

Eco-friendly building supplier's market growing 30% monthly

SCOTTSDALE

For a company just getting off the ground, a.k.a. Green is flying pretty high these days.

The eco-friendly building supply store has been in business just 10 months and already is seeing a 30 percent monthly increase in sales.

In February co-owners Jeffery Frost and Mick Dalrymple had to move into a larger space featuring a showroom four times the size of the original store.

Now, Dalrymple is producing a

new PBS series likely to air next January, featuring ecotopics such as Scottsdale's hydrogen house and the city's successful Green Building program.

"Business has been great," Dalrymple said. "There is a large non-served market in this area. And it doesn't take a brain surgeon to see our energy crisis is not going away. We want to be prepared for it rather than be overwhelmed by it."

Frost agrees, "As a society, we are wanting to make healthier and smarter decisions for our families."

While the green-materials industry is still relatively small today, it has grown by more than 50 percent in the past decade and now accounts for more than \$233 billion in annual consumer spending.

A.k.a. Green is where Sharper Image meets the Whole Earth Catalog.

Their store features innovative products that are also Earth friendly. Products you will find include:



Mike Rynearson/The Republic

Jeffery Frost, co-owner of a.k.a. Green, restocks his supply of natural clay plasters in his Scottsdale eco-friendly store.

A.K.A. Green

■ **What:** Makers of stylish eco-friendly building products.

■ **Where:** 8100 E. Indian School Road, Scottsdale.

■ **Contacts:** www.aka-green.com or (480) 946-9600.

■ Curtains that improve air quality.

■ Cork flooring that is hypoallergenic because it can't absorb dust.

■ Compact fluorescent bulbs, which use 75 percent less energy than standard bulbs and last up to 10 times longer.

■ IceStone, a durable coun-

tertop and flooring surface that's made of 75 percent recyclable glass and concrete.

Fighting stereotypes

Dalrymple said bamboo floors and recycled denim insulation are very popular right now.

"We don't carry stuff just for the sake of green," Dalrymple said. "It has to be green and it has to have real design appeal."

Dalrymple said there are still people who think of a green building as a hut of straw bales or mud.

"You can have a green home that looks like anything," Dalrymple said. "The whole idea is you're building higher quality so you're getting better energy performance, getting rid of toxins and using materials

that have less impact on the Earth."

While building a green home can add 5 to 10 percent to the cost of a project, those added costs could be recouped later through water and energy saving devices.

Some tax credits may also apply.

Dalrymple said their customers are typically people who are chemically sensitive, concerned about the environment and concerned about climate change. They also want something stylish and different.

"The builder/developers who use our products are doing some of the most interesting cutting-edge projects in the Valley," Dalrymple said.

This week, Dalrymple is in New Orleans attending a U.S. Rebuilding Council.