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Canada's Housewares Magazine

May 2014

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Contact the Canadian Gift Association

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August 30 to September 2, 2014

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Opening Lines

The battle for independents

The closing of Kingsmill's Department Store in London, Ontario is sad on so many levels I don't know where to begin.

First, there is the fact that Jim Hands and Elaine Norris are former recipients of the Global Innovator Award. I presented Kingsmill's with the *gia* for Canada back in 2006. The store itself was gorgeous, with polished wood floors and an antique hammered tin ceiling. But it was the passion and combined talent of those two individuals that really made the honour so special for me. Spending the weekend with the Kingsmill's team in Chicago was absolutely delightful and although they didn't go on to win a global *gia*, it was one of the highlights of my career. To watch a store that was selected as one of the best in Canada disappear is so disheartening.



Secondly, the closure is a tragedy for the architectural landscape of London and the retail history of our country. Established in 1865, the store has been family owned and operated for five generations. It's housed in a historic building that is reminiscent of a time gone by – a time when shopping downtown was a special Saturday event, a reason to get dressed up and make a full day of it, perhaps ending with a nice cup of tea in the cafe. (At press time, Pillar Nonprofit Network had pulled out of the purchase of Kingsmill's and the future of the iconic building is unknown.)

Finally, the closing of Kingsmill's was particularly sad because of the way it was handled, and the impact it has had on surrounding retailers. Two terrific independent kitchen shops (Kiss the Cook and Jill's Table) are both located within a few miles of Kingsmill's and have worked co-operatively with them for years. Both have been adversely affected (along with many other retailers across southwestern Ontario) by what was promoted as a 'customer appreciation event', rather than the liquidation of a store closing.

At a time when independents are facing greater challenges than ever before, you can imagine how frustrating it is to discover some vendors were initially shipping Kingsmill's new products for what was essentially a 'going out of business' sale. That changed quickly enough as suppliers learned the truth, but the damage had been done. And consumers continue to drive into London in droves to take advantage of 75% price reductions as 'everything must go'. The other retailers – the ones who hope to still be around when Kingsmill's is gone – are losing sales at a time when they can least afford it.

Right across the country, from Quebec to B.C., specialty kitchen shops are closing their doors, the owners throwing up their hands in defeat since they're unable to compete with online shopping and mass merchants who are now carrying many of the identical products. So how do we reverse the trend? What can we do – what can I do – to keep this integral part of our industry alive and moving forward in a positive way? I'm looking for ideas and I want to help.

One of the things I've always admired about independents is their inherent ability to work together as a united force. We need to address the unique challenges faced by kitchen shop owners today. We know there are lots of problems. Let's explore some solutions. Email me, or call me, with your concerns, your ideas and your thoughts on the future of specialty kitchen shops in Canada and how to reverse this downward spiral.

Retailers by their nature are risk takers and used to dealing with a variety of challenges. Claire Breeze, the subject of the retail profile in this issue, is one of the best in our industry, but she's also a realist. She agreed to the interview with one condition, that she be allowed to talk about the need for housewares vendors to create two distinct product lines today, one for mass merchants, one for independents. Even then, the future is not secure, she says, unless you own multiple locations. Claire now owns four stores, and is in the process of setting up her online business, but still worries that without a national housewares buying group, the future of specialty store owners is bleak.

I hope Claire is wrong, but the Kingsmill's closing is worrisome. As we say goodbye to this London landmark, we must do more than follow in the British tradition to 'keep calm and carry on'. As an industry, the time to act is now.

– Laurie O'Halloran
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People In the News

• **Eric Beam**, who joined Hamilton Beach in 2011, has been promoted to general manager and vice president for Canada and will assume responsibility for the Canadian head office in Markham, Ontario. John Seymour, former president, has left the company to pursue other opportunities.

• **Nadège Vergura** has been appointed senior marketing manager at Philips, responsible for kitchen appliances and Saeco branded products.

• Following Lifetime's acquisition of BUILT NY, **John Roscoe Swartz**, founder of BUILT, was named president of the newly formed Lifetime Built division.

• Bradshaw International recently finalized an agreement with **Bialetti**, the Italian coffee maker and cookware company, to become the brand's North American partner. The partnership provides a 25-year license agreement for Bialetti cookware, bakeware and kitchenware.

• **Jura** has announced a corporate name change from Jura Capresso, the name under which the company markets the Jura and Capresso brands in North America and the Caribbean, to Jura Inc.

• Dollarama has hired **Johanne Choiniere**, previously senior vice-president of Metro's restructured Ontario division, as its new chief operating officer. Beginning May 12, she will head up retail operations as well as logistics, distribution and supply chain management for Canada's biggest dollar store chain. Choiniere replaces Stephen Gonthier who recently left the company to become CEO of 99 Cents Only Stores.

• Staples will close up to 225 stores in the United States and Canada – 12% of its North America outlets – as it loses customers to mass market chains and e-retailers. Shares of the largest U.S. office supply retailer fell about 17% in the last quarter. Staples has 1,846 stores in North America.



Whirlpool expands manufacturing base

Whirlpool Corporation plans to invest \$40 million to nearly double the size of its Greenville, Ohio, small appliance manufacturing operations. The expansion is expected to generate 400 new jobs by 2018 – bringing the facility's total workforce to about 1,400 employees.

Executives say strong demand for KitchenAid small appliances is driving the need for increased production capacity. Overall small appliance production has doubled during the past five years at the Greenville facility. The company is seeing significant growth across the globe. With increasing market demand for premium products and the recent introduction of the KitchenAid brand into new areas, the company is confident this growth will continue.

Whirlpool produces KitchenAid stand mixers and attachments, hand mixers and blenders at the Greenville facility, which has been in operation since 1942. The facility currently produces an average of 16,000 units per day.

Letters

I just read your editorial in the March issue and want to thank you. You are absolutely right that it is a joint effort to produce an exciting trade event; show management, vendors and retailers all play a critical role. The failure to "engage" on the part of any of those three groups creates serious challenges for all participants, and most importantly for the entire industry at large.

*Peter Moore,
President and CEO,
Canadian Gift Association*

An advertisement for the 'Final Touch Watermelon Tapping Kit'. The background is red and white. On the left, four numbered steps illustrate the process: 1. Slicing the watermelon, 2. Removing the lid and scooping out the fruit, 3. Inserting the tapping tool into the watermelon, and 4. The finished watermelon with the tapping kit attached. In the center, a large watermelon has the tapping kit installed, with a glass of red watermelon juice next to it. The text 'Final Touch' is in a cursive font, and 'Watermelon TAPPING KIT keg' is in a large, bubbly font. Below the watermelon, the text reads 'Turn watermelons or other fruits into a drink dispenser.' At the bottom, contact information for Product Specialties Inc. is provided.

Final Touch
Watermelon TAPPING KIT keg

1. Slice to keep the melon standing straight (optional).
2. Cut a lid from the top, scoop clean and set fruit innards aside.
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Turn watermelons or other fruits into a drink dispenser.

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London Drugs is top retail brand in B.C.

Ipsos and *BCBusiness* wanted to know what brands were closest to the hearts of provincial residents. They recently unveiled their list of *B.C.'s Top 10 Most Loved Brands* at a reception last February. Results were based on an Ipsos study that asked respondents to rate a variety of brands that have strong ties within the province along various dimensions of brand love.

The top 10 most loved brands are:

1. London Drugs
2. WestJet
3. Save-on-Foods
4. White Spot
5. SunRype
6. Vancouver Canucks
7. B.C. Hydro
8. The Keg
9. BCAA
10. Chevron

"Here in British Columbia, we have some extraordinary brands that have succeeded in making a name for themselves on the local, national and global scenes," says Michael Rodenburgh of Ipsos in Western Canada. "For those brands defined as the most loved in B.C., they have meaning in our daily lives. We couldn't imagine this beautiful province without them."

The study ranked 65 B.C.-based brands using a measurement approach inspired by Ipsos' Brand Value Creator model. It also examined eight key dimensions linked to how consumers interact with and actually love brands.

While retailer London Drugs took the top spot as the Most Loved Brand, it also scored high on a number of dimensions in the study.

"London Drugs almost tripled the average B.C. brand score when it came to consumers referring to a 'brand that I trust,'" Rodenburgh explains. "The company also more than doubled average B.C. scores in the categories of a 'brand I'm likely to interact with'."

Dollarama plans for more growth in 2014

Dollarama is planning to open another 400 stores in Canada, including 150 in the next two years. "There is continued runway for growth," says chief financial officer Michael Ross, citing the strength of the brand that he says has become a 'junior anchor' in many Canadian malls.

Ross says Dollarama is planning 85 'net' new stores in 2014, between 70 and 80 in 2015 and sees opportunities for growth, especially in Ontario and Western Canada. The company opened 86 new stores in 2013.

Although it reported that December sales results were negatively affected by severe weather, resulting in store closures, Dollarama did have a robust third quarter in 2013, with a comparable store sales increase of 4.8%.

Dollarama has also started planting seeds for international expansion, with 15 stores in El Salvador, and an eye on Costa Rica, Columbia and Peru as possible next platforms.

Shopify POS system available in Canada

Ottawa-based Shopify is bringing its point-of-sales (POS) hardware and service back home to Canada after a successful launch in the U.S. It's also making a bricks and mortar-only Shopify service available.

Shopify began as an e-commerce retailer, managing the backend inventory systems of online shops for nearly 100,000 merchants. It expanded its business in August of last year by launching a payments processing service and POS system, allowing customers to ditch third-party payment providers and use the same inventory management system for both e-commerce sales and in-store sales.

Now Canadian retailers can buy the hardware needed for the Shopify POS. New customers to Shopify now also have the option to start with just the POS and not an e-commerce store.

The hardware available includes a card reader that is compatible with a Shopify iOS app on the iPhone and iPad. It can be used to take credit card payments from Visa, MasterCard, and American Express. Plus, those payments can be accepted at new, recently negotiated lower rates, according to Adam McNamara at Shopify.

The POS-only plan costs \$49 per month and is "incredibly important" for Shopify, he says. "If merchants want to get started and aren't ready to sell online yet, Shopify is a great place to start."

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Advertising Material Due:
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Retail News Update

Federated Co-op acquires 14 stores

Federated Co-operatives Limited (FCL), on behalf of the Co-operative Retailing System, has agreed to purchase 14 food stores from Sobeys – four stores in Edmonton and Winnipeg and one each in Regina, Saskatoon, Taber, Leduc, Westaskiwin and Fort Saskatchewan.

“This transaction is indeed a historical agreement for our federation. It is an excellent strategic fit that will strengthen Co-ops across Western Canada,” says CEO Scott Banda. “We look forward to welcoming new employees and customers, acquainting them with quality products, service, and benefits that Co-ops have been offering members and customers for a century.”

The purchase is a two-step transaction for FCL: first, to acquire the 14 sites from Sobeys; and, second, to transfer ownership and operations of 12 to local retail Co-ops.

Approximately 1,300 employees work at the stores involved in this transaction. They will continue to be employed at each of the respective locations following the transaction.

FCL, based in Saskatoon, is owned by 225 autonomous retail co-operatives and their 1.6 million individual member-owners in communities from Vancouver Island to northwestern Ontario. Retail co-ops currently operate approximately 250 food stores and 400 gas bar/convenience stores. During the past five years, the retail Co-ops involved in this transaction returned \$300 million in cash back to their individual members in recognition of their patronage of the Co-op.

Walmart steps up hybrid expansion

To fully understand Walmart’s stepped-up expansion of smaller, hybrid stores in the U.S., American CEO Bill Simon says we should think of the strategy as “the digital thinking of physical retail.”

Simon explains that the retailer is using its *Neighborhood Market* and *Walmart Express* formats to create a new

kind of “fully tethered retailer,” offering consumers all the possibilities of e-commerce with the convenience of a physical store, including such innovations as grocery delivery, drive-through grocery pickup, and storage lockers.

“We are using these formats so shoppers can order groceries and maybe a snow shovel online, then pick it up on their way home, when they are stopping to gas up at Walmart anyway,” he says.

The problem is that Walmart has fallen behind on fill-in shopping trips, as many smaller competitors, including dollar, drug and convenience stores, have proliferated. “Our growth has been interrupted by the rapid growth in these smaller stores.” Walmart has a roughly 10% share of that \$415 billion market.

