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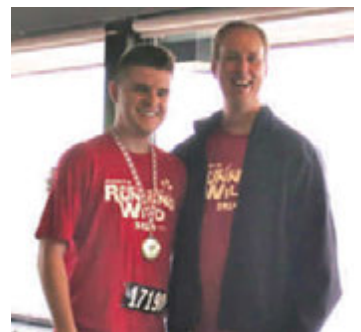
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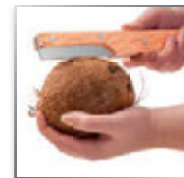
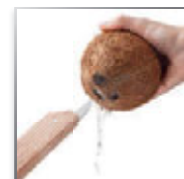
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Opening Lines

Failure could be the key to success

If at first you don't succeed, consider yourself lucky. That's because failure can often be the best teacher, in life and in business. Success is easy to live with, and can lead to complacency if not tweaked regularly. Failure, on the other hand, forces you to stop, take stock of what you're doing and where you're going – and then change it. Failure, if handled properly, can be a valuable learning tool, which is a good thing considering how often it happens in the retail business.

There are plenty of examples of businesses that were thought to be 'too big to fail' going down, but there are even more examples of great companies that emerged from the ashes of failure, stronger and better for it. One of those is Crate & Barrel, headed by visionary Gordon Segal, who founded the company with his wife, Carole, over 50 years ago.

Segal endured many early missteps with his company, but he learned early on that he was in good company. "My first 10 years in business, I thought I was the only retailer that made mistakes, and I would infuriate myself when I blew some things," Segal said recently. "I was lucky enough to join the Young Presidents Organization, where there were a lot of successful executives. I found out that they got knocked over too, but they were like those inflatable dummies that we used to punch and they'd bounce back. These guys just bounced back quicker than most."

Segal *expects* his employees to fail. In fact, he asks his people 'to fail fast'. As he explains, "if you saw a merchant who has never had a markdown, then you really didn't see an adventurous merchant."

In her commencement address to Harvard graduates a few years ago, Harry Potter author J.K. Rowling – one of the most successful writers of our generation – spoke of the many benefits of failure. She told graduates "it is impossible to live without failing at something, unless you live so cautiously that you might as well not have lived at all – in which case, you fail by default."

You will never know your true strengths until you've been tested by adversity. Everybody makes mistakes. I've certainly made many in my 30 years as an editor. In 1997, for example, I launched the National Housewares Show. By all financial accounts, it was a success. But in my mind, it was a failure because it just didn't attract enough retailers. I realized very quickly that our little housewares industry just isn't large enough to support its own national show. I also learned a far more valuable lesson – that I'm a writer, not a trade show producer, and I should stick to what I know best. As such, I've never looked back, and have poured all my energy into this magazine instead. Best thing that ever happened to me.

Like publishing, there is enormous pressure on retailers today who compete in a more challenging environment, trying to entice a fickle consumer who can easily buy anything online. Too often, sadly, it's too late to save a failing business and the store is forced to close its doors. But every now and then, it leads to a new way of thinking or a new approach, and something magical can take place. That's what has happened with Hudson's Bay and their flagship Toronto store.

Just a few short years ago, many in our industry had written off The Bay. The stores were stodgy, dull and lifeless. Canadians were upset that our national retail institution has been purchased by a U.S. investor. Enter Bonnie Brooks, and with her keen eye, she has transformed Hudson's Bay into a leading fashion destination for younger consumers and well-heeled women. I knew she was on the right track when my 16-year-old daughter Haley (who has a fabulous sense of style) started shopping there for her clothes.

Now her successor, Liz Rodbell, has done for housewares what Bonnie did for fashion. Called *Home on Seven*, the newly opened seventh floor of housewares, with its Kleinfeld bridal boutique and gift registry, is drop-dead gorgeous. At a time when there is so much doom and gloom in housewares, this store is a joy to behold. Hudson's Bay Company may have an American owner, but *Home on Seven* gives me hope and fills me with Canadian pride.



– Laurie O'Halloran

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People In the News



• After 18 years, Orillia, Ontario retailers **Bob Hudson** and **Brenda Hudson** (pictured above in 2011) have decided to retire. They have sold their store, Hudson's Kitchen & Homewares, to Donna Horton, who took over June 1st.

• The David Shaw Group recently appointed **Mary Villamagna** as national accounts manager for both the David Shaw and Classic Chef divisions of the company. Formerly with Fox Run, Mary has an extensive background in the housewares and tabletop industry.



• Trudeau Corporation has announced several appointments. **Anne-Marie Trudeau**, above left, has been named director of national sales. Trudeau has more than 15 years experience with the company as the head of Kids product development. **Sherrie Lawson**, top right, a 25-year veteran of the housewares industry, has been appointed executive account manager, and **Jenny Gouskos**, above right, has been named category manager for the glassware division.



• **Don Schacter + Associates** has added the following new lines: MEPRA, French Bull, Farfalli and William Bounds. As well, DS+A has added several new reps; **Gary Wall** in B.C., **Adrienne Orr** in the GTA, **Stephen Reinhard** in Quebec, **Francois Boutin & Brigitte Meunier** in Quebec and **David Wood** in the Maritimes.

• Philips Consumer Lifestyle has appointed **Fernanda In-serra Mendes** marketing manager for kitchen appliances and Saeco, right. She comes from Natura Cosmetics in Brazil, where she held progressive marketing roles including brand strategy manager for their corporate brand.



• Danesco recently appointed **Jeff Manning**, who was previously with Accent Fairchild Group, as national account manager. He is replacing **Shawn Ypes**, who has retired.

• Montreal-based tea retailer Davids Tea, which operates 127 locations, has appointed **Sylvain Toutant** as its new president and CEO. He is the former president of Keurig Canada.

• **Dirk Van den Berghe**, an international food retail veteran, has been named to replace Shelley Broader as president and CEO of Walmart Canada.

• In early May, Target announced the departure of chairman and CEO **Gregg Steinhafel**. **John Mulligan**, Target's CFO, has assumed the position of interim president and CEO. After reporting nearly \$1-billion in losses last year, **Tony Fisher**, president of Target Canada, has also been let go. **Mark Schindele**, senior V.P. of merchandising operations, is now president of Target Canada. Schindele will report to Kathee Tesija.

