

## Social-design site Quirky launches US-made product

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(AP) — Quirky.com, a website that lets users collaborate on designing household products, is launching its first U.S.-manufactured item, a take on the traditional milk crate, on Wednesday.

The storage crates will be sold on the design website Fab.com for the next seven days. Starting on July 1, they will be available at 400 Target stores around the country.

Quirky is one of a growing number of startups based in New York as the city vies to rival Silicon Valley in becoming a technology hub.

Quirky lets people submit inventions that range from kitchen tools to cord organizers to bathroom accessories. The company's designers then work with Quirky's online members to develop their favorite products at a rate of two a week. Quirky keeps the rights to the products and the inventors and Quirky members who gave input on the design get royalties as long as the product is sold.

"We fully manufacture, distribute and take all the financial risk on behalf of the inventor," said CEO Ben Kaufman.

The company wanted to make the crate in the U.S. in part to speed up the manufacturing process, allowing the storage cube to be ready in time for the back-to-school shopping season. They are being built in Vermont.

The crates, which look like a rounded, sleeker version of the plastic milk

crates found in many college dorms, will cost \$20, with accessories ranging from \$5 to \$30. They were designed by Jenny Drinkard, who graduated from Georgia Tech about a year ago.

"It makes sense to include consumers in the design process," she said of Quirky's process. "Not just put it on the shelf and hope they like it."

**More information:** [www.quirky.com/cratefab.com/sale/7052/](http://www.quirky.com/cratefab.com/sale/7052/)

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