With the expansion of Neighborhood Markets, first launched in 1999, and the newer Walmart Express, “we now have an opportunity to really make an impact in this area.” But what makes the concept powerful, he says, is combining the smaller stores with the power of its e-commerce capabilities.

Plans call for a doubling of its small store growth in the coming fiscal year.

Staff to revenue ratio is key factor in retail

Many U.S. chains have announced some heavy cuts in staff, and fewer employees is now one of the key forces changing the face of retail. But Jason Moser, an analyst at Motley Fool One, claims there is one key number that counts in retail: revenue per employee. In Amazon’s case, every person the company employs generates an average of \$800,000 in sales. For Best Buy? The number is much less than half that.

He says the footprint of stores is shrinking because consumers are shopping online more. And technology has streamlined inventory systems, making them more efficient, so stores need far less room to keep stock.

“That translates into the need for less space,” he explains. And a demand for what might be called “smaller boxes”.



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Retailers allowed to keep English names

A Quebec judge has ruled that major retailers do not have to modify their commercial trademark English names into French, as the province's language watchdog had hoped. The Superior Court justice ruled in early April that businesses with storefront signs that have their trademark name in a language other than French do not contravene the French Language Charter.

Several multinational retail chains (who operate a total of 215 outlets) took the province to court after they were told by the language watchdog to change their names or risk running afoul of the rules governing the language of business in the province.

The *Office quebecois de la langue française* wanted the companies to change their signs to either a generic French name or add a slogan or explanation that reflected what they sold. But the judge hearing the case ruled in favour of the major retailers – a group that included Best Buy, Costco, Gap, Old Navy, Guess, Wal-Mart and Toys "R" Us.

"Public signage by the plaintiffs of their trademarks uniquely in a language other than French, when there is no French version of the trademark, does not violate the Charter of the French Language or the laws respecting the language of commerce and business," Justice Michel Yergeau wrote.

The watchdog suggested that a store like Wal-Mart, a household name with no French equivalent, could change its signage to "Le Magasin Wal-Mart."

Container Store gives bridal shower advice

The Container Store has released a Bridal Shower Guide with ideas for using its products in a bridal shower. The Bridal Shower Guide offers tips, ideas and inspiration for an organized shower. With the introduction of the guide, the retailer also kicks off a regular monthly contest where brides can win \$1,000 *Store More Card* by creating a Pinterest Board called The Organized Shower.

The Guide focuses on three themes: Kitchen, Closet and Travel. The guide is available in stores, online and via direct mail to select customers.

As they prepare for the shower, brides and grooms can create a gift registry either in one of the retailer's stores or online. Additionally, The Container Store has partnered with Wedding Paper Divas to offer discounts on shower and wedding invitations.

Bricks & mortar stores learn online tactics

Online giants such as Amazon and eBay have been gleaning information about their customers' merchandise browsing and buying habits for years and now bricks and mortar retailers are taking a page from their playbook.

From in-store cameras that track how long customers pause at store displays to opt-in apps that recognize shoppers' identities and send an instant coupon to their phones, retailers are keen to discover new avenues of advantage over convenient rival websites.

The emerging technologies let retailers observe customers looking at an item in a store and simultaneously determine how many people are using the store's WiFi network to check Amazon's price on the same item, for example.

Not all of the technologies are designed to combat showrooming, which is not necessarily what consumers are doing in stores when they are checking their mobile devices. Research indicates consumers more often start researching items to find out more information rather than looking to undercut a price.

Consumers want to buy in more ways than one

Consumers today want to shop with retailers who offer several ways to buy stuff. In fact, former nice-to-haves (like an easy-to-access storefront, a ecommerce-enabled website or mobile shopping app) are becoming the norm. This was revealed in a new survey of retail expectations conducted by PwC. The survey polled 15,000 consumers (in Canada and around the world). Here are the four key things consumers want today.

1. A distinct and compelling brand.

The term "brand story" isn't just for marketers any more. Contrary to popular belief, today's consumers are becoming more and more loyal. In fact, data shows that they want to shop at fewer retailers; in 2013, 59% of Canadian shoppers patronized just five or fewer national non-grocery retail chains, up from 46% a year earlier.

When choosing which of the select few stores they'll buy from, shoppers look for compelling, clear and engaging branding. When asked why they buy from their preferred retailer, the top answer was not price or selection, but rather "I trust the brand".

2. Customized offers

Consumers want retailers to appreciate their individual tastes and provide offers that complement those preferences. Big data and analytics tools are making it easier for store operators to do so. However, consumers are skittish about retailers knowing too much about them, especially if they believe their personal information may be compromised.

3. An amazing digital experience.

Today's consumer is buying in more ways than ever before with 26% of Canadian shoppers using a tablet in 2013 (up from 22% in 2012), while 29% used a smartphone (up from 23%). PwC claims consistency is crucial to success in this multichannel environment. When a customer visits to your website, Facebook page, mobile site or your store, they want an easy to navigate, and easily recognizable, experience.

4. Transparency

Your stockroom should no longer be a place of mystery. Shoppers today want to know exactly what you have available, and when. And if you don't have it, they'll check out whether your competitors do. When asked to identify what type of in-store technology would most enhance their shopping experience, the most common response (with 47% choosing it) was the ability to check other store or online stock quickly.

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Industry Update

The Cookbook Store closes after three decades in Toronto

Food lovers and cookbook enthusiasts are mourning the loss of The Cookbook Store. The 31-year-old Toronto institution became one more retail casualty. The building that houses the store on Yorkville Avenue has been sold to the developers of a 58-storey condo tower.

Sadly, ongoing road construction, extreme weather, online competition, and the proposed condominium development had a devastating impact on the store's sales. The Cookbook Store has hosted hundreds of famous chefs and authors over the past 30 years.

Debit card fraud at a record low

Interac debit card fraud was down 62% in 2013 due to better technology, according to the group responsible for the payment network. The Interac Association says Interac debit card fraud losses caused by so-called skimming, or the stealing of information, dropped to \$7.3 million last year, down from \$18.2 million in 2012. Chip technology on bank cards has made the difference.

The \$7.3 million in fraud last year in Canada was related to skimming from the magnetic stripes on bank cards. Chip and PIN technology has been introduced in Canada on credit cards and bank debit cards in the last four years.

While chip and PIN technology are helping to decrease fraud in Canada, the U.S. lags in use of the technology.

Overall fraud losses on Interac purchases, including those made outside Canada, decreased to \$29.5 million in 2013 from a high of \$142 million in 2009. In 2012, fraud losses were \$38.5 million.

As a result of the decline in fraud, the number of Interac cardholders reimbursed by financial institutions fell to 72,200 in 2013 from 238,000 in 2009.

Sales of soda machines soaring

U.S. retail sales of home soda machines soared 30% last year, and sales of the accompanying products more than doubled, according to NPD Group.

The machines offer consumers the convenience of customizing their beverages on demand, while saving money and helping the environment. Increased sales of the CO2 carbonators, which more than tripled in 2013, are a good indication that consumers are continuing to invest in, soda making machines while offering retailers add-on revenue.

Sales of syrups and mixes for home soda machines soared 83% last year, with regular and diet soda at the top of the list. Sales of flavored water options grew the most, almost tripling.

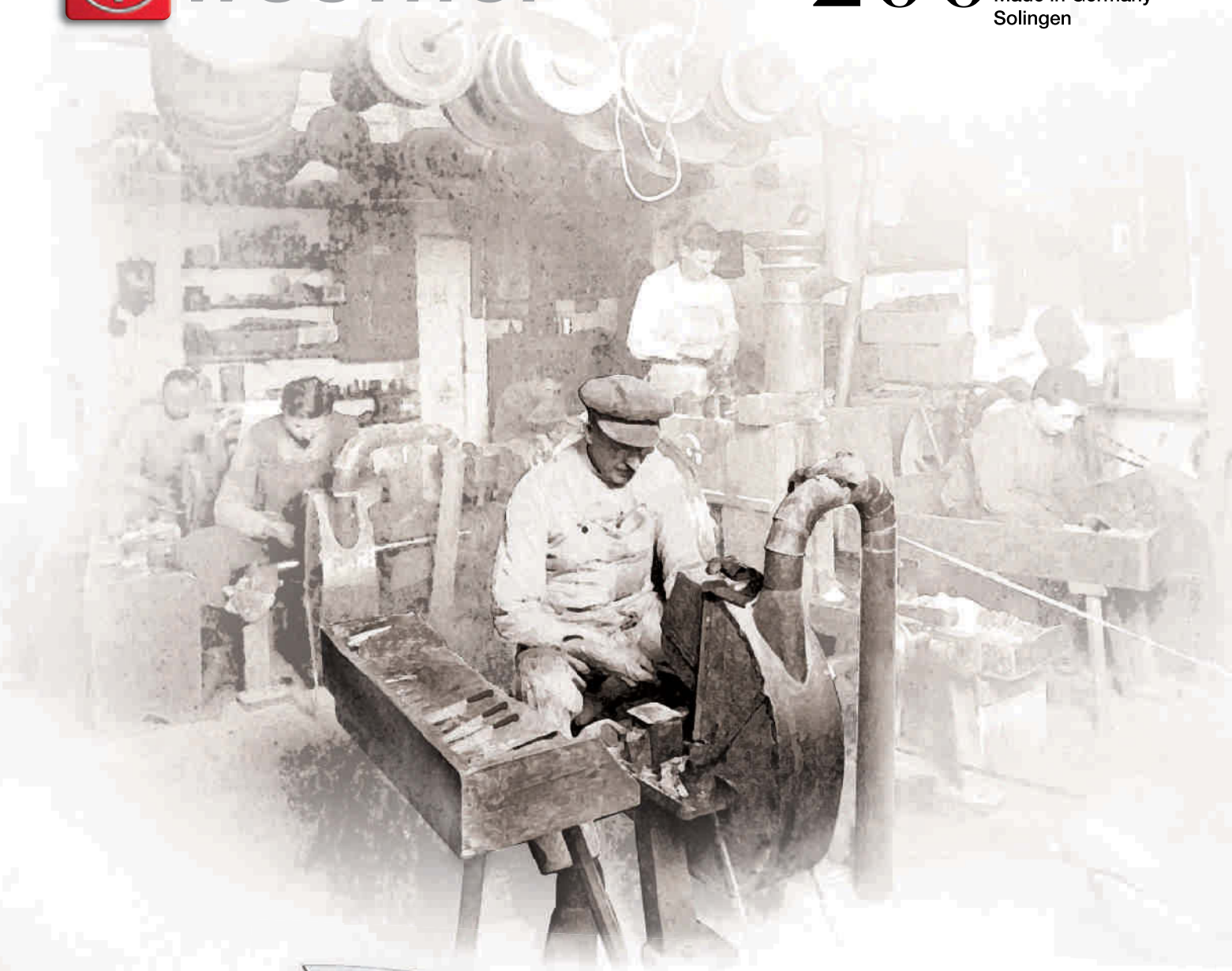
The home soda maker category is still in its infancy with relatively low household penetration. Growth is contingent upon broadening the category's appeal.



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Cole & Mason plan to transform the cooking experience with new seasonings line

Born in Britain, Cole & Mason has been a trusted international brand of high quality salt and pepper mills for over 60 years. Now the company is ready to spice things up with the recent introduction of a new line of innovative kitchenware for storing and using herbs and spices. The products are designed to add pleasure to the preparation, cooking and enjoyment of food.

There has been an explosion recently in consumer interest in flavours and new seasonings. Cole & Mason's mission is to meet the needs of food lovers everywhere. The new herbs and spices products share the high quality design and superior performance that characterizes the Cole & Mason brand.

The primary consumer of Cole & Mason products is a married, 35 to 40-year-old female with kids at home. A confident cook who prepares most meals from scratch, she appreciates the high performance, style and flavour delivery of Cole & Mason's entire range, from simple shakers to the precision system manual and electronic mills. This loyal base is becoming more conscious about flavouring, seasoning and exploring new foods.

The Food Network, cooking shows, digital blogs and new cooking styles

have all influenced the consumer to become more aware and experiment with flavours and food. C&M's goal is to entice the emerging millennial generation, those aged 16 to 34. This group will become the largest consumer demographic by 2015 and are just starting to equip their first kitchen. Brands are extremely important to this group, and they connect to them in a different way than their parents did.

