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Convert-A-Bench makes outdoor eating a snap

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Summary

Two local entrepreneurs are helping folks cure the problem of outdoor entertaining and eating with their Convert-A-Bench - two park-style benches that fold into one picnic table.

The concept is not a new one, but Steve Watts and Brent Norton have taken the bench-to-table idea a few steps further and patented a product that includes arm rests, easy assembly (only four screws), and their brand new all-resin benches.

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The concept is not a new one, but Steve Watts and Brent Norton have taken the bench-to-table idea a few steps further and patented a product that includes arm rests, easy assembly (only four screws), and their brand new all-resin benches. "There are several types of convertible tables, but we are the only ones with arm rests, which makes for a more attractive bench form," Norton said.

Premiere Products also offers all wood benches, but the excitement for white resin fencing, trellises, window frames and other outdoor amenities spurred the company, and it has just launched its direct marketing campaign for the plastic benches.

To help with the launching, QVC, a home-shopping television network, will present the product as part of Utah Day, Friday, April 10 between 6 and 7 p.m. Four other QVC appearances have also been scheduled.

The benches (in twos) sale for approximately \$159, depending on the area of the country. Local residents can purchase directly from the warehouse. Premiere products have also been sold in stores like Sam's Club, Walmart and Kmart. They weigh about 40 pounds and have a unique sleeve system where the bench planks just slide into place.

The new resin benches are also weather proof and durable, and can accommodate up to 600 pounds per bench. Decorative cushions are also available.

The idea for the product came to Watts and Norton in 1991. Both wanted more than their current jobs offered, so they took a chance and now have a company that brings in more than \$2 million a year. With the introduction of the new resin benches, they expect those numbers to more than double in the next year.

"Our future looks really exciting," Watts said.

Premiere Products, which does most of its business out of state, is also going into foreign markets. "We are gradually moving overseas in Japan, Chili and Australia first," Watts said.

With benches and picnic tables being seasonal products, Premiere would like to open markets in the southern

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fashioned a Create-A-Bench kit that includes just the plastic arms and legs. The buyer provides the wood slats. The kit retails for \$49.95.

Norton grew up in Provo and attended Provo High School. Watts, an avid golfer, attended Logan High School. They have been friends for a long time, but their first "business" experience together was forming Sports Production.

Norton does the radio coverage for Brigham Young University's baseball games, and Watts calls the baseball games for Utah Valley State College on a competing station. A third and former partner, [Ward Parkinson](#), helped the duo get started with the company.

Area residents are invited to come to the warehouse at 300 N. Draper Lane (an I-15 frontage road north of the Center Street overpass) to see the benches, or they can call 375-5484. For those out of Utah County, call 1-800-508-2253.

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