacturers' prices, along with showrooms displaying directly-purchased furnishings, it by no means feels like a typical shopping experience.

"We call it the country club environment," said Diana Massaria, who owns the DirectBuy with her husband, John.

John, 38, and Diana, 32, have owned DirectBuy Boston South for a little more than a year but have already overseen a sizeable expansion.

Previously located on Reservoir Park Drive in Rockland, the DirectBuy moved to its new location on Commerce Road in May, a move that more than doubled its space and tripled its employees.

The new location features more than 14,500 square feet - up from around 6,500 square feet at the old location - including several showrooms and office and warehouse space. It is staffed by 25 employees, up from seven at the previous location.

As the name suggests, DirectBuy allows members to purchase items directly from the manufacturers without the usual mark-ups of retail stores. The company is headquartered in Merrillville, Ind., and has 140 locations throughout the United States and Canada that are owned and operated by franchisees like the Massarias.

The service works much like a club, with customers paying what amounts to dues for three- or 10-year memberships. Membership allows them to sift through price books, choosing in many cases any model or design available in a manufacturer's entire catalog, and to purchase the product at cost plus shipping and handling.

John Massaria would not disclose the price of membership but said the Rockland location consists of more than 2,000 members.

"If the benefits of the membership didn't pay for itself, we wouldn't have hundreds of thousands of members nationwide," John said.

An average member typically saves about \$20,000 over 10 years through buying direct, he said.

John said the recent expansion was both a result of increasing business as well as an attempt to fit into a broader plan for all DirectBuy locations nationwide to move to more expansive showroom styles.

Sitting throughout the DirectBuy South showrooms, members flip through cost books of big-name manufacturers, looking for furniture and appliances. DirectBuy features more than 700 manufacturers, their products ranging from light fixtures to television sets to pots and pans.

Paul Garstka, a member from Brewster, sat with a kitchen designer planning his kitchen remodeling project. He said he was surprised by the wide array of options provided by DirectBuy.

Garstka said he expects to save from \$25,000 to \$35,000 on his project by buying through DirectBuy.

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John Massaria maintains that just like with a country club or gym, members reap the benefits only when they use the service.

□□It's like joining a gym and not going there," John said. □□If you don't go, you're not going to lose any weight."

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Transmitted Tuesday, August 21, 2007

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