"Great seasoning is at the heart of great cooking," says Brigitte Roy, President of Danesco, exclusive distributor of C&M in Canada. "Food lovers tell us that it is really important to have the right equipment in the kitchen and at the table."

The new range will inspire everyday cooks to get the most out of the incredible variety of herbs and spices that are available today. Danesco hopes to position C&M as the defining symbol within the kitchenware department through the creation of new spice lines that encourage all consumers to experiment with food and flavours. The company will increase C&M brand awareness this year and beyond with greater consumer editorial exposure in print and on TV as well as on social media and through food bloggers, etc.



Paderno's new Spiralizer is ideal for making spiral cuts of vegetables and fruit. It features three interchangeable stainless steel blades that make perfect spiral cuts in seconds. Completely BPA-free, it also has a non-slip suction bottom for added safety.

Cuisinart unveils new beverage system

Cuisinart and beverage system manufacturer Bevyz have entered into a distribution partnership to market and sell the new 'Cuisinart powered by Bevyz' Multi-Drink System.

This new system provides single-serve hot or cold, still or sparkling beverages on demand, all dispensed from one compact countertop appliance.

The flavour capsules used to create these beverages are equipped with sensors that activate the machine's precision dispensing mechanism, which delivers hot or iced tea, hot chocolate, coffee, juice, sodas, soups, sparkling water, and more in seconds.

The system's internal boiler, carbonator and cooling system allow instant transition from hot to cold to carbonation and vice versa, a first in the beverage industry.

Cuisinart will market and sell the Bevyz-developed Multi-Drink System and accessories across North America.

"The new system is slated for launch in Canada in early 2015," says Beverley Melnick of Cuisinart Canada. "We believe beverage and water systems will be a huge business in coming years. This is a unique system is the only one that offers a range of hot, cold, still or carbonated beverages.



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Vendor News Update

Jura brewing system wins design award

Jura Capresso's automatic coffee brewing system, the Jura GIGA 5, won a 2013 Good Design Award from the Chicago Athenaeum, the independent museum of architecture and design in the U.S.

The awards honor quality design of the highest form, function and aesthetic. The GIGA 5 won for its cutting-edge design, construction, utility, energy efficiency and environmental sensitivity.

Winners' products become part of the Museum's Permanent Design collection. And for the first time this year, winners were displayed at the Chicago Athenaeum during the housewares show.

Lifetime buys BUILT NY

Lifetime Brands announced today that it has acquired the business and certain assets of BUILT NY. BUILT is a designer and distributor of brightly coloured, uniquely patterned Neoprene products, including bags, totes, cases and sleeves. BUILT's customer base comprises over 30,000 retail outlets in over 60 countries, the company stated.

Jeffrey Siegel, Lifetime's chairman and CEO, says, "BUILT is well known and highly regarded for authenticity, quality and innovation. BUILT's product line, which embodies 'the good life' spirit, will complement Lifetime's product portfolio and enhance our distribution to fine retailers worldwide."



Continuing its award-winning ways, Joseph Joseph has received a Red Dot award for the Edge glass brush, shown above, and an iF award for the TriScale folding digital scale. This marks the ninth award in seven years for the brand, which is distributed in Canada by Danesco.

Red Dot for Le Creuset

Le Creuset has also received the Red Dot Award 2014 for its new 4.5-quart stainless steel saute pan. In all, 4,815 products from 53 countries entered the competition this year. The product was selected by 40 international design experts from 25 countries.

Le Creuset's New Stainless Steel Cookware features the company's distinct three-ring detailing and a self-sealing lid. The line is made from premium grade tri-ply stainless steel and is backed by a lifetime warranty.

Kitchen Designs are bigger and better than ever!

Kitchen design used to be simple – it was all about the work triangle that allowed the cook to move efficiently from refrigerator to range to sink. Today, designers have more complex calculations to make. After all, the work triangle never accounted for that second island, the extra prep sink, the double oven, or where to situate the love seat, fireplace, tablet-docking station, and flat-screen television.

Kitchens have grown by about 50% over the last 40 years, according to the National Home Builders Association. They are now an average 306 square feet and take up 11.6% of the floor plan in a typical new house.

The manifest destiny of the kitchen is to become a multipurpose great room for living, eating, entertaining and, from time to time, cooking.

"What we're seeing is a trend in general toward larger kitchens but smaller houses," said Richard Buchanan, of Archer & Buchanan Architecture in West Chester.

The trend towards bigger kitchens and smaller houses reflects an evolution in people's lifestyles over the last century and the emergence of an enhanced foodie culture powered by the Food Network. It's all good news for the housewares industry!

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A return to more modest coffee cups

Today, the average American coffee mug, like most things American, is size XXL. Six ounces may be the standard serving size with most home coffee makers, but the cups on household shelves these days are routinely double, triple, even quadruple that.

It wasn't always this way. Before the 1950s, coffee was served in petite cups that discouraged people from adding heaps of sugar and cream. The small size encouraged them to savor the flavour while the brew was still hot, similar to espresso cups.

We may see a return to tiny cups as coffee culture shifts toward the slow and small-batch. At the spring shows, several tableware designers were playing with scaled-down forms, giving coffee drinkers who crave modest proportions more options than ever.

Housewares sales were up 3% in U.S.

The NPD Group reports that U.S. sales of small appliances, housewares and home fashion, reached \$46 billion in 2013, a 3% increase over 2012. According to the global information company, the majority of the growth was seen in the small electrics category.

All major segments within the small appliance industry experienced dollar growth in 2013. Blenders, mixers, specialty stylers, juice extractors, espresso makers, and bare floor cleaners were the strongest performing categories. Increases in the average price paid played an important role in the growth of both small kitchen (up 5%) and personal care appliances (up 4%).

Online is also playing an important role in this industry; while in-store sales of small appliances grew slightly (up 1%), and still account for the lion's share of industry dollars (72%), online sales grew an impressive 20%, now representing 20% of total dollars.

The star of non-electric housewares products in 2013 was cookware, which saw sales increase 3% to \$2.1 billion (37% of the total market). However, the tabletop spotlight was on dinnerware, as average spending has increased over last two years. Overall, online sales brought in 17% of non-electric housewares dollars in 2013, and grew 16% from the previous year.

Home fashions and textiles sales were driven by the bed segment, growing 2% compared with 2012, and accounting for almost 60% of industry dollars. With the exception of the kitchen & dining segment, it wasn't the average home fashions expenditure that increased in 2013, but rather the number of items purchased. There was a noticeable shift in channel share as online sales grew a dramatic 24% at the expense of brick and

mortar retailers, which experienced a sales decline. Despite the increase, online sales of home fashions were just 14% of total dollars in 2013.

It's not easy to market to Millennials

Companies marketing to millennials have found doing business with this generation is no easy feat. New survey data from Pew Research Center may offer some insight into why these consumers are markedly different than previous generations.

Millennials, whose ages range from 18 to 33, are the most racially diverse generation and, compared to their parents, have more liberal views on social issues including same-sex marriage and marijuana legalization and fewer ties to organized religion and political parties. They're less likely to be married and have more student debt than previous generations did at that age.

One of the bigger challenges: Millennials are "low on social trust," according to Pew. Just 19% say most people can be trusted, compared with 31% of Gen Xers and 40% of baby boomers.

On the retail side, that translates to a generation that is brand aware, but cynical and not very brand loyal.

Despite spending roughly an hour a day on retail websites, tech savvy millennials also require more brand interaction opportunities than advertising.

It's increasingly important for brands to have a presence on Facebook, where Pew reports 81% of millennials have an account. Their average number of friends is 250, according to the survey, well above Gen Xers' 200 or younger boomers' 98.

But marketers' edge may be millennials' optimism. There's a lot stacked against them. They have more student debt and lower levels of wealth than their parents or grandparents did at that age, and 51% say they don't expect Social Security will provide for them at retirement. Yet 85% of millennials told Pew they expect to have enough money to lead the sort of lives they want.



Table linens provided a bright spot in an otherwise flat home fashion textile category in the yearlong period ending January 2014. According to the NPD Group, table linens – tablecloths, runners, napkins, placemats – had a 14% increase in dollar sales as compared with the same yearlong period ending January 2013.

"The art of accessorizing has moved beyond the runway, and into our homes. It's about bringing freshness to a table, bed, or bathroom that may have been feeling stale, without spending a fortune to redecorate," says Debra Mednick, executive director and home industry analyst.

Other home fashion textiles categories that showed dollar sales growth included bed covers, 4%; sheets and pillows, 2%, and bath accessories, 1%; with the next closest growth category a full 10% below table linens.

Overall, according to NPD Group, the home fashion textile category showed a 2% decline for the year ending January 2014.

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Show Business

Timing of Tendance is key for holiday buying

Tendance in Frankfurt will once again open the busy autumn, winter and Christmas season from August 30th to September 2nd. As one of the most important order venues for the consumer-goods sector in the second half of the year, Tendance gives the retail trade the chance to place last-minute orders for Christmas at the same time as offering an initial preview of the 2015 spring and summer collections.

“Tendance holds a firm place in the European trade fair calendar as an order and inspiration platform. With its clear focus on the European consumer-goods sector – especially East Europe and Scandinavia – it brings together buyers with decision-making authority and professional suppliers at the perfect time”, says Nicolette Naumann, Vice President of Ambiente/Tendance.

With a huge spectrum of new products and popular classics in six exhibition halls, numerous name brands and international key players cover the subjects of living and giving in their entirety. The Living section with new collections from the tableware, interior design, home accessories and decorations, as well as furnishing concepts, is located in Halls 8.0, 9.0 and 11.1.

Year in, year out, Tendance is an important presentation platform for contemporary arts & crafts. The ‘Form’ exhibition shows industrial and artisan projects made by Tendance exhibitors. The ‘Window-dressing Live’ workshop will provide a host of valuable tips about visual merchandising. The workshop has been created especially for retailers and proved to be a veritable magnet for visitors to Tendance 2012 and 2013. In Hall 9.2, visitors can discover how to turn shop windows into genuine customer attractions and an impressive showcase for the shop.

Following last year’s successful première of Ecostyle, this trade fair for sustainable consumer-goods, will also be held parallel to this year’s Tendance. On all four days of the fair, trade visitors can order ecologically-oriented lifestyle

and designer products in Hall 9.2.

Tendance, the international consumer-goods event, is now recognized as one of Europe’s most important order platforms the second half of the year. The range of products to be seen covers all levels of quality and is relevant for all channels of distribution.

For more information, please visit our website at: www.messefrankfurt.com

Summer edition of NY Now should sell out

Expected sell-out participation from 2,800 new and returning suppliers of leading home and lifestyle brands signals a robust summer 2014 edition of NY NOW, The Market for Home + Lifestyle (formerly NYIGF). Returning to its traditional five-day date pattern, the summer 2014 market will run Saturday, August 16, through Wednesday, August 20, at New York City’s Jacob K. Javits Convention Center and Passenger Ship Terminal’s Pier 94.

NY NOW will feature 100,000 products in 400+ categories across its four signature collections: HOME includes Home Furnishings + Textiles, Tabletop + Gourmet Housewares and Accent on Design; LIFESTYLE showcases Baby + Child, Gift, Personal Accessories, and Personal Care + Wellness; HANDMADE separates artisans by process and provenance with Designer Maker and Global Design; and NEW! highlights market newcomers on Pier 94.

“There is a high level of enthusiasm for the summer show, and we’re excited to showcase new and returning companies in all four Market Collections,” says Christian Falkenberg, NY NOW director.

Notable newcomers and returning companies in the HOME Collection’s 1,100 exhibitors this August include Arte Italiana, Claude Dozorme Cutlery, Fusionbrands and Tea Forte within the Tabletop + Gourmet Housewares section; and Creative Danes/Menu, Donna Wilson and Stelton within Accent on Design. They join anchors such as Atipico, Joseph Joseph, Lenox, Mariposa, Match, Michael Aram and Matouk.

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A gift that keeps on giving

They were ready to retire from the retail business, but rather than simply sell or close their store, Karl and Pat Conway decided to donate it to a very worthy charity.

