



Lacks Enterprises Inc's new product doesn't veer too far from automotive

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By **Shandra Martinez | The Grand Rapids Press**

Lacks Enterprises is finding a new use for the technology that has made it a leader in automotive decorative trim.

Its latest product doesn't veer too far from automotive. Under the name **Coach House Accents** it is offering a product that dresses up a garage door to look like a carriage house.

"We are all about curb appeal," said Tim Grant, the product development manager.

Launched in January, the garage decorative pieces are expected to be the first in a series of architectural design products planned for the home. More products will be released in 2012.

"It's a natural extension of our core competency," Grant said. "We are really just **diversifying our product offerings** in the market."



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Amy Batey attaches garage door decor with simple hand tools. The decorations are a new product from automobile supplier Lacks Enterprises.



The automotive technology makes the products stronger and more durable than the competition, and are virtually maintenance-free because of the finishes and high-quality composite materials used, Grant said.

The product is being marketed to the do-it-



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yourself consumer and can be installed in less than 20 minutes.

"We designed it so anyone can do it," Grant said. "We fit about 80 to 95 percent of the doors out there."

The 8-foot double simulated window overlays have a suggested retail price of \$275, while the hinge and handle sets sells for \$120 for the Traditional Series in black and \$220 for the Signature Series in deep bronze and heritage black. The pieces come with a 15-year warranty — longer than most garage doors.

The decorative parts produced in the company's Kentwood facility on Airwest Drive SE, with similar technology used to make the grill for Buicks: an automotive-grade resin that is then painted to look like metal with Lacks'

patented Spinelli process.

Lacks operates 17 injection molding, electroplating, painting and assembly facilities in West Michigan and South Carolina, employing more than 2,000 people.

"There is really nothing like it on the market," said Jay Mosterd, co-owner of the Holland-based Quality Door Inc., which sells the product at its four locations in Holland, Muskegon, Grand Rapids and Grand Haven. "It's more durable finish than any other decorative hardware on the market."

Mosterd says he tried the trim on his garage, and it holds up better than previous products, which are often made of metal fabricated in China.

The challenge may be building the market. The product hasn't been a hot seller at Environmental Door in Grand Rapids.

"It's a little different than what most people want," said Michelle Barbrick, manager of the garage company at 1501



Third Ave. NW.

Lacks is selling the products through local garage door dealers and online at coachhouseaccents.com

While Coach House Accents could eventually become a division of the nearly half-century old family-owned business, at this point it is being treated like a small startup with four employees staffing the venture, said Ross Rivard, Coach House's marketing director.



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The business is expected to be profitable by 2012, said Bob Bieri, Lacks' general manager.

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