

# Surf's Up

Calling all Frankie and Annette types: Dig this way-cool Hawaiian-print bedding line. A one-stop source for Polynesian-print decor, Uhula.com will throw a bikini beach party in your store or home.

Uhula (pronounced Oo-hoo-la) is a soft goods company developed by Marcia Needles and her family in 1999. The inspiration for the Hawaiian-themed bedding line bloomed when Needles' 13-year-old daughter Cassie wanted to redecorate her bedroom in the theme but could not find a single related item in California stores. Undaunted, Marcia and Cassie designed and created their own bedding and bedroom decor. It was such a hit with Cassie and her friends that Needles decided to test the product in the marketplace.

Marcia's strong credentials in marketing and sales gave her the confidence that she could sell, but sourcing the right manufacturer and retailers was the key. "We started with surf stores," Needles says. "They sold out rapidly, so there really was a need for our product."

Uhula initially benefitted greatly from its location near several of the largest Hawaiian-print manufacturers but soon struck out on its own. In fact, textiles now form the basis of the company's success. "When we started, I'd look at a gentleman's aloha-print shirt and think, 'I have a duvet cover in

that fabric,'" Needles says. "We've migrated from using other people's prints to designing all of our own fabrics."

Unique, vibrant patterns in beach themes—flowers, surfboards and boogie boards on a background of rich and vibrant colors—set Uhula apart from other bedding manufacturers. All of the bedding lines are made of 100 percent cotton, and the products can be delivered immediately. Uhula makes bed skirts, duvet covers, pillowcases and shams for any size bed. The company also produces such home decor items as bamboo picture frames, bedroom dressers and rugs with a surfboard theme.

Uhula started as a teen-, juvenile- and preteen-focused company, but it is expanding its scope with a baby's room line—complete with crib bedding, towels and bibs—and an adult line scheduled to launch at New York's Home Textiles Show at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center this month.

While the tropical look is considered a trend, Needles believes that it will evolve and continue. "The surf, snow and skate industries have blended to form a huge outlet for what used to be a more segmented market," Needles says. "We get orders from everywhere."

Uhula bedding products are only available in select stores nationwide. So

Uhula.com is where most wholesalers and consumers buy the products. "Our Web site is important because we are relatively new and don't have enough distribution in all the states," Needles says.

For more information, visit [www.Uhula.com](http://www.Uhula.com) or call (949) 361-6565.

Red surfboard rug. **CIRCLE 555**

Tropical Boogie Collection. **CIRCLE 554**



The Needles family.