By Denise Gaze

Charity usually begins at home. For Karl and Pat Conway, however, it began at work when, after 20 years of running a very successful home furnishings store in Invermere B.C., they decided to retire. But instead of selling their store (called Interior World), they donated the store to The Family Resource Centre, their favourite local non-profit organization.

The building that originally housed Interior World was once a United Church so perhaps it was destined to be a place where good things happen. Giving the store to a charity was a major decision that Karl and Pat made together.

The Family Resource Centre provides a wide variety of community programs, such as women's outreach, youth programs, employment help, housing, dealing with addiction and many other services. The Centre has been around since 1988 and is funded by a number of Provincial and Federal Ministries. Located in a small community of 15,000, the centre is invaluable to the hundreds of people who come through the doors every year.

Karl has served on the board of directors of The Family Resource Centre for six years. This will be his last year. "One of our mandates has been to establish a

social enterprise, and to generate income aside from our government funding," says Karl. "When my wife and I decided to retire, we discussed the idea of passing our business to The Family Resource Centre, so they could operate it as a profit generating business."

The Family Resource Centre was exceedingly grateful for the opportunity. The Conways helped with the transition period by providing advice and contacts with long established suppliers. They put social enterprise into action by using a business model to generate profit for charity. The dividends flow through to the centre because they are now invested shareholders.

"One thing I want to stress is that although this is a new company, it's incorporated and fully taxable. It competes with everybody else on the street," explains Karl. "We were adamant that it not be seen as having an unfair advantage over other business owners."

"This venture provides us with the funds to stabilize our agency by diversifying our funding stream," says Pat Cope, executive director of the Centre. "The business lets us position ourselves within the business community contributing directly to the local economy."

Karl also made sure that The Family Resource Centre was aware of just how much hard work is involved. "We have already had to reinvent the business a couple of times," he says. "We are in our 60s. We need to take time for ourselves."

During the transition, the store remained closed for a brief five months

Appropriately enough, the store is located in a former church.



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Retail Heroes



A beautiful Family Tree behind the cash desk, above right, lists all the services offered by the Family Resources Centre. Ambiente now has a new name and a fresh new look.

with volunteers working feverishly to create the new look and bring in merchandise. Interior World had a very loyal customer base and they were happy to see the store continue.

With a fresh new look, The Family Resource Centre renamed the store Ambiente Home Design Elements, a 1750-square-foot space featuring over 400 SKUs. Situated on a main street with a lovely courtyard out front, Ambiente carries a variety of kitchenware along with high-end home furnishings. The store also encourages local artisans to be part of the inventory.

Products are now purchased for the store with funds from The Family Resource Centre and a small operating loan from The Kootenay Savings Credit Union. Any additional revenue coming from Ambiente to the centre will not impact funding from the government. In

fact, Pat explains, “there are many services in our community which have never been funded by the government.”

“We bought furnishings to sell at market retail value,” she adds. “Once we have paid our overhead costs and made our corporate tax contribution to the federal government, the remaining profit comes back to the agency. I think it’s positioned us in a very different way with our business partners and local government and the community in general.”

You might wonder how a charity can suddenly enter the retail world without merchandising experience. As it turns out this ‘touched by an angel’ story has another interesting twist. Dru Wagner, an employee of the centre was working for their Safe Home Program on an on-call basis. Gradually the job evolved into more hours when a Woman’s Resource centre was added two years ago.

As fate would have it, prior to working for The Family Resource Centre, Dru had worked in retail including a few years with Pat and Karl at Interior World! Dru was given one year’s leave of absence and is now the store manager of Ambiente. There are three part-time staff as well.

“I am really keen on making Ambiente a success because I really care about what The Family Resource Centre does,” says Dru.

The Centre’s Board of Directors played an integral role in making the donation happen. The 11 board members have a broad range of business ex-

perience, and are clearly people with a social conscience.

After many years of feeling victimized by a lack of government funding, combining business and charity may be the solution. The Family Resource Centre has really taken hold of the reins. With 20 employees, this new venture has been a boon for all involved. Feeling more empowered and not having to play the “government funding waiting game”, owning Ambiente has provided a sense of independence for the centre. “We are selling quality goods at the store and people know that the profits are supporting a great cause,” says Pat. “It’s a win-win situation for everyone.”

Open just a few months, the store has already received a great deal of support from the community and tourists who love the store’s history. There’s a beautiful “Family Tree” wall mural positioned perfectly behind the cash register for customers to see and ask questions. The tree lists all of the services offered by The Family Resource Centre.

Ambiente will soon add a design centre and will eventually offer online shopping as well. Funds generated through sales at Ambiente will be used to augment services and add additional services needed at the centre.

Charity may begin at home for some, but for The Family Resource Centre it began in the hearts of two generous people. The Conway’s inspiring decision is a gift that keeps on giving back to an entire community. 🐾



The Ambiente staff, left to right: Shelley Messerli, Dru Wagner, Sona Manukyan and Susan Rodewalt.

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Strength in numbers

With four busy kitchen stores – and four children under the age of nine – retailer Claire Breeze proves that expansion is the key to success in this business

by Laurie O'Halloran



As a rule, specialty retailers tend to be outgoing extroverts who thrive on interaction with other people – especially customers. Claire Breeze is an exception to that rule. The successful owner of four kitchen shops in southern Alberta, Claire is a quiet, thoughtful, very private person who chooses to stay behind the scenes rather than on the store floor. But beneath her subdued demeanor there lies a retail visionary, an entrepreneur who takes multi-tasking to a whole new level. That's because in addition to her four stores, and a growing online business,

Claire is also a mother to four children under the age of nine!

Her wonderful husband, Alex Souvairan, makes it all possible. A hands-on dad, he cares for the children full-time, in addition to acting as the company's on-call computer technician, recycler and delivery man when necessary.

Claire and Alex have been together since high school. The second of four children herself, she grew up in Canmore, Alberta and he is a native of Britain. They fell in love at 16, married at 19 and attended university together in London, England, where she studied

film and television production and he majored in multi-media engineering.

When they returned to Canada in 2000, rather than embarking on a career in film, they opted to take over the management of a hotel in Canmore that was owned by Claire's parents. They ran the motel for three years before tiring of the hospitality business. "We were ready to slow down," she recalls, "and wanted to work just 10 hours a day instead of 24!"

They decided retail was the answer, so in 2003 the couple purchased The Colorful Cook, a solid, well-established 900-square-foot kitchen shop on the



Specialty Retailer Profile

main street of Canmore. Running both the motel and the store for a year was exhausting, so they left the hospitality field to focus on the store.

Expansion was in the plans from day one, but it happened faster than Claire had imagined. Less than a year after buying The Colorful Cook, she found out Pots & Peppers, a kitchen shop Claire had always loved, was for sale. The 1800-square-foot shop was located just 40 minutes away in Cochrane and even though Claire was five months pregnant, she and Alex negotiated a deal to buy the second store in August 2004.

Daughter Aurelia was born in December of that year, and Claire took just one week off before getting back to business at the two stores. Known for her high energy level and strong work ethic, she would rush home when Alex needed her to feed the baby, then return to work. Though they did have a small staff, at the time Claire was doing all the receiving for both locations (there is a warehouse for storage at the Cochrane

store). She was also in the process of modernizing the interior of Pots & Peppers – no small feat.

“When we bought the store, it had low ceilings and dark brown walls. It was so dark they used to have candles burning to provide extra light,” she says. “It also needed a focus. The previous owner sold everything from toys to charms and I wanted to make it a specialty kitchen shop, where people knew precisely what to expect when they walked through the door.”

Claire rebranded the stores Kitchen Boutique because it clearly identifies what they are selling, whereas the previous names were sometimes mistaken for restaurants. The new name is also easier to remember and search online.

Initially, the couple wrote off \$160,000 worth of stock, then revamped the inventory to include only housewares, and renovated the interior to make it cleaner and less cluttered.

“Kitchen stores tend to be messy and chaotic because of all the gadgets we

have to display,” she says. “I get my staff to organize linear displays to declutter the look of my stores. Keeping categories together and organized is very important. If my customers can’t see or miss a product because it’s overwhelming, that’s a loss in sales. On the flip side, if you don’t have enough happening, you can look like you’re going out of business and lose sales because you lack product selection.”

With two kitchen stores and a new baby, life was busy for Claire and Alex, and about to get even busier. In April of 2006, Claire gave birth to second daughter Imogen. The following year, they decided to launch an online store.

Using SmartVendor software, Claire spent almost two years trying to get it right. It was difficult with two very different websites, for two very different stores. She realized it had to be simple

Claire now operates four Kitchen Boutique locations in, left to right, Cochrane, Banff, Airdrie and Canmore, Alberta



Specialty Retailer Profile

fied, and easy to access, so she created the umbrella name Kitchen Boutique.

"When I first went online, I thought it would be my third store, but that wasn't the case at all," Claire explains. "Even though we had a great website, selling online was something else altogether. It was impossible to compete with Amazon. The prices that you are able to justify in a bricks and mortar location, with attentive customer service, are not possible online. We couldn't match the prices, so we ended up using the site as a digital marketing tool."

Having always wanted a big family just like the one she grew up in, Claire welcomed son Osias in 2009, and two years later her fourth child arrived, another daughter, Cyra.

"I've always had lots of energy," says Claire. "If I don't have enough going on in my life, I tend to attract it. There is a lot of chaos in my life and although I try to keep it organized, usually something has to give." She admits she doesn't spend as much time on herself as she should, other than playing soccer once a week, yet that isn't enough to derail her ongoing expansion plans.

Another opportunity presented itself in 2012 in the growing city of Airdrie, just 20 minutes away. At the time, Claire's sister, owner of a clothing store in Cochrane, was also looking for a second location. The two sisters found two ideal spots side by side in Yankee Valley Crossing, a mall on the southeast side of town. It marked the first time Claire had built a store from the ground up and she gave it more of a youthful appeal, with trendier, modern kitchen products. Best of all, she and her sister were able to help each other out with deliveries, and spend time together.

Banff was the fourth city in Claire's sights. A tourist mecca, it seemed the next logical step for the Kitchen Boutique, but the lease rates were exorbitant. Fortunately, a unique opportunity to move into a small 600-square-foot space came up late last year. With wider frontage and a large window, it feels much more spacious. It's also conveniently located right next to the Banff



post office, providing plenty of local walk-by traffic. She was able to get a short lease in order to evaluate what kind of numbers the store will do and determine it's potential before making a long term commitment.

Although all four stores are branded under the Kitchen Boutique name (the website is currently being upgraded), Claire has given each of the bricks and mortar stores it's own individual identity. Canmore is *The Mountain Kitchen*; Cochrane is *The Country Kitchen*; Airdrie is *The Suburban Kitchen*; and Banff is *The International Kitchen*.

An intuitive buyer who knows what sells, Claire carries over 8,000 SKUs between the four stores. She tries to offer a

The Airdrie store has a 'suburban' theme with premium cookware and kitchen gadgets.

different product assortment for each different customer base. For example, in Airdrie the residents have a big box store on every corner so her products have to be attractively priced. In Banff, however, she stocks a lot of "odd or unusual items", because that's what sells. As with most kitchen shops, gadgets are her best sellers (especially Nawrocki's 'world's finest pot scrubber').

She stays on top of trends by listening to what her staff say is hot and selling well. Claire also listens to her reps, and when time permits, checks out other



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Specialty Retailer Profile



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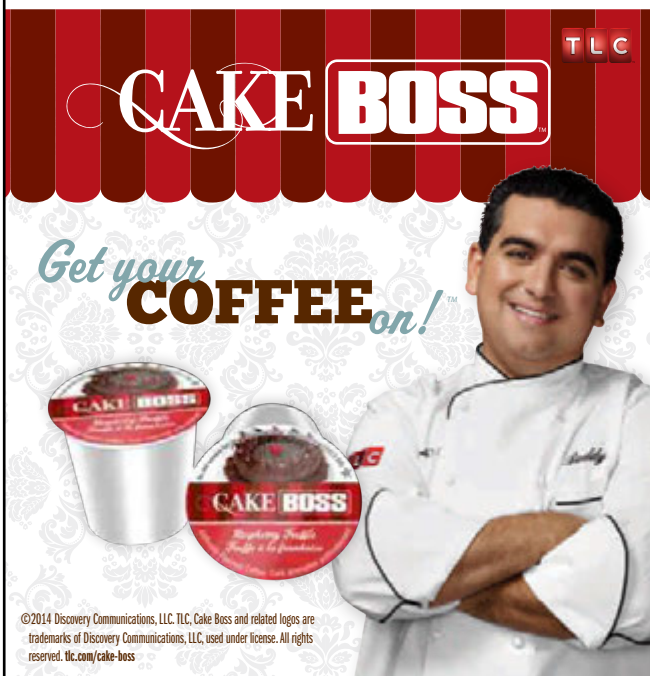
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groups on Facebook, including mom's groups and food-related sites that talk about exciting new ways of cooking.