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A shift in buying habits

Your article about the battle for independents is so true. I have been an independent sales agent for 27 years, working across Canada and now in Ontario and Quebec. There are many other sales agents who have been travelling the roads longer than I have but I am sure they would all agree – we have never seen a period of time like this when the independent retailer is so threatened.

Over the past 12 months – and as of this writing – there are a significant number of independent retail operations to whom I sell that have either closed or are in the process of closing.

There is a definite shift in buying habits taking place and it's coming from many directions. Mass merchants, online shopping sites, dollar stores, a change in consumer buying priorities and even various levels of government have all contributed to declining sales for independent retailers. Recent reports in the news media show how cash strapped the middle class truly is. Add all these factors together and you have a virtual tsunami of threats to the independent retailer and to the business model that has powered our economy

since before confederation.

I don't have a solution. I am just expressing my concern for the sake of all of the entrepreneurs who operate bricks and mortar stores and the self-employed sales agents who work with them on a daily basis. If you want to convene a gathering of individuals representing retailers vendors and agents, count me in.

Tim Smith, Tim Smith Sales

Looking for answers

Nothing makes me angrier than calling a supplier during standard business hours and having no one on the other end to answer the phone! Frequently I will be working on a marketing plan, a special order for a customer, or there is a customer standing in front of me who needs an immediate answer. The days of customers waiting hours or days for a response to an inquiry, whether by email or in person, are long gone. So why do so many housewares suppliers fail to address this issue?

From suppliers who leave at 1 p.m. on a Friday– just as retailers are finalizing their weekend selling plans – to part-time receptionists who leave work

at 3 p.m. every day like it was a bank, to having only one person who can look anything up and nobody else who knows how to 'work' the system, I am constantly frustrated. Retailers would never leave a cash desk unattended. Why do our suppliers do it? How hard is it to cross-train some staff so when the regular customer service person is away, there is another person available? I thought we were in the business of selling, not doing government-type work in some back office?

So my simple advice to my suppliers is: do you want to increase your sales? Then answer the phone when we call! Christmas is on the horizon.

*Fred Pritchard, FCGA, Owner
Golda's Kitchen*

Ramp up the registry

Thank you for a well written editorial in the May issue of *Home Style* regarding the Kingsmills closing. I have suggested to other London retailers that they ramp up their wedding registry offerings to pick up some of the large wedding business that Kingsmills had. We are here to help the retailers just as you are.

Margaret Alsamgeest, Browne & Co.

Retail News Update

Canadian Tire uses Sport Chek model to get back into online sales

Using its Sport Chek division as a digital testing ground, Canadian Tire – which abandoned e-commerce in 2009 – is now offering about 90% of its products for sale online, following a small pilot that started in November. (The company still distributes about 11 million flyers weekly, spending over \$100-million a year.)

The company is betting that its fast-growing Sport Chek chain will help reinvent its retail business model. It has teamed up with Communitech, a government-funded digital lab in Kitchener, Ontario. The centre was instrumental in helping Sport Chek's in-house team build a digital community board at its flagship West Edmonton Mall store for

\$12,000. A previous prototype, built by a third party at one of its Toronto outlets, cost the company \$1-million. Communitech also helped Canadian Tire build kiosks in stores to help shoppers locate products and they're now working together on 10 other projects.

The focus is still on the store for the foreseeable future, however. In fact, at the recent RCC conference, Canadian Tire president Michael Medline said the death of traditional retail stores is greatly exaggerated. He is betting he will be able to convince customers that shopping in stores is better than going online for the cheapest deals.

Medline described his vision of retail as one where community becomes a pri-

ority and the local store carries items that better suit the demands of the neighborhood. "We have to be better in the community," he said. "We have dealers who can stock their stores in a way that works for each individual community."

He added stores that respond to local demands, and also employ a more knowledgeable staff, will help ensure that customers walk out with purchases in their hands. It will be a high-tech variation of the traditional mom and pop shop.

Medline estimates Canadian Tire is still a year and a half away from having the presence it needs to have in e-commerce but the company is taking steps in the right direction.

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FedEx opens centres in Home Hardware

As more Canadians turn to online shopping, FedEx hopes an agreement to open shipping centres at Home Hardware Stores will help it grab a larger piece of the e-commerce market.

Federal Express Canada says the centres, which serve as mini-hubs, will offer more “points of access” for customers to drop off and pick up parcels.

The new FedEx locations will look very similar to the Canada Post outlets now operated by Shoppers Drug Mart, Jean Coutu and others.

“It offers us the opportunity to expand into areas where we might be a little under-penetrated,” says James Anderson of FedEx. “Smaller stores, or stores in rural areas, are something that we find very intriguing and we’re certainly interested in engaging.”

FedEx’s move comes as Canadian retailers place a greater emphasis on sales made through their websites. More retailers are also opening distribution centres within their stores, allowing shoppers to select and pay for their items online before picking them up at the store.

Home Hardware has about 1,100 locations, though the company hasn’t said how many owner-operators it expects will choose to house full-service FedEx shipping centres within their location.

FedEx estimates the “first-wave” will have more than 100 Home Hardware locations participating in the partnership.

Sears Canada targets the middle class

For the last six years, Sears Canada has surrendered retail sales to competitors such as Walmart, Costco and a resurgent Hudson’s Bay. As rivals expand their footprint, Sears is shedding jobs and selling off several of its most valuable leases.

But CEO Doug Campbell dismisses suggestions that the Sears brand may be on the brink of extinction. His focus is to “continue to drive forward the transformation.”

The turnaround will see Sears gradu-

ally get out of “marginally profitable categories,” such as electronics, and focus increasingly on merchandise and services that reflect the priorities of its core customers.

“Canadians,” he says, “have middle class sensibilities, meaning even if they advance out of the middle class, they are generally more frugal.”

While Sears will maintain a presence in big-city markets, it will intensify its efforts on smaller cities, such as Windsor, Ontario.

“What’s good for Sears is we have 113 full-line stores, we have 48 home stores, 240 dealer locations and over 1,000 catalogue pick-up locations. We’re ubiquitous all across Canada but part of the challenge is you’ve had this iconic brand for such a long time and did well. But somewhere along the line, it lost its connection with consumers and changing trends.

