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Photos by JACK WATSON / For the Camera

Conor Aucoin, of Boulder, moves a leather recliner on Monday afternoon in preparation for HW Home's annual warehouse sale this year at the former Lord & Taylor department store at Broomfield's FlatIron Crossing mall.

HW
HOME

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HW Home store goes big

Annual sale in department store start of growth spurt

By Greg Avery

Camera Business Writer

BROOMFIELD — There's something appropriate about HW Home throwing its annual warehouse sale in a former department store.

The Boulder-born furniture store is more than quadrupling the size of its annual blowout event, filling the 65,000-square-foot second floor of the former Lord & Taylor department store at FlatIron Crossing with hundreds of tables, chairs, sofas, lamps and other furnishings.

The four-day sale, which starts Thursday, marks a major evolution for HW Home, which held its previous annual sales in a 15,000-square-foot Louisville warehouse in the Colorado Tech Center.

This one is much bigger, a symbol for what the furniture seller is doing across the metro area, including at its first store in downtown Boulder.

"I really can't believe what we're doing, but why not?" asked Ron Werner, co-owner of the store. "Sometimes you've got to roll big."

Werner expects 3,000 people — some of them from out-of-state — to browse the warehouse sale, which starts with an invite-only night and then opens to the public Friday.

Beyond the one-time sale, HW Home is enlarging its downtown Boulder stores, moving its existing FlatIron Crossing store inside the mall and plans to open a fourth store in Greenwood Village.

In Boulder, HW Home bought the commercial triplex



Ron Werner, co-owner of HW Home furniture store, trains employees on Monday afternoon in preparation for the store's annual warehouse sale.

next door to its 1941 Pearl St. shop and is expanding into it next week, making the showroom nearly 5,000 square feet.

That expansion benefits all the retailers on east Pearl Street far more than if the company had moved somewhere else, said Kathy Vossler, co-owner of Feather Thy Nest, a home merchandise store a block to the west.

HW Home's expansion also adds to area's reputation as the city's best cluster of home furnishings stores: "It has become our identification, and that helps all of us," she said.

Later this year, the HW Home will move its Broomfield store inside FlatIron Crossing. Werner is not yet announcing the exact location but, he said, being inside the mall will increase the business' exposure

and suit HW Home better than the changing mix of shops at the mall's outdoor Village.

A fourth HW Home opens this spring in The Landmark, a high-end \$140 million condominium project under construction in Greenwood Village.

Werner and Jim Hering founded HW Home on east Pearl Street in 1999. Hering brought a background managing a large Chicago merchandise showroom and Werner bought a background in finance.

In their Boulder store's early days, the pair would close the shop at 6 p.m. and pack furniture into a rented U-Haul and deliver items for the next hour or two.

They later bought their own trucks, added staff to handle deliveries and began branching

out by opening their Broomfield and Cherry Creek locations.

John Koval, director of development for Boulder's Coburn Development Inc., signed HW Home to its first store lease and has gone on to sell Werner and Hering both Boulder buildings.

HW Home's style, price point and emphasis on immediately delivering any pieces it sold — getting rid of the weeks of lag many furniture sellers operate under — seemed likely to be a hit and it was, Koval said.

"What they've got is a great concept, and they do a great job adapting it to different locations," Koval said.

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