(Although Claire says she used to be the cook in the house, Alex has since taken over, and done an amazing job.)

Her suppliers are constantly impressed with Claire's ability to understand just what her customers want.

"Claire is a true professional, always enthusiastic and completely honest," says Ford Nixon of Nixon Agencies. "Her life is extremely busy yet she manages to maintain a balance between work and family that is really quite amazing. She and Alex make a very strong team and work well together."

Bill Marshall at Zwilling J.A. Henckels is another admirer. "I think what makes Claire successful is that she has a clear vision of what she wants the stores to look like. She has branded each according to their unique location and is always searching for new ideas to entice her customers."

He adds that she feels a genuine responsibility for her family and her employees, whom she treats like family. Claire currently has 24 part time staff members, including co-managers at each location and a shipper/receiver.

When hiring, she first tries to find out what motivates the person. "And they have to love to cook," she says with a laugh. "If you don't cook or bake, don't bother applying here."

When she opened the Airdrie store, she finally hired a full time receiver, a position that was hard for her to give up. She likes to stay in control of every aspect of the operation but just couldn't physically do it anymore.

Though she never actually spends time on the floor, Claire does try to visit each store at least once a week. She'll chat with the managers and listen to any concerns they may have. Her loyal employees appreciate her attention to detail, and her hands-on approach.

Lianna Benny, the manager of Kitchen Boutique in Cochrane, has worked for Claire for a decade. "She's a great boss," Lianna says. "This is a great place to work because Claire is very good at what she does, she knows what will sell. She's an expert in everything and very intuitive but prefers to stay behind the scenes. She knows so much about the products that she could sell anything she wants, she just chooses not to."

She goes on to say that although Claire has four beautiful children, she doesn't think she could cut it as a stay at home mom. "She's very lucky to have Alex supporting her – they are good partners."

Finding and keeping good staff is always an issue, but Claire claims the two major challenges she faces today as an independent retailer are much more complicated.

First, she must make sure that every single customer who walks through the door has a positive experience in the store and is not ignored by staff. "My employees tend to stay with me a long time and it's a challenge for them to keep it fresh. It's wonderful that they are like family, but I don't want them

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Specialty Retailer Profile



to get complacent. When you spend a lot of time in the store, greeting people day after day after day, it can get pretty tedious.”

Claire loves it when her suppliers offer a contest for her employees with product incentives. She can easily track a dramatic rise in sales when staff are motivated to win a beautiful Emile Henry casserole, for example.

Ensuring a positive customer experi-

ence is even more important, she contends, in the age of social media. As she explains: “If a customer goes into Target or Canadian Tire, and can’t find what they want, but there’s nobody to help them, they simply walk out. The customer doesn’t care because she has no expectation of service. That’s not the case with a specialty store, where we are judged by a different set of rules and a much higher standard. We must always be ready and willing to help or we will be vilified on Facebook. If I don’t let someone use our staff washroom, which is located in the back of our warehouse and is where we keep our purses and belongings, then that person will be vicious on social media the next day.”

Her second greatest challenge is an ominous one: trying to find a way for kitchen shop owners to survive without greater support from the vendor community.

“I don’t see how independents can have any kind of future in this country unless suppliers start to treat us differently, and offer us truly different products from national chains,” Claire stresses. “Vendors need to offer a distinct line for specialty stores, one that is completely different from the mass merchant products, or we are doomed.”

Claire laments the fact that smaller stores who have worked hard to build a brand and establish a loyal, long-term working relationship with a supplier are now losing out to the immediate volume offered by a mass merchant who

will delist the line the second they find a cheaper price. “My suppliers are making my job harder,” she says.

Frustrated by this turn of events, Claire thinks the only way to survive in the next decade will be to continually expand until she is the owner of a chain of multiple specialty shops.

“The alternative would be for all independent store owners to form a buying co-op where we could order products as a group, brand everything together and take advantage of volume pricing for products specifically designed for our market,” she says.

Claire will be working towards that goal in the months ahead – in addition to the multitude of other hats she wears. She is currently chair of the downtown business association in Canmore and is active in the redesign and launch of the new web site (she has partnered with Shopify to handle online sales). Claire and Alex are also active in the community and regularly get involved in local charity events.

“We believe that whatever we give to others we will get back in return,” she explains. “I trust that in all aspects of my life and business.”

If one day the retail business proves to be more than she can handle, Claire Breeze does have a back-up plan. She would love to have her own production company and make an epic *Lord of the Rings*-type feature film. Compared to the pace she now keeps, that actually sounds relaxing. 🐾



The Banff store features a variety of international products, but the main focus is on Canadian-made items that appeal to tourists and locals.





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Making coffee

An Overview of the Canadian Coffeemaker & Espresso Market
by Armin Begic, Manager, The NPD Group



Urnex has launched a new Clean Cup for single cup brewers. The cleaning cups are designed to extend the life of the coffeemaker. The pods, shown above, are compatible with all K-Cup single cup coffee brewers. Urnex also offers the Clean Cup descaling liquid for home coffee machines, right.



Nifty Home Products recently partnered with Keurig and Green Mountain Coffee Roasters to market a line of Keurig K-Cup storage solutions, below. Nifty's line of K-Cup pack storage provides retailers with a range of items endorsed by Keurig and GMCR. Both Urnex and Nifty products are distributed by United Sales & Marketing.



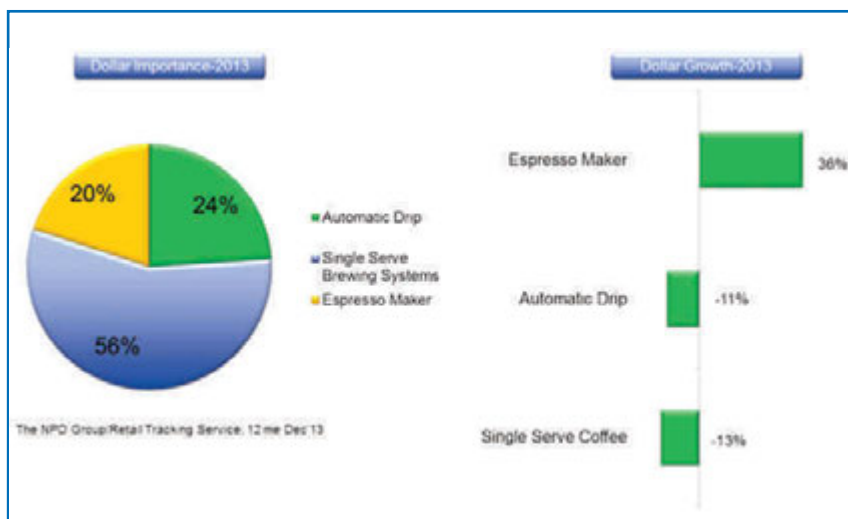
It is hard to discuss the small kitchen appliance (KA) market in Canada without mentioning coffee/espresso brewers. Nearly 30% of the total KA revenue in 2013 came from brewers, making overall KA growth highly dependent on this segment.

In 2013, overall brewer sales in Canada reached \$190 million, a 44% increase compared to 2010, most of which can be attributed to the immense popularity of single serve brewers. The single serve segment has grown exponentially over the last five years, and currently represents 56 percent of total brewer revenue; more than twice the size of automatic drip and nearly three times larger than espresso makers.

Although espresso makers represented a smaller proportion of brewer sales compared to auto drip and single serve, there is momentum and growth potential. An NPD Group consumer study conducted last year found that 35% of Canadians are consuming more espresso-based beverages than a year ago. Therefore, it is no surprise that espresso brewers also saw a 36% increase in retail sales in 2013 and were the fastest-growing segment among all brewer forms that NPD tracks.

Most of the brewer segments performed very well over the past few years, however in recent months growth has slowed drastically, especially the single serve (non-espresso) segment. After growing volume 22% in Q4 2012 the segment declined 14% in Q4 2013. Increased household penetration, competition from other "giftable" categories, and rapidly declining average prices may all be contributors to single serve's most recent declines.

Although the last five months were not as favourable to brewer manufacturers in terms of growth compared to the last few years, recent innovations by way of coffee/espresso hybrid machines and new proprietary capsule systems may spark consumer demand in the coming months.



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Making coffee



Breville introduces the world's first 'automatic manual' coffee machine, the Oracle. It's simpler to operate than most machines since the hands-free grinding, tamping and texturing are all contained and done for the user. It can make two cappuccinos in 90 seconds; and delivers cafe-quality results for every type of coffee drinker, every time. Taking customer service to the next level, Breville has partnered with select retailers to offer full "White Glove" service for the Oracle espresso machine. Exclusive to Canada, the Oracle espresso machine comes with free services including calibration and orientation by retailers in select cities. It has stainless steel espresso and steam boilers for simultaneous espresso extraction and milk steaming. A hands-free milk texturing feature also textures milk for a silky latte or creamy cappuccino in just one touch.

This hot red 15-Bar pump-driven espresso machine from **DeLonghi** accommodates two separate attachments with a patented dual function filter holder. The Sempre Crema filter enhances the brewing process to produce a perfect crema. The patented cappuccino frother includes a special chamber that mixes steam and milk to create a rich, creamy froth. It has a removable 1.4 litre water tank and drip tray.



The Lattissima Pro from DeLonghi is a high pressure 19-Bar system featuring Nespresso's patented extraction system. It facilitates the ideal flow of water through the ground coffee for ease of use. Capsules are automatically ejected into the holding tank after brewing. The automatic cappuccino system provides thick, long lasting foam at the touch of a button.



The **Cool Gear** Pearlized Vortex Coffee mug uses double wall insulation to keep hot beverages hot and cold beverages cold. This versatile hydration vessel features a spill proof lid, is top shelf dishwasher safe and BPA free. The Pearlized Vortex cup comes in four glossy, bold colors. They will be available in June 2014

DeLonghi's cappuccino, espresso and latte glasses, below, are made of double wall thermo borosilicate glass. They're designed to keep drinks hot or cold and are comfortable to hold. Condensation-free and dishwasher-safe, they're available in two-ounce or 7.5-ounce sizes.



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Making coffee



For true coffee lovers, **Cuisinart** introduces the Single Cup Grind & Brew coffeemaker. It's easy to use. Simply add coffee beans, add water, press 'brew', and in less than two minutes it brews a fresh cup of coffee with perfect flavour. A built-in grinder freshly grinds any type of beans, automatically dispenses ground coffee directly into filter basket, and brews up to 16 ounces. The unit also features a grind-off button for use with pre-ground coffee.

Featuring an advanced pump boiler system and two filter choices, the commercial-grade Capresso EC PRO espresso machine from **Jura**, right, is equipped with two filter options that allow coffee lovers at any skill level to prepare barista-quality espresso. The heavy-duty double spout espresso filter is convenient and easy to use, brewing one or two espressos at a time. The filter's sieve creates optimal pressure without having to perfect tamp or grind size. The EC PRO's bottomless espresso filter lets users brew barista style and produces a rich, thick crema.



The Capresso On-the-go coffeemaker, left, has a large permanent filter that can hold up to six tablespoons of medium ground coffee for maximum strength. On-the-Go also works with pre-packaged soft coffee pods and automatically shuts off after the brew cycle is complete. An On/Off button helps to save energy when not in use. The Jura Impressa Z9 One Touch TFT, below, is made to high Swiss standards of precision. It features an aroma grinder that is twice as fast. The rotary switch to choose a variety of coffees plus fine foam technology with two thermo-blocks.