Sears has to regain its relevance in the marketplace, particularly with younger consumers. “It’s very hard to reinvent yourself. The capital costs of making that transition are steep. Sometimes it’s better to sell and let somebody else try to do something with the real estate and brand,” he says.

Canadians just not into showrooming

Showrooming – the practice of visiting a physical store to check prices and products before buying them elsewhere or online – is supposed to have become a problem for retailers in the smartphone age. But a recent study suggests most Canadian smartphone users aren’t doing it.

The study, done by International Data Corporation Canada, surveyed 582 Canadians with smartphones. It found that 46% of respondents had checked the price of a product in-store against other retailers.

“The rate of smartphone adoption has been quickening, and with the rate of adoption comes this comfortability with using the phone for more things,” says Leslie Hand of IDC retail insights.

While the IDC study suggests showrooming is not yet the norm, it did find that smartphones are used in a variety of ways throughout the retail experience.

- 61% had used their smartphone to look up a store’s location or hours;
- 69% had downloaded at least one shopping app;
- 54% had typed in a shopping list and checked it;
- 73% had used their smartphone to call, text or message someone while shopping to ensure they were making the right purchase;
- 66% sent someone a photo they’d taken of an item;
- 35% looked up product information on their phone instead of asking an employee;
- 28% scanned a QR code in the store.

“Given the time they have been around, the use of QR codes in the retail environment has been a disappointment so far,” says Tony Olvet of IDC Canada.

American shoppers are more likely to embrace the smartphone shopping experience. In a U.S. study done by IDC over the Christmas shopping season, 70% of respondents said they check prices on their phones, and 53% looked for deals. It also found one in five shoppers purchased an item from elsewhere on their phone – while still in the store.

G.E. Raymond invented the egg-beater in 1907, a creation that led to the founding of the A&J Manufacturing company in Binghamton, New York. The company went on to employ 200 people and churn out four million kitchenware products every year before being bought by rival housewares maker Edward Katzinger in 1929 and moving to Chicago. The brand name was eventually dropped in the 1950s in favour of Katzinger’s new company, EKCO. The EKCO line is now distributed by World Kitchen.

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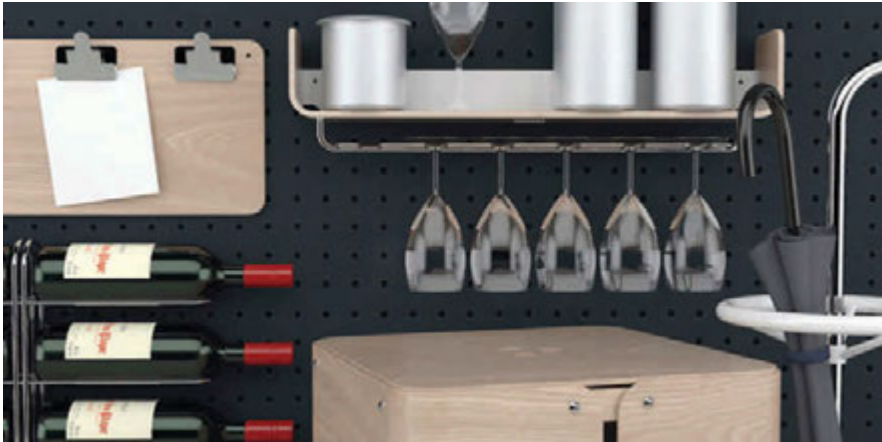


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David Shaw Design is now the official distributor of the Sebastian Conran collection by Universal Expert. Universal Expert launched this new line last year at Williams Sonoma in the U.S. and it's been available in Europe for two years but the August gift show will mark the Canadian premiere. Designed with the contemporary, urban home in mind, each piece combines function and performance with high style. Beginning with Prep & Cook and Sink & Countertop products, the line has expanded to include Share & Serve and Storage & Utility (shown above). Sebastian Conran (who is the brother of popular dinnerware designer Sophie) will make a special appearance at the David Shaw Design exhibit during the Toronto Gift Fair. Be sure to visit booth 7314 in the Toronto Congress centre on Sunday, August 10th to meet Sebastian in person.

Sub-Zero partners with Hamilton Beach in U.S.

Hamilton Beach Brands has entered into an exclusive multi-year licensing agreement with Sub-Zero Group to create a line of luxury counter top appliances and kitchen tools under the Wolf Gourmet brand name in the U.S. The line will complement Wolf major appliances in the kitchen.

In addition to select retailers, the premium line will be available to consumers through the Sub-Zero and Wolf distributor and dealer network and supported by Wolf's Customer Care team. A U.S. product launch is planned for spring 2015, and globally at a later date. At press time, a Canadian debut has not been announced.

Waterford releases *Mad Men* drinkware line

AMC's hit series *Mad Men* wrapped the first half of its final season on May 25th and to commemorate the show, Waterford Crystal debuted a special series of drinkware.

"The Mixology Collection – *Mad Men* Edition" was on display at its Forty One Madison showroom during the New York Tabletop Market. It is officially licensed through series producer Lionsgate.

Eric Kane, director at Mixed Media Group and licensing agent for *Mad Men* remarked: "Over the last seven years, *Mad Men's* storytelling has created such a vivid picture of this epoch, the show itself has become synonymous with mid-Century lifestyle and culture. Waterford's heritage and prestige made this a perfect pairing of two icons."

The Mixology Collection – *Mad Men* Edition features hefty pieces with traditional, deep cutting with bands of rich gold and precious platinum. Circon, Draper and Olson patterns are featured in a double old fashioned or hi-ball at a suggested retail of \$175 a pair. A Circon pitcher (S.R.P. \$350) or Circon Decanter (\$400) in a choice of gold or platinum accents, are also part of the initial launch

The Mixology Collection – *Mad Men* Edition is a two-phase launch; a subsequent Spring 2015 release will coincide with the seven-episode conclusion of the TV series.

Jimmy Kimmel plugs Nespresso on show

This spring, Nespresso turned The Tonight Show with Jimmy Kimmel into a unique commercial integrating spokesperson Penelope Cruz and the company's VertuoLine brewer into an opening comedy bit that saw Kimmel turning over his hosting duties.

