its product life cycle. Focus within the category in the near future will be a proactive approach geared toward maintaining volumes at peak levels at attractive margins. This is accomplished primarily through incremental improvements to the product line to keep it fresh in the eyes of the consumer. Some suggested concepts are as follows:

- **Model 700 BDL Synthetic Stock** – The current Model 700 BDL Synthetic stock is dated in styling and aesthetics. A common complaint of Model 700 Synthetic stocks is that it feels "hollow" and "cheap". Wall thickness on the Model 700 Synthetic stock is relatively thin in the butt section and is currently stuffed with foam to help absorb some of the "hollow" sound encountered when the stock is tapped on. Consideration should be given to both increasing the wall thickness and to a change in material. The Model 597 rimfire and the Model 710 bolt-action centerfire both sport very solid feeling and sounding stocks which are substantially cheaper to produce than the current Model 700 Synthetic stock.

  In addition to the "cheap" feel of the Model 700 Synthetic stock, its styling is dated. Originally designed as a plastic version of the trusted wood stock, checkering patterns where included in the molded design of the synthetic stock. Now that synthetics have gained acceptance in the market place, it is not a prerequisite that they follow along the same lines with respect to appearance as their wood counterpart. Changes in stock texturing or rubber over-molded panels in the grip and fore end areas of synthetic stocks are beginning to take the place of the more traditional checkering patterns. A great example is the Sako Model 75 Synthetic.

  Requirements for a redesigned Model 700 Synthetic stock are:
  - Must feel and sound more durable and solid than the current stock
  - Must utilize either a texturing change or rubber over-molded panels in the grip and fore end areas
  - Must take advantage of new technologies currently under evaluation by R&D to create a non-slip rubberized surface through the injection molding process
  - Must minimize or eliminate "swirls" in the stock found in the current synthetic stock