The new JavaBlend from **Hamilton Beach** is designed to satisfy all coffee cravings with one countertop machine. It can brew 16 ounces of hot coffee into a travel mug with lid (it's included) or blend a 32-ounce frozen coffee smoothie. The Wave Action system is designed to pull the mixture down in to the blades for smooth results and no ice chunks. The two-speed blender provides optimal control. Other features include patented stainless steel Ice Sabre blades and a filler cap that lets users add ingredients easily. Simply pour the brewed coffee into the blender and add ice, milk or flavourings to enhance the blend.



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Making coffee

Whether it's a smooth shot of espresso, rich cafe americano, creamy latte or frothy cappuccino, the Oster Primalatte Espresso, Latte & Cappuccino Maker is designed with coffee lovers in mind. Choose from freshly ground beans or the convenience of an E.S.E. pod. It's 15-bar pump, single and



double shot filter with scoop and tamper is easy to use and produces exceptionally rich taste. The automatic frother is suitable for any type of milk (dairy, soy, almond) and offers an adjustable froth dial making it easy to personalize the froth level for rich, creamy beverages. The removable milk reservoir makes it easy to refill, clean and can store leftover milk in the fridge. Now available in stainless steel or white, the Primalatte's super sleek design will compliment any kitchen.



The Cool Kitchen Pro milk frother from **Orly Cuisine** comes in stainless steel, shown above, plus four trendy colours. Quick and efficient, it features a practical see-through lid with integrated storage for the whisk. The jug has a non-stick interior and convenient pouring spout.



This spring On Route will launch two new celebrity chef brands of single cup coffee: Guy Fieri and the Cake Boss. Guy's Flavortown Roasts! offer big, bold taste, and funky flavours. Cake Boss is an irresistible coffee collection offers everything from the classic Buddy's Blend to bakery-inspired signature flavours like Raspberry Truffle. Also new is the Blender Boyz line of Iced Cappuccino mixes in pre-portioned pouches, below. One pouch makes one drink, eliminating any mess or the need for measuring. Available in three flavours.



Also from Orly, the Cool Kitchen Pro electric stainless steel coffeemaker is available in two sizes: 30 cups or 40 cups. It offers 950-watts of power and double wall construction with coffee level indicator, heat resistant handles and locking safety lid. Ideal for parties, it's easy to clean and use.

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Making coffee

The new EA90 fully automatic espresso machine from **Krups** creates a foamy cappuccino or thick latte directly in one cup. It cleans up in a breeze thanks to the integrated auto cleaning system for a spotless frothing nozzle, every time. At the touch of a button, preparing up to 17 different drinks has never been this easy with a unique touch screen menu that displays each selection in intuitive colour. With its ground coffee bi-pass function and favorites menu, up to eight people can store their favorite cup. The new EA90 series represents the culmination of the Krups legacy of intelligently designed, precision-crafted brewing systems.



Inspired by the charismatic cafes of France, **Le Creuset's** Café Collection features a full assortment of coffee and tea-inspired designs that draw on Le Creuset's history of blending style and functionality. The distinctive mugs, saucers and storage crocks complement both traditional and modern kitchens. Each piece is available in Le Creuset's vibrant palette of colours and are packaged in beautifully distinctive gift boxes.



Sagaform has developed the stylish, lightweight Accent coffee pot in cooperation with designer Gustav Hallen. Suitable for casual or formal occasions, the pot is available in black or white with brightly coloured lids. They each come with an additional lid in the same colour as the pot to distinguish between regular or decaf. The lid features an easy to open design and the handle is covered with grip-friendly rubber for ease of pouring.

Swissmar announced a new partnership with Nespresso at the Toronto Gift Fair. The company will now distribute the stylish CAPstore Box 40, below, capsule storage solution for Nespresso coffee machines.



The OXO sugar dispenser from **Danisco** has a side spout that allows for easy, controlled pouring. Designed with stainless steel accents on a clear, BPA-free body make it great for countertop or table.

This August **KitchenAid** will unveil its new Pour Over coffee brewing system. The new machine features automated pour-over brewing technology for a clean, full body coffee flavour. It provides a 'pour and pause' flow of water over the coffee beans to enhance the flavour and aroma. A visible brewing indicator lets users view the entire process of the cycle. A newly patented Brew Temp Optimization platform is a first for the marketplace. The water tank on top dispenses water directly into the brew basket to minimize heat loss.

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What else?

Making coffee



Nespresso has added to its world-class coffee range with the new VertuoLine, an innovative single-serve system that delivers deeply flavoured, crema-topped large-cup coffee or espresso. VertuoLine's propriety extraction process is called Centrifusion, combining centrifugal and infusion. The capsule spins and water is injected into the capsule, infusing it with the ground coffee inside the capsule. This intelligent extraction system is enhanced with bar-code reading technology that monitors five parameters: cup size, temperature, rotational speed, flow rate and the time the water is in contact with the coffee.

Danica's powder coated coffee tin, right, features stylized art deco labelling. Each food-safe tin holds 40 ounces. The company also offers a Chalk-board Decor mug and 100% cotton kitchen towel, below, with a chic coffee cafe design.



Remington is hoping to change the way coffee is brewed with the new iCoffee machine. The patented SteamBrew technology utilizes steam jets inside the brew basket and then stirs the coffee throughout the brewing process. Each of the coffee grounds is completely suspended and surrounded by hot water at the perfect brewing temperature. A rich coffee crema then forms, eliminating bitter or acidic aftertaste. iCoffee also features an exclusive brewing window which allows users to watch the SteamBrew process in action, including the formation of the crema. Because SteamBrew achieves maximum flavour extraction, it requires less coffee than traditional machines.



The **Impress** coffee brewer from Gami-la delivers hand-crafted coffee one cup at a time without paper waste. Simply scoop grounds into the outer vacuum-insulated vessel, add hot water, push the filter down, add the lid and drink.





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Baker's Best

What's hot in bakeware and decorating accessories



The Pinata cake pan from **Nordic Ware** is setting new baking trends, left. The pan's special insert allows the baker to bake a hollow centre cake, fill the centre cavity with assorted candies or treats, then glue the two halves shut with frosting. The pan is made of durable aluminum with a premium non-stick interior coating. Also new is an exclusive line of patterned bakeware, above. The pans are made of aluminumized steel for added heat conductivity with a non-stick interior and an exterior featuring a trend-setting design. Ideal for baking, transporting and serving.



In addition to offering a complete collection of Healthy Ceramic non-stick baking pans, above, GreenPan will give home baking a boost this year with its Boston Premium 3D collection, right. Use the 'groovy' surface for tarts, pies and pizzas, and the 'smooth' surface for cakes, cookies and muffins. Distributed by **Jascor**, each piece is beautifully packaged. Also new from Jascor is the iSi Dessert Whip Plus Mini, left. The high quality stainless steel bottle has a removable silicone cover, removable piston and an easy to operate lever.



Trudeau offers a variety of colourful baking gadgets. A set of five cookie cutters, above, snap together for compact storage. A set of four pinch bowls, shown below, each measure 1/2 cup. They're made of flexible silicone for easy pouring. Trudeau also offers a bowl scraper and measuring cups made from bamboo fibres and melamine.



La Pâtisserie

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Baker's Best

Top Culinary Trends for 2014

HIDDEN SURPRISE TREATS

Home bakers can create excitement at birthday parties and other celebrations with surprise fillings tucked inside cakes, cookies or muffins. Food is also a centerpiece for guests to share in a surprise, such as revealing the gender of a baby during the shower.

BAKING FOR GIFTING

Baked from scratch treats are an inexpensive way to personalize gifts for families and friends. Consumers are moving towards more meaningful gifts, and nothing is more appreciated than delicious home-based cookies or cakes.

HEALTHY COOKING

Grilling, broiling or searing lean proteins has become a popular way to reduce calories without sacrificing flavour.

GLUTEN-FREE BAKING

Natural or uncoated aluminum pans are perfectly suited for gluten-free baking. Wheat alternatives need a natural surface to 'grab' onto as they rise during baking, making coating-free pans the ideal choice.

INTERNATIONAL CUISINE

Food trucks are gaining in popularity right across North America. They feature a fusion of ethnic specialties from around the world, offering consumers a variety of new cuisines to try at home.

Source: HomeWorld Business

The new Pro Mini line of bakeware from **DanESCO** makes scrumptious individual portions of tarts, cakes and other desserts. Each piece is made of durable carbon steel with a non-stick coating for even heat distribution. The pans release baked goods in perfect shape and clean up in seconds. The pans are PFOA and PTFE-free and safe for the dishwasher. They're sold in sets of four.



Mastrad has created a variety of baking kits for cupcakes or macarons (shown). Shown left, and distributed by **Swissmar Imports**, the kit creates homemade, professional looking French min-macarons. The accessories are 100% BPA-free. It includes a 100% silicone, dishwasher-safe baking sheet with 52 cavities with filling marks, a reusable silicone piping bag with six nozzles/tips for piping and filling and a recipe book with added advice. A cap and clip will preserve mixtures in the bag in between batches.

InterContinental Mercantile presents new OvenChef bakeware by Duralux. Offered in three rectangular sizes, and three oval sizes, the line will be introduced this June. Each piece offers a deeper design, made in France of tempered glass that is thermal shock resistant, non-porous, nestable and safe for the freezer, dishwasher and microwave.



Baker's Best



Counseltron's easy to use cake decorating set from Metaltex makes decorating simple and convenient. The easy-to-fill bags feature a large filling side that makes decorating cakes a fun task. It comes with eight reusable nozzles and three large disposable bags.

La Patisserie Prestige bakeware from **Orly Cuisine** is part of the company's professional series. Each piece features new silver ecological non-stick coating that is PFOA and PTFE-free. The durable baking pans feature 1mm thick gauge construction and are easy to clean.



The Smart Cookie provides an innovative new way to shape, store and freeze homemade cookie dough. Compact and stackable, the product is made of 100% BPA-free Thermoplastic Elastomer that stays flexible in the freezer and allows cookie dough to be removed easily. A great way to ensure portion control, it's safe for the top rack of the dishwasher. It comes gift-boxed with a recipe booklet.



Anchor Hocking splashproof mixing bowls from Everyware, left, feature a non-slip base that peels off for easy cleaning. It comes in four sizes and colours. The Isabella collection of serveware, below left, combines two fine materials, ceramic and glass, in various shapes including this two-piece cake set. The TrueFit two-quart batter bowl, below, is deep enough to keep contents inside and a handle to maintain a good grip while mixing.



Chef'n 3D Cake Creature molds make cupcakes or individual cakes come alive. These fun, whimsical shapes can be made into a variety of colourful creatures. They can also be used as decorative cake toppers to set a party theme. Each mold is made of silicone and bakes into a shape that will stand and be ready for frosting. Chef'n products are distributed by **Danica Imports**.



Home Entertaining

Serving up appetizers and hors d'oeuvres with style!



From MEBEL of Italy, the latest tableware collection is called Small Entities. Created by Marco Maggioni, the stunning collection is a perfect example of form meets function. State of the art manufacturing technology has created a Melamine material that has a glass-like porcelain quality. Durable, non-toxic, shock resistance and dishwasher-safe, the serveware will not absorb food odors, grease or colour. The bowls on both sets are removable for easy replenishment. Beautifully gift boxed, they make a lovely hostess gift. Distributed by **Canitra Agents**.

Made from renewable sources such as corn, sugar cane, wheat and sugar beet, this eco-friendly outdoor serveware from **Ricardo** is fully biodegradable and harmless to the environment. Through a complex patented process, sugar extracted from plants and turned into plastic without petrol-derived materials in its composition and process. The serveware can sustain temperatures of up to 120 °C, making it the only dishwasher-safe, microwave-safe bioplastic in the world.



This Signature faux slate Snack Platter Gift Set is by Q Squared of New York City. The stylish set includes a large 13 x 7-inch platter, spreaders, cheese knife and serving bowl. Each piece is made of melamine with an organic shape and natural lines that give it a touch of luxury and the look of slate. Durable and versatile, the set is safe to go in the dishwasher. From **Browne**.

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Home Entertaining



This sleek, modern three-piece cheese knife block set is made of walnut-stained rubberwood with magnets to securely hold the knives in place. There is a triangle base on the block for added stability. Distributed by **Swissmar**, the set includes a cheese wedge knife, basic cheese knife and serving fork. Perfect for party trays, the cheese knives are dishwasher-safe.