At the scheduled start of the show, Kimmel's cast and crew, including Guillermo, were nowhere to be found. Kimmel was "shocked" to find them backstage, being served coffee from a Nespresso machine by Penelope Cruz.

In the ad, Kimmel becomes "captivated by the coffee" and surrenders his hosting duties for the evening. The approach is part of a Nespresso-branded integration to support the launch of the VertuoLine single-serve brewing system, designed to brew both American style large-cup coffee and espresso.

"Nespresso VertuoLine was specifically designed to meet the taste preferences of the North American coffee drinker," said Frederic Levy, president of Nespresso USA. "This partnership will help us reach a larger U.S. audience, introduce us to new fans and further increase our brand awareness."



Full Circle recently won the coveted international Red Dot design award. The Fresh Air odor-free compost collector (above) was judged best of the best for its groundbreaking design. Full Circle is distributed in Canada by Danesco.



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Denby sends two winners to England

Denby thrilled the winner of the Trip to England Contest when they held a surprise event at their local Hudson's Bay store in Richmond Hill, Ontario. Nadia and Giuseppe, above, were presented with a giant plane ticket to commemorate the prize they won by registering for Denby dinnerware at their local Hudson's Bay store. The prize includes air transportation to London, England; two nights in Derbyshire; £500 spending cash; two nights in London; and a red carpet tour of the Denby Factory in Derbyshire.

Denby partnered with the retailer to award a loyal customer and provide some insight into how their registry items are hand-crafted.

Lodge benefits from popularity of cast iron

Lodge Manufacturing is the last major manufacturer of cast iron pans in the U.S., and president Bob Kellerman – whose great-grandfather, Joseph Lodge, founded the company 118 years ago – is enjoying a resurgence in the cookware's popularity across North America.

While he won't divulge sales figures, industry data show that shipments of cast iron and similar enameled products nationwide have surged more than 225% since 2003.

Lodge began pre-seasoning its pans several years ago, which Kellerman says appeals not only to people who were intimidated by the seasoning process, but also to buyers at Wal-Mart and Target, who account for the bulk of Lodge's sales. (The line is distributed in Canada by Counseltron.)

According to the Cookware Manufacturers Association, shipments of cast iron and similar enameled products in the U.S. have increased more than 225% since 2003 – rising from \$35 million to more than \$114 million – while shipments of cookware in general increased by just a third. Lodge is the only major manufacturer of cast iron cookware in America.



Dave Simmons, president of Jarden Consumer Solutions, right, presents Jesse O'Halloran with a medal for placing first in a 5K run organized by the company on June 11th. The walk/run event, called *Jarden is Running Wild*, is held annually as a way to build team spirit, get everyone outdoors and motivate staff to exercise more.



Umbra's new Shift collection wins award

Philippe Malouin's new Hanger Chair (above) hangs just like it's a piece of clothing. Part of the innovative Shift collection launched by Umbra, these folding chairs use a clever storage system and are suited for the smallest of spaces.

Umbra's new Shift product line recently won the 2014 ICFF Editor's Award for Best Accessories collection at the 26th annual International Contemporary Furniture Fair held in New York City. ICFF is a major North American showcase for contemporary design.

Umbra Shift is a collection that focuses on contemporary influences in the design community and marks a departure from traditional products for the Canadian company.



Spring showcase attracts premium buyers

Nationwide hosted their annual Spring Product Showcase on May 7th and 8th at the company's head office and showroom in west Toronto. Purchasing director Anna Markotic, above left, and CEO Ted Nishi, above right, provided visitors with an overview of the latest premium and incentive products from brands such as Panasonic, Danby, BergHOFF, Orly Cuisine and Samsonite. About 120 visitors toured the showrooms and enjoyed a complimentary lunch during the two day event.

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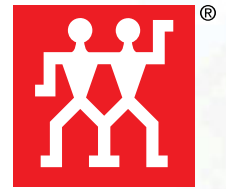
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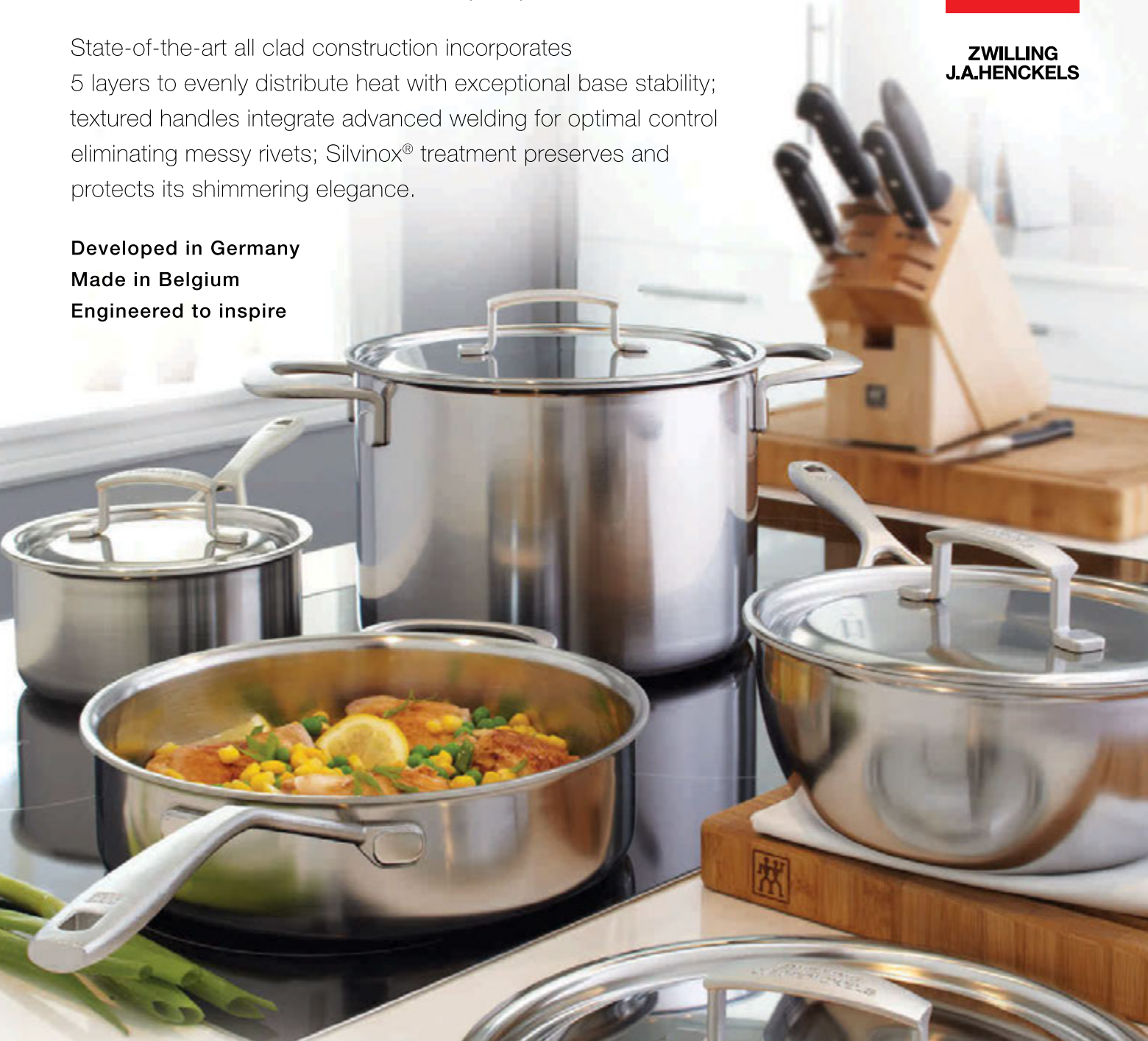
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Yorkdale is the first stop for foreigners