The iSi Sodamaker Classic is back! Crafted with a classic retro look and distributed by **Jascor**, the Sodamaker easily creates refreshing, sparkling water. The mesh casing and operating elements are made from quality stainless steel while the retro charger holder is made of durable plastic.



The new BlockBowl from Canadian designer Geoffrey Lilge is both a cutting block and, when turned over, a serving bowl. Made from solid American black walnut from **OnOurTable**, the new collection includes a variety of products, each piece laminated to expose the beautiful edge grain of the wood.



The right cookware can make any dinner party a breeze. **All Clad's** 6-Inch Gratin vessels, above, are striking to look at and easy to use. The 1.8-inch depth is perfect for individual portions of baked pastas or scalloped potatoes. And thanks to their raised handles, taking these vessels out of a piping hot oven is safe and convenient.



Denby unveils the Monsoon collection of kitchen ceramics, offered in four distinct patterns. The straight sided pieces pick up on traditional shapes. There is a soft cream fine china ceramic body on dinnerware and a slightly thicker profile on some of the serving/baking items. Shown above is the Cordoba pattern.



Made in Scandinavia, the Nuuk salad bowl and fruit tray from **Danica** make any edible arrangement look chic and inviting. The distinctive swirl glass designs are handcrafted.



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Home Entertaining



The Artland Oasis collection from **DanESCO** adds a touch of vintage charm to outdoor entertaining. The line includes rustic drinking and condiment jars and serving trays made of thick, durable glass and galvanized steel. The BIA Cordon Bleu sectional appetizer dish, above right, is presented as a trio of small bowls fused together. The different sizes are ideal for serving crudites, fruits and dips or condiments. It's safe for the microwave and the dishwasher. Also from BIA Cordon Bleu, these sets of white porcelain plates, right, are perfectly suited to appetizers or desserts. Each plate is embossed with a different wine or cheese themed design. Beautifully gift-boxed in sets of four.



Counseltron's 36-ounce oval serving vessel by Lodge delivers an amazing presentation for appetizers, desserts and entrees. This American-made foundry seasoned item is effective for both hot and cold recipes. It can also be used for camping as well. Shown in the photo, the sweet potato casserole recipe is one of the Lodge-Kellerman family favourites.



The **Holdaplate** provides a solution to the age old problem of what to do with food and drink while standing at a cocktail party. Much of the plate's appeal rests in its simplicity: a contour, or LipGrip, on its periphery allows for a cup of any size to easily nestle alongside, held in place by the user's index finger and supported effortlessly by the remaining fingers below. Currently offered in a 6-inch standard cocktail plate size at www.holdaplate.com.



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Floor care

What's new in brooms, mops and vacuum cleaners

Powerful on the inside, quiet on the outside, the **Rowenta** floor care line is the result of more than 15 years of acoustic research. Each machine has unrivaled decibel levels, making it up to four times quieter than the average vacuum. The Made in France



Silence Force Extreme canister range combines elegant European styling with superior engineering. The Rowenta Stick vacuums are the perfect blend of thoughtful ergonomics and smart technology with units featuring ultra-slim Delta Head and Delta Vision LED Headlights, dust can't hide in tight corners or under low furniture.



Bissell has launched the Symphony, an all-in-one vacuum and steam mop. It has a powerful cyclonic action that picks up dry debris and cleans wet, sticky messes in one pass. With the power of steam, it can eliminate up to 99.9% of germs and bacteria, removing the need for chemicals. Moisture won't build up in the tank while cleaning thanks to dry-tank technology.

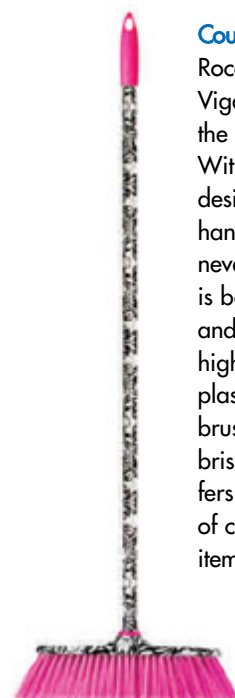
In addition to the popular Roomba obot vac from **iRobot**, the company now offers the Scooba 450. This new floor scrubbing robot is the only one of its kind on the market and is the ideal choice to keep hard floors brilliantly clean every day. The Scooba automatically sweeps and pre-soaks, scrubs, then squeegees floors, cleaning stuck-on messes and washing away up to 99.3% of bacteria. Simply fill the robot, press 'Clean' and walk away. Distributed in Canada by United Sales & Marketing.



The Full Circle range from **DanESCO** includes stylish, functional cleaning products made from sustainable and renewable resources. The company was recently awarded the B Corp Certification, joining an elite group of companies committed to making the world a better place.



Counseltron's new Rococco broom by Vigar makes cleaning the home more fun. With its eye-catching design and colourful handle, cleaning will never be the same. It is both fashionable and functional with its high density plastic handle and a brush featuring nylon bristles. Rococco offers an entire range of colourful cleaning items for the home.





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Floor care

Weighing less than 14 pounds, the easy-to-carry **Hoover** Floor-Mate Deluxe Hard Floor Cleaner, below, gently and safely scrubs sealed hardwood, vinyl, ceramic tile, laminate and marble. It fea-

tures Multi-Purpose SpinScrub technology with patented counter-rotating brushes that wash and scrub hard floors from all angles. The brush is removable for easy cleaning. Dual Tank technology includes separate tanks for clean and dirty water, so you can easily fill, empty and rinse each tank individually. Clean water tank capacity is 3/4 of a quart. A Wash/Dry Mode uses brushes to clean while suctioning up excess water. Dry mode stops brushes to suction up excess water and improve drying time. Solution Control squeeze releases cleaning solution easily while a Clean Boost! fingertip control applies extra detergent to stains and heavy traffic areas.

Also new from Hoover is this Air Canister Vacuum, below. Powered by WindTunnel 3 technology, the Air canister is lightweight, steerable and versatile for all

multi-floor surfaces.

The tool attachments and multi floor power nozzle provide superior cleaning access in hard to reach areas.



The **Dirt Devil** Lift&Go provides a powerful pick-up for every corner of the home. With a handy Carry Canister, and on-demand cleaning wand, it covers everything from couches to stairs to floors. It also tackles hard floor messes with the Vac+Dust SWIPES Above Floor Tool. The articulating head is perfect to clean ceiling fans. Lift&Go also features Dual Cyclonic Filtration. It's designed to cut through any mess with constant powerful suction.

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Housewares show draws record number of retail buyers

With the promise of spring in the air – and a downtown river dyed bright green to honour St. Patrick’s Day – retail buyers flocked to Chicago on March 15th to attend a vibrant and dynamic edition of the International Home + Housewares Show. Held at McCormick Place, the sold-out event attracted 2,100 exhibitors from 45 countries and recorded an increase in total buyer attendance from around the world.

“The show kicked off with very high attendance on Saturday that continued through the close on Tuesday,” says Phil Brandl, president of the International Housewares Association.

“The new Saturday morning opening is a proven success and once again received high praise from our Retailer Advisory Council as well as from exhibitors,” Brandl adds.

In terms of international attendee demographics, Canada, Mexico and the rest of Latin America continue to bring in the highest number of buyers.

“For the buyers from the Americas, the show has become a not-to-be-missed event,” says Derek Miller, Vice President, Global Marketing of IHA. “Noteworthy this year is good growth in buyers from key international markets such as Canada, Latin America, Australia, Korea and several European markets.



Also, there were large buyer delegations from key African markets.”

Media attendance included a significant increase in bloggers plus coverage by *The New York Times*, NBC’s Today Show, *The Wall Street Journal* and several Chicago TV stations. The show generates in excess of 300 million consumer impressions in total.

The 2015 International Home + Housewares Show will be held March 7th to 10th. Show information is available at www.housewares.org.



Celebrity Chef Duff Goldman demonstrates the fine art of air brushing a cake at the McCormick Place Cooking Theatre.

Charity gala honours industry icons



On Monday, March 17th, the Housewares Charity Foundation paid tribute **David Ortiz**, of Wal-Mart; **Janis Johnson**, of the Gourmet Catalog, right; and **Wolf-gang Wüsthof**, below right, of Wüsthof, who was honoured as Humanitarian of the Year. The lavish evening included a silent and live auction with all proceeds going to the breast cancer research foundation.



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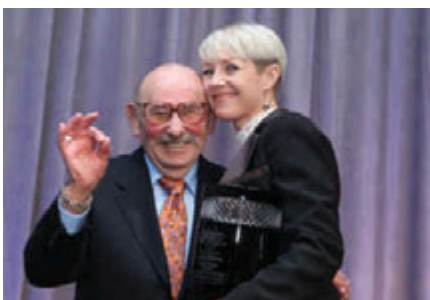
Laurie O'Halloran, *gia* sponsor for Canada, left, at the gala with this year's recipient, Shawn Gibson of Teatro Verde Cucina.

Program pays tribute to the world's best retailers

With so many exceptional entries, there were six (instead of five) retailers selected as Global Honorees. The six were honoured at the gala *gia* dinner held on March 16th in Chicago. They include:

- TheSuperCool - Australia
- K & Ö HOME - Austria
- Merci - France
- Galleria Fiaba - Italy
- Kookwinkel Bianca Bonte - Netherlands
- Lakeland - United Kingdom

The global *gia* jury, consisting of four merchandising experts and seven editors of co-sponsoring housewares publications from around the world, selected the Global Honorees from the 23 winners previously chosen in their respective countries by the national *gia* sponsors. In addition, the Martin M. Pegler Award for Excellence in Visual Merchandising was awarded to LERCHE design of Denmark, below.



Suppliers recognized for outstanding design

Twelve suppliers of cutting-edge designed products were winners of the *gia* Global Innovation Award for product innovation at the 2014 International Home + Housewares Show.

- Best Collection Design: **Magisso** for Naturally Cooling Ceramics.
- Best Product Design: **Crucial Detail** for The Porthole, **Joseph Joseph** for Twin-cut Compact 2-in-1 Scissors, and **Sagaform** for the Mini Greenhouse

The Martin M. Pegler Award for the Best Booth Design went to **3 Sprouts**.

"The winners were all selected by a panel of design experts who judged them on inspired design quality, brand positioning, outstanding craftsmanship, exclusive market focus and design-focused sustainability," says Phil Brandl, of the IHA. "We are pleased to have companies who extend the limits of the design spectrum exhibiting at the show."



Jacques Gatien of Atlantic Promotions/Starfrit (based in Montreal) received the 2014 Lifetime Service Award from the International Housewares Association at the show. The award recognizes the fact that this was Mr. Gatien's 50th year exhibiting at the Chicago International Home + Housewares Show.

Shows honours thirteen innovative vendors

Thirteen housewares suppliers ranging from name brands to small entrepreneurs were honoured as winners of the third annual IHA Innovation Awards in March. The winners, in a variety of categories: are:

- Bath + Personal Care: **Polder Housewares** for the Hot Sleeve.
- Cleaning: Flood Products for the Flood Sax.
- Cook + Bakeware: **Now Designs** for the Dumpling Cube (shown below right).
- Floor + Carpet Care: **iRobot** for the Roomba 880.
- Home Décor + Gifts: **The Sweetheart Gallery** for the It's a Snap Frame.
- Home Organization + Storage: **Prepara** for the Evak.
- Household Electrics/Home Environment: **Moneual** for the SW Baby Monitor.
- Kitchen Electrics: **L'Equip** for the Infrared.
- Kitchen Hand Tools + Cutlery: **Harold Import** for the Evo Oil Sprayer.
- Kitchenware: **Staybowlizer** for the Staybowlizer.
- Personal Care + Home Healthcare: **Objecto/Hatzlachh Supply** for the H5 Spiral Hybrid Humidifier.
- Pet Products: **Ginsey Home Solutions** for the Dirty Paws Footbath.
- Tabletop: **GRAYL** for the Water Filtration Cup.

More than 500 products were entered in the IHA Innovation Awards competition. The 65 finalists in all categories were featured in the New Product Showcases in the Buyers Club in each Show building and the 13 category winners were on display in the Hall of Global Innovation in the Lakeside Center.