Last year, over a third of all first locations for retailers entering Canada were at Toronto's Yorkdale Shopping Centre. But that wasn't an unusual year for Yorkdale which has been Canada's entry point for many foreign retailers over the years. Its latest mall expansion, anchored by a 188,000 square foot Nordstrom store, will see even more first-to-market retailers between now and 2016. Yorkdale is forecasted to become North America's top-selling mall by 2018.

Some of the first-to-Canada retailers for Yorkdale include Canada's first Apple Store in 2005 and Crate & Barrel in 2008.

The mall's leasing team, under the management of Oxford Properties, aggressively targets foreign retailers. It also targets foreign tourists, being Canada's first mall to accept the China UnionPay card. Last year the mall's annual sales surpassed \$1 billion, with sales forecasts of \$2 billion by 2018.

Yorkdale's new 298,000 square foot Nordstrom wing won't be the mall's final expansion, however. Another mall expansion is planned after Sears is demolished, housing multiple retailers and as many as two new department stores. Construction won't likely begin until Nordstrom opens in 2016.

New showroom is a consumer lab for CTC

Canadian Tire's experimental new showroom is taking cues from online shopping in an effort to create a more cohesive consumer experience across the retailer's channels.

The 16,000-square-foot showroom, which opened this spring at the retailer's Leaside location in Toronto, features 35 digital touch displays the size of large-screen TVs, a pickup area for online orders and bulk purchases made in store, and merchandise organized to match the way it's displayed online.

David Hicks, senior V.P. of dealer relations and store support at Canadian Tire, says the new "living lab," focuses

mostly on seasonal products like barbecues and patio furniture. It was built to serve as a "test and learn" experience for the retailer before it rolls out the new display techniques to its 490 stores across the country.

Ultimately the effort is about using space more efficiently. When a store doesn't have room to display its full assortment of barbecues, says Hicks, the touch screens allow the dealers to augment that and show customers what else is available. The large swipe screens feature images, ratings, reviews and product information beyond what's available on point-of-purchase signage, Hicks says. In addition, by studying how customers interact with the touchscreens and product displays, the retailer will get a better idea of which products to display when space is limited.

The Source sets a good example

As RadioShack Corp burns through cash in an attempt to reverse nine straight quarterly losses, it could learn a few things from its Canadian successor, The Source, experts say.

In 2009, Circuit City's U.S. parent company filed for bankruptcy protection and BCE Inc. bought the stores, rebranding them once again as The Source. Since then, their sales and number of stores have grown while other electronics retailers faltered. The Source has been opening new stores and sales have been rising in the 2% to 6% range in the past couple of years.

The Source has succeeded where RadioShack has struggled because of its smaller footprint stores in urban areas and malls. The smaller stores allow The Source to specialize in niche gadgets and accessories and focus on customer service, he said.

In the electronics retail market, where everyone is selling the same product at the lowest price possible, trying to compete with big box stores is a losing battle. In Canada, The Source is not selling the same things as its big box competitors, but in the U.S., RadioShack does.

And while RadioShack struggles to carve out a niche for itself through a crisis, The Source has already done it twice.

Of course, being owned by a telecom giant doesn't hurt either. The Source functions as a marketing and distribution portal for Bell, with customers able to, for example, buy a cellphone and sign up for a Bell wireless plan all at once.



Target executives try to revamp division

Target executives are going back to the drawing board to revamp and improve its fledgling Canadian division amid mounting losses and other snags in its core U.S. market. Almost from day one, they were plagued with problems such as bare shelves and shopper complaints that their prices were too high.

Target's first-quarter results, released in May, reflect the rocky rollout, although in some aspects they were better than analysts had expected.

The retailer reported first-quarter sales in Canada of \$393-million (U.S.), 8% lower than analysts had estimated. But its \$211-million Canadian loss before interest and taxes was slightly better than the forecast of a loss of \$225-million. Gross profit margins remained weak at 18.7% of sales compared with 29.5% in its U.S. market, driven by heavy discounting to clear excess inventory.

It expects this year's Canadian sales to be close to \$2-billion, below its earlier forecast of \$2.6-billion, and profit margins to fall by 20% instead of by 10%, its previous estimate.



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GreenPan teams up with Helen of Troy

The Cookware Company, which manufactures GreenPan ceramic non-stick cookware, has entered into a strategic licensing agreement with Helen of Troy to develop a cookware collection for Helen of Troy's OXO brand. According to The Cookware Company, the partnership will broaden its reach in the cookware market, as the new line will incorporate materials and cookware styles new to The Cookware Company. For Helen of Troy, the licensing agreement extends OXO's reach into a strategic new category for the housewares brand.

RS and Apple lead in sales per square foot

It's not easy for retailers to maximize how much they sell on a per-square-foot basis. It's harder to continue to show growth in that metric after you become

a leader, and harder still to do both of those things while also adding square footage. But there are a few companies that can say they've accomplished the trifecta, according to data from *eMarketer* that tracked 225 retailers.

Apple is the retail leader here over the most recent 12-month period, and it's neither particularly close nor a surprise. High-end tech isn't the only path to success, though; the other two companies averaging more than \$3,000 per square foot are Tiffany & Co. and Murphy USA, which operates convenience stores attached to gas stations.

Meanwhile, the top three companies are not leaders in growth, which is understandable considering how they outpace every other retailer by more than \$1,000 per square foot, on average.

So, who is the leader in sales-per-square-foot growth? Restoration Hardware, with a growth rate 6 percentage points, or 33%, higher than the next

closest retailer, Vince. Michael Kors, fourth in overall sales per square foot, is fifth, increasing an already impressive sales figure by 14.5%, trailed closely in both categories by Kate Spade.

Restoration Hardware is on the rise, according to *eMarketer*, because of the company's "design galleries", the larger-format stores that range from 25,000 to 60,000 square feet. They are staged like luxury residences and come with amenities like rooftop gardens (see Anthony's Stokan's article on page 54).

IHA reaches out to consumers

The International Housewares Association is advancing its recently announced consumer outreach initiative on behalf of the industry with a new consumer website set to launch July 1, according to Derek Miller, V.P. of global marketing.

The new consumer website will supplement the association's longstanding B2B website (housewares.org) and showcase two main content components: an educational section featuring articles and information contributed by independent writers and industry insiders; and a section showcasing IHA member products.

"We have millions of unique visitors coming to housewares.org," Miller explains. "A lot of consumers are visiting our site, but they're getting a B2B message. This new website will help us to cultivate a stronger consumer message to support our industry. We can be more influential in the consumer path to purchase."

Michaels goes public

Michaels, the arts and crafts retailer with 1,263 stores, is seeking \$528 million in an initial public offering. Michaels is offering 27.8 million shares at \$17 to \$19 each, according to a regulatory filing. Michaels was acquired by Bain and Blackstone in 2006 for about \$6 billion. Each firm will own 40% of the company after the offering. At the high-end of the price range, Michaels would have a market value of about \$3.9 billion. It generated \$4.6 billion in sales last year.

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A warning for grumpy old men

Cynics are three times more likely to develop dementia than those who have faith in humanity, a study has shown.

Believing that others are motivated by selfishness, or that they lie to get what they want, appears to radically increase the risk of cognitive decline in later life. It could mean that grumpy old men and women should be screened more closely for diseases such as Alzheimer's.

Cynicism has previously been linked to health problems such as heart disease, but this is the first time it has been associated with dementia.

Weight of the glass affects taste of wine

Hosts should serve their guests drinks in heavy glasses because the weight of the vessel makes the beverage taste better according to an Oxford University academic.

Charles Spence, Professor of Experimental Psychology, says that a heavy glass rather than a flimsy plastic cup will make people think the drink is significantly better.

Spence says lightness is associated with poor quality and 'cheapness' and will change the flavour of even the most expensive tittle. "We like heavy containers. We associate them with better quality, it has greater worth," he says.

He adds "lightness is associated with flimsiness, poor quality and cheapness. People feel it's more disposable.

Spence also says people are often fooled into thinking wine is of better quality if the bottle is heavier in wine shop.

Guests still spending heavily at weddings

Spending on wedding gifts continues to rise – as does everything else about attending (or having) a wedding.

More than 67 million Americans are planning on attending one or more weddings in 2014 and they'll pay more

to do it, according to the latest American Express Spending & Saving Tracker.

The report shows that the average cost for a guest to attend a wedding is now \$592. That's up 10% from 2013, but it's up 75% from 2012. More than half of that cost pays for travel and lodging: \$308. Another \$164 goes for special attire and accessories.

Spending on wedding gifts is also increasing. Again, the big increase was from 2012 to 2013, when the average cost increased from \$94 to \$108. The increase from 2013 to 2014 was just \$1, to \$109, but that still leaves the average cost in 2014 16% higher than it was two years ago.

When the wedding is for a coworker, guests spend an average of \$74 on the gift. When it's a close friend, guests spend an average of \$116. When the bride or groom is a close family member, the average gift cost for 2014 goes to \$200, up 20% from 2012.



The report showed that 33% of wedding gift buyers will purchase the gifts from the couple's registry. Another 33% give money and 13% give a gift card. Cash is what 55% of couples prefer, up from 52% last year.



This dinnerware is so good you can eat it

Thanks to a new invention, the days of cleaning plates and bowls might be over. Known as the Bake.A.Dish, this new machine can make kitchenware out of bread that can hold everything from soup to curry.

Is this the future of kitchenware? This odd kitchen gadget banishes the arduous chore of washing up after meals because it bakes edible plates and bowls. The clever machine uses a top secret process that allows the 'bread' to hold any kind of food including liquid-based meals. It can make bowls or plates of any size up to 16 inches in diameter.

Bake.A.Dish is the work of industrial design student Saeed Rahiminejad. It is a contender for the Electrolux Design Lab 2014 awards, and the designer is now seeking funding to help put his concept into production.

Rahiminejad, 26, of Tehran, says: "The product is aiming at personalizing your dinnerware, making a more sustainable alternative to disposable dinnerware and adding a fix of fibre to one's daily diet. All you need is flour and water."

The energy needed for making the breads comes from solar panels and the water used to bake them is less than that used to wash dishes.

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U.S. will be partner country at Ambiente



Next year, the Ambiente fair in Frankfurt will welcome the United States of America as its Partner Country. Scott Henderson has been selected as the designer of the American Partner Country presentation at Ambiente 2015.

“Scott Henderson is distinguished by an uncompromising and unmistakable design style, especially when it comes to designing consumer goods. He has a great talent for giving mundane articles a playful quality without impairing their functionality and we are delighted he has agreed to create the very popular Partner Country presentation at the next Ambiente”, says Nicolette Naumann, vice president Ambiente/Tendence.