Retailers need to own the 'Digital Shelf' first

Technology has dramatically changed consumers' shopping behavior but this trend presents retailers with an opportunity to reach them before the shelf, Michelle Schumaker, home goods branding lead for Google, told an audience at the March housewares show.

In her presentation, "*Rethinking the Shopper's Path to Purchase*," Schumaker presented Google data and the results of a new housewares research study to help better understand the new technology-driven path to purchase and help build targeted marketing strategies to own the new "digital shelf."

Schumaker claims one in three people consider the Internet to be a fundamental resource of the human race – as important as air, water, food, and shelter. "We are on the Internet two times more than we were just three years ago," she explained. "The rate of PC usage has grown 20%. Today, we are all about multi-device usage and we are always online."

According to Google research, people use their smartphone most often during the course of a day, followed by tablet, laptop/PC, connected/streaming TV activity and then cable TV activity. In addition, she said, about 84% of housewares shoppers use the Internet to research products and 61% didn't have any brand in mind at the start of their search. "We don't remember if we are online or offline anymore; it's just living. With digital you can start a conversation, expand your brand, leverage technology and connect with the consumer."

Two brands that have used social and Internet platforms to their advantage are Electrolux and iRobot, Schumaker said. Both brands used two minute videos on YouTube – Electrolux with its "vacuum music" and iRobot with its Dance Robolution – that created a connection with current and future shoppers. "Instead of being limited by a 30 second spot on TV, both brands created a conversation and a platform for their brand."

Schumaker also praised companies who create mobile apps that shoppers can use.

"Some brands are going above and beyond in the digital space to make a connection with a consumer before shoppers go to the shelf," Schumaker said. "Use the power of technology to capture your next consumer and enrich their lives."

Learn to thrive through inspiration

Housewares manufacturers need to adapt, inspire and motivate in order to have success with today's ever changing consumer, IHA's lifestyle trend forecaster Tom Mirabile said in his keynote address at the show.

He explained how to do so during his seminar "Top Trends for 2014 - The New Normal: How to Survive and Thrive in our Erratic Marketplace." Mirabile is senior vice president at Lifetime Brands

"Whether you're a retailer, manufacturer or wholesaler, a single word encapsulates today's most crucial business imperative: Adapt," he said. "Today's consumer lives and shops in multi-dimensional ways we couldn't have imagined a decade ago. More importantly, they crave – no demand – innovation."

Mirabile discussed several generations to illustrate how housewares manufacturers need to adapt: social GenY, active Baby Boomers and the Strapped Gen X.

Gen Y, aged 19-37, early technology adapters, true foodies and are the most design savvy generation ever. They expect customization, and they reuse and repurpose. "That presents a challenge to us because we are trying to sell them something new," Mirabile said. "They want small spaces that live large, and that's important to keep in mind as we design products for them. They are also more casual so we have to adapt to the way that they entertain. And, they are also more frugal."

Gen X includes people who are practical and pragmatic, who spend more money on pet products than any other generation, Mirabile said. "They see their home as the hive and the haven where they can relax. They are aged 39-47. Their salaries are depressed and they have more debt than any other generation. Our role as adapters needs to give them good reasons to buy," he explained.

Baby Boomers, Mirabile said, are defining luxury, but don't just give them the most expensive or most desired product, he advised, give them products that deliver superior function and technology. Baby Boomers are aged 48-68, and many have children or parents living with them. Some are downsizing, but not willing to sacrifice luxury. "What is impressive about this generation is that the women are the healthiest, wealthiest and most active generation of women in history. They are buying experiences, not objects. We need to adapt to their wellness desires, and to their fiscal concerns."

Mirabile also discussed the "Inspire" trend, which is about consumer strength, more retail choices, blurred channels and categories and the socialization of food. "Those are your opportunities to inspire the consumer," he said. "Give the consumer new ways to live and design."

Even more opportunities to inspire consumers include a growing ethnic diversity population and an increasing emphasis on health. "Health has become more important than a nice place to live or money, community, friends, and work fulfillment. Companies and products that help consumers understand and accomplish better nutrition while minimizing time investment will have the advantage," he said.

The last trend, Motivation, is about creating sales with a clear focus on consumer inspirations, health and wellness and changing strategies. "It is the intangibles such as experience, knowledge and skills that provide the new motivation to spend. It's not about having something for everyone, it's about product and services for a targeted audience. You need to motivate with value beyond price, and that includes brand ethics, durability, variety, and design."

Canada Night 2014

Canada Night 2014 was another success for housewares buyers and sellers. Held during the Chicago show on Sunday, March 16th at the Inter-Continental Hotel, the event attracted over 200 vendors and 100 retailers



Representing Canadian Tire, left to right, Esther Ifrah, Wissam El-Hajj-Khalil and Connie Ng.



Brigitte Roy of Danesco, at her first Canada Night, with Normand Ouellet of Stokes.



Left to right: Yuvraj Dayal of Home Outfitters, Shannon Hamilton and Larry Hignell of Hudson Bay and Milton Tjin of United Sales.



Representing Keurig Canada, left to right, Mathieu Gadbox, Jason Rakovitis, George Doukogiannis, Sunny Ren, and Kris Small.



A tour de force from B.C., left to right, Brent Bondarenko of Kitchen Therapy, Karen Kirkpatrick and Suzanne Scanlan of Wilton, Fontaine Wong of Ming Wo, Pat Joya of Capital Iron and Robbin Lich of Kitchen Therapy.



Adam Ball of United Sales and Marketing, left, with his former colleagues from Jarden, Wayne Grant, David Simmons and Adriana Lopez, far right.

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Canada Night 2014



Kelly Westlake of Hamilton Beach is shown with Paul Washington, the housewares buyer for Lowe's.



Jacques Dubuc of Trudeau/Home Presence, left, a long time sponsor of Canada Night, and John Hooke of Canadian Tire.



John Patrick of World Kitchen Canada, left, with Graham Wong of Sears Canada.



Nancy Diener of Salton Canada, right, with Angelo Carreira, centre, and Catherine Stefanizzi of Loblaw Companies.



Representing the west coast, Jim Mitchell (left) and Judy Mitchell of DeLonghi with Glenn Charles of Charles Marketing.



Left to right: Chris Everett, Paul Pogor and Rob Dewar were on hand to represent United Sales and Marketing.



Shannon Dameron, left, and Christina Bono of Today's Bride with Torsten Lawson of Zwilling J.A. Henckels.



Paul Smith of Accent Fairchild Group, left, with Jon Cooperman of Canadian Tire.



A smiling group of housewares industry veterans. Left to right: Tim Casey of Paderno, Dennis Heffron of Housewares Distribution, Rick Fielden and Jason Hutton of Salton.

Spotted on the Show Floor



Shown with Marta Mikita of SodaStream are, l-r, Gary Omand of Soda Stream and Frank Querido, Alan Asbridge and Francis Rego of Hudson's Bay.



Representing Canada at the Jura/Capresso booth, left to right, Joe Di Donato, Adam Byford and Lorenzo Di Donato.



Tim Dykeman and Chris Shipton of Jascor with their new line of pet accessories.



Bishu Mukherjee of B&M Marketing demonstrates his new Sushi maker.



Gervais Jurchuk is shown with Chantal Carpentier of Sensio, based in Montreal. The company unveiled a new line of coffeemakers and small electrics in Chicago.



Louise Sauve-Nicholls with Eric Beam, right, and Andrew Milligan, left, at the Hamilton Beach exhibit.



Rob Hargrave and Dennis Heffron hold the new Obol bowl in the south building.

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Chris Porter

Paderno Sales Agent for B.C., Alberta and the Yukon



If you want to learn how to sell cookware, there is no better training ground than the professional food service industry. Just ask Chris Porter. For two decades, before joining his father Doug's sales agency, he worked in the commercial food service industry, calling on restaurant owners and professional chefs.

"You couldn't ask for a better sales training environment," Chris says. "Everything is perishable and the customer needs the products the very next day. All sales are immediate and there is no room for errors or mistakes because you're working with such tight margins. Professional chefs are the most demanding customers you will ever meet."

Despite his heritage, a career in sales was not something Chris had planned. An only child, he was born in Edmonton but moved to Vancouver shortly after. His father, Doug, was a salesman in the camera industry and his mother was a lab technician. After graduating from high school in 1991, Chris spent six weeks in Europe, and then enrolled in college, followed by Simon Fraser University, all the while working for Neptune Food Service and living on his own. Exhausted and disillusioned, in 1996 he decided to explore the world.

Chris spent three years travelling to all four corners of the world. It was an amazing learning experience, but more importantly, he realized that it was people and culture that really interested him. He returned to B.C. and completed a degree in cultural anthropology. It was the perfect background for his career in sales, especially on the west coast with its eclectic mix of people from around the world.

By this time, Doug had launched Porter Marketing and was successfully representing Paderno in western Canada. There wasn't room for both father and son in the business so Chris stayed on full time with Neptune, which eventually became Gordon Food Service.

During his 20 years in the commercial food industry, Chris got married (to his wife Eugenie) and had two sons, Marcus and Bradley. Life was good. Then four years ago, Doug decided it was time to retire and Chris, at age 36, felt the time was right to take over his dad's agency and make the business his own.

He spent a year shadowing his father, meeting key accounts and learning the business inside out. His experience with chefs was an asset, he could readily appreciate the difference good quality cookware can make. And as a very proud Canadian (he has a tattoo of a maple leaf on his arm) it was also a big plus that Paderno is one of the few housewares manufacturers left in Canada.

Though he initially carried a couple of other lines, Chris now concentrates only on Paderno. He calls on both major retailers, such as London Drugs and Overwaitea, plus about 100 small independents. He also recently took on responsibility for Paderno's sales in Alberta.

Chris knows his charismatic father spent a lot of time building close relationships with his customers. He wanted to continue that, but also tweak the business a bit. Product knowledge is a very important part of what he does. Chris happily travels from store to store regularly conducting product demos and information sessions for retail sales staff.

"My dad has a great personality. He could sell anything to anybody, but these are different times," he explains. "My approach is to work with my customers to enhance their merchandising efforts so that everyone makes a profit. I want to help them grow their business, and also grow mine."

Chris knows this is a "people business" but he believes that once you've established a good, solid foundation with your customers, you can also have some fun. And he does.

"When your customers know they can trust you, they will commit more to your offerings and that's when the magic happens," he says. "That's when the business really starts to take off, for both of us."

His customers know that he is in this for the long haul and that he will always be in their corner. Loyalty is definitely one of his strengths. Chris empathizes with his retail customers and he understands how to meet their needs – on an individual basis.

"Chris is truly the perfect sales rep," gushes Caren McSherry of The Gourmet Warehouse in Vancouver. "He is always on time, informative without being pushy and always has our best

interests at heart. He really is a delight. I wish we could clone him!"

It's no surprise that dealing with people is the part of the job he enjoys the most.

"My favourite days are those spent on the road," he says. "I like going out and meeting the people, spending time in their stores and getting the consumers excited about our products."

There are many frustrating variables that he can't control, however, such as having a U.S. firm open up a huge strip mall right next to one of his favourite independents. But he'd rather find solutions than dwell on problems. He wants to be seen as someone who adds value to his customers, especially with those special accounts he inherited from Doug.

"I met Chris through his father and he is a fitting 'heir apparent' to the Paderno team in B.C.," says longtime customer Fontaine Wong at Ming Wo in Vancouver. "It's so refreshing to see a young man come into this industry with energy and commitment. He doesn't come to us just to sell Paderno products. He comes with sound, marketable ideas. Chris shares his knowledge infectiously with all sales associates. He listens and he responds."

He has definitely forged his own path, but Chris readily admits his father was a mentor in many ways. He still turns to him regularly for advice, since his father was the person who taught him how to negotiate and to be flexible. But the two people who had the greatest influence on Chris were his grandfathers. They came from very different walks of life but were similar in ways that are important to Chris.

"They were loyal, hardworking, well-respected men," he says. "I always admired their ability to find balance in life between work and family. It's the most valuable lesson I've learned."

An active, involved father – who loves to ride his 2008 Harley Rocker – Chris feels fortunate to have found that perfect balance in his own life. He has done his father, and his grandfathers, proud. 🐾

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