The Partner Country project is an important part of the Ambiente programme for exhibitors and visitors, which embraces a wide range of events including the Partner Country presentation and the special Partner Country Day with numerous activities.

Henderson’s designs are widely recognized and have recently been included in the *New York Times Magazine’s* feature on the 20th century’s best designs and *I.D. Magazine’s* Annual Design Review. He has won numerous awards, including the Design Plus Award, the Good Design Award and the IDSA Industrial Design Excellence Award.

During the last edition of the fair, the Ambiente Partner Country Globe was handed over to Kevin C. Milas, Consul General of the United States of America, by Japanese Ambassador H.E. Takeshi Nakane. During previous Partner Country presentations by Denmark, France and Japan, the presentations have been

seen by many prominent guests, such as Princess Benedikte of Denmark, actress Catherine Deneuve and super model and actress Rila Fukushima.

The next Ambiente will be held in Frankfurt am Main from 13 to 17 February 2015. The Partner Country presentation is open on all five days of the fair.

Categories make fair in China easy to shop

Buyers attending this year’s Interior Lifestyle China, which will be held September 18th to 20th at the Shanghai New International Expo Centre, China, will find sourcing easier and more efficient due to improved product categorization of the show’s two halls.

The three-day show is organized by Messe Frankfurt (Shanghai) and is expected to attract 350 exhibitors and 23,000 local and international visitors.

Commenting on the categorization, Wendy Wen of Messe Frankfurt says “with clearer categorization, we are improving sourcing efficiency. The first hall will feature living and giving lifestyle items, while the second hall will showcase dining products and the country pavilions.”

The Home Style Award will also change focus from product design to design displays. This year’s Home Style Awards, organized by the Shanghai Brand Development Center, Lifestyle Brand Committee and Messe Frankfurt (Shanghai), will honour the best themed display at an Interior Lifestyle China exhibitor booth. Industry experts and the media will vote onsite during the first day of the show and the winner will receive their prize at an award ceremony the same evening.

In addition, there will be a Home Style Award for the Best Store Display. Both awards are aimed at supporting the lifestyle retail industry and we hope this will help drive development across the industry.

As well as displaying photographs of participating stores and retailers, Interior Lifestyle China will have a Window and Store Display area which will fea-

ture window and counter displays. It will be created by a highly renowned merchandiser working for a well-known international brand. This will demonstrate the difference in display strategies between western and Chinese designers. In addition, seminars will be conducted in the display area to encourage the exchange of information.

According to the report “How Active Are Retailers Globally” by CBRE, a leading international commercial real estate services and investment company, international retailers (22%) and Asian retailers (58%) are targeting China, making it the hottest market in the Asia Pacific region and the fifth hottest market in the world. The report also states that Chinese consumers are turning from classical luxury products to less luxurious brands and sub brands that interpret their personalities. This change is affecting fashion as well as lifestyle and household products.

For more information about Interior Lifestyle China, please visit www.il-china.com.

Hong Kong trade fairs set new records

The seven fairs organized in April by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) set new exhibitor and buyer records. Collectively, the fairs welcomed more than 11,000 exhibitors (6,907 from overseas) and 221,000 buyers (126,000 from overseas).

Buyer attendance from Asia surged 7.5%, year-on-year, with the Chinese mainland, India, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam recording considerable increases.

According to Hong Kong Exhibition & Convention Industry Association estimates, each international exhibitor and international exhibition visitor spent, on average, HK\$8,800 and HK\$11,000 respectively. Counting overseas fair visitors and assuming that each exhibitor sent two representatives to Hong Kong, the seven fairs brought in more than HK\$1.5 billion to Hong Kong.

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Where have all our reps gone?

by Candace Sutcliffe, Retail Manager, CA Paradis/The Chef's Paradise



"Any great business has to figure out how to turn adversity into advantage, by determining what is good about the new situation."

– Danny Meyer, CEO of Union Square Hospitality Group

Much like Netflix has made the Blockbuster rental model obsolete, the iPhone/iTunes combo has crippled the retail record store industry, ebooks and tablets to brick and mortar bookstores, the housewares industry is facing a major sales flow renovation largely due to technology. While consumers are still consuming movies, music and books; the purchasing process has become increasingly accessible and personalized between the manufacturer and the end user, eliminating the layers in between.

While brick and mortar retailers will always exist, as proven by the above examples, reinvention will be the key to their longevity. But with fewer independent retail operations to service, the sales agents or manufacturer's reps who call on them has become a dying breed.

Once considered the lifeline of a retailer and manufacturer's mutual success, the role of independent sales representation is now being challenged as companies are looking for ways to increase profitability by cutting costs in a progressively uncertain period in retailing. Savvy retail buyers have become accustomed to doing their own research in order to get maximum value out of every dollar spent. A good sales agent, however, can add value to the purchasing process by providing a framework of potential benefits and risks to both buyers and sellers. They are the eyes and ears at the street level and can communicate and explore new opportunities for both parties. So much of our in-

dustry still relies on personal relationships yet suppliers seem to be favouring "in-house" account managers over on-the-road salesmen, who may not know or appreciate the layout, product assortment or location of their retail customer base. Those few talented traveling agents that have been able to survive are now facing expanded territories with multiple product portfolios to manage and longer working hours only to maintain sales rather than enhancing them.

With the influence of the American-style box store shopping mentality pressuring the Canadian market, more and more retailers are looking to boost profit margins through direct import and private labelling programs. At the same time, North American manufacturers and distributors are streamlining U.S./Canadian operations by amalgamating warehouses, support staff and management to one central location rather than operating on both sides of the border. In both cases, communication relies more on the use of technology rather than through a middle man. As consumers become more brand conscious and brand loyal, name alone can sell a product line and investment in brand equity and awareness within a marketplace through multi-channel advertising will have a more lasting impact than independent agencies can deliver.

It's not all doom and gloom however. Agents (and retailers) that can adopt these new technologies and selling methods can weather the storm and maybe even prosper. Being able to stay ahead of the competition by identifying emerging market trends and niche selling opportunities early on can be invaluable. Sales agents who participate in new social media platforms and use these personal networking

tools to build on customer relationships, while providing content and support to help enhance the brand experience online, can only stimulate demand for the brands represented.

Actively engaging in a customer's operations and culture will result in a more efficient, adaptable and ultimately more successful long term relationships.

Manufacturers also need to understand the evolving role of a sales agent. They can better prepare their reps by providing new methods of communicating their message. Tablets or iPads that provide immediate access to catalogs, websites, real time inventories, shipment tracking, etc. can fuel an agent with immediate answers for their customers. Providing rich media content such as demo videos, product commercials or instructional demos can also be beneficial in launching a new product or in training sessions.

Being able to send information back to a supplier, whether photos of a defective product, new merchandising ideas or details on a competitor's product improves the flow of communication while providing quicker resolution. The days of lug-ging catalogs, trying to navigate through multiple indexes to find a product or waiting for a laptop to power up are gone. The role of the sales rep has become much more than just an "order taker".

While technology is challenging the way business is conducted, manufacturer reps and sales agents who adapt and embrace the ever-changing sales role will re-define how we can all better serve our customers and become more efficient. ☺

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Retail life lessons

We asked kitchen shop owners across Canada:
“What is the most valuable lesson you have learned as a retailer?”

One word comes to mind: persistence. When we first started 15 years ago, some suppliers at the CGTA show refused to do business with us because we were going to sell products online. Where are those folks now, hmmm?

When we went to open our first store, the big box mall said we don't rent to independents because they don't have financial stability. We were in that mall for eight years before we moved to a larger building. However, over that same time, large chain tenants in the same mall went under. Where are those chains now?

When we fired a popular vendor for price gauging the Canadian market by 30% for U.S.-made goods, they came back four years later with fair pricing.

Time after time, you may hear “you are not large enough of a business for x or y”, but I say, be persistent. If you're in this for the long haul, be persistent because the players will change, but hopefully you will still be here when they are gone.

Fred Pritchard, Golda's Kitchen, Mississauga, Ontario

The most important lesson is to be passionate about your work. We have a goal to fulfill all of our customer's needs. It is essential for us to meet and work with people who have the same way of thinking and vision of Cuisina. That is the reason why our clientele's favorite shop is Cuisina and the reason why our employees are always happy to serve these clients!

Mario Brochu, Cuisina, Montreal

You must have a vision. One of my favourite books is *Energy Bus* by Jon Gordon. Briefly, it's about, getting your team on the bus and moving in the right

direction with a shared vision, focus and purpose.

Over five years ago I read this book and was truly inspired. I've always had a knack for retail but now have a passion for what I do. It not only gave me a sense of purpose but it gave me insight into how to get my team to share my vision and together shape our daily actions so we are moving in the direction I want to go.

My goal is simple: "Inspire customers with a truly extraordinary retail experience". This vision has shaped everything from our hiring practices to customer interactions, merchandising strategies and how we prioritize our day-to-day activities. It not only keeps us motivated to do what we need to do but keeps us in check on the path we are taking.

I have found that my team now have a sense of purpose when they are working and are doing something for the greater good. This is mainly because we have full two-hour team meetings every other week to keep the vision alive.

Most importantly, over the past 5 years we've had nothing but sales increases year after year, an average of 15% annually. We are up 33% since I started the program. And even with a disastrous 2013 Christmas in which we were closed for four of the most important days, we still ended the year with a 2% increase. This is all because of the dedication and commitment of my team and them understanding my vision.

During these "challenging times" I couldn't have made it through without my vision. It has kept me focused, it has motivated me to persevere and, most importantly, it has kept me and my team in positive spirits – though some days were definitely harder than others.

Vince Menchella, iQ Living, Toronto

The most important lesson I've learned is to work with my suppliers and reps, ensuring that the products I bring into my store are both unique and different from the mass merchants and that my reps protect my interests with regards to other independent stores.

I try to respect other stores who purchase a product first, and not sell the same things that my neighbouring businesses do. It can be really tough making sure that the product I want to sell is exclusive because I know that certain lines are very extensive, and if done properly, could be “shared”. However, finding the balance to share a line is a unique situation in itself. Many business owners want what they want when they want it and will fight for it.

What's the solution? Buy up the competition I guess. Barring that, do the best you can. Be a good ambassador with retail practices that reflect how you'd like to be treated by your own neighbours.

Claire Breeze, Kitchen Boutique, Alberta

In my business I would say there are two principles I stay true to. The first is to stay focused on what I know best – kitchenware. When I have forayed into bath or garden it has not worked for me. People know when it comes to cooking and the kitchen they can count on us for the knowledge and tools they need. I do not have a green thumb!

The second is to go with my instincts. I know what I want and what sells for me. It may be different than another retailer but I do not let myself be swayed. Naturally, I stay on top of trending ideas and products and I feel I have a pretty good handle on what will be a hit with my customer.

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Staying focused is sometimes challenging but, with a few exceptions over the years, I am never stuck with unsold inventory!

Laurie Oehy,
Academy of Culinary Arts, Toronto

As we all know, the largest percentage of business is conducted in late November through to December 24th. My advice is to:

- Order accordingly and generously as you cannot sell what you do not have.
- Keep daily notes on when the most popular items sold out. Refer back the next year in order to avoid shortages.
- Trust your instincts. Just because it is the top seller in eastern Canada, it may not be the same in your area.
- Communicate with your staff daily, never assume, as you know that makes an ass of u and me.
- Never take things for granted, it can be your enemy. I have always felt that fear is the best motivator.

Caren McSherry, *Gourmet Warehouse, Vancouver*

Over the years, both in retail and my previous life in distribution, there have been many life lessons. However I would say the most important lesson I am *still* trying to learn as a retailer is patience.

As my partner, Fouad Kejjo, so eloquently puts it “learn to aim BEFORE shooting”. This is a skill that does not come easily to me, but over the years, I have learned it is invaluable, both in relations with staff and clients, as well as with suppliers.

It is far too easy in life to react, rather than absorb, reflect, plan and then act. A well thought-out plan or reply is always more effective in the long term than ‘shooting from the hip’, no matter how great the short-term satisfaction. It is very similar to playing a strategy game such as backgammon, where the player that is able to think multiple moves ahead is always the ultimate winner.

Dave Abrams,
Ares Accessoires de Cuisine, Montreal

I have always been a single owner and find that this works best for me. After 16 years in business, I know that I could not operate with “job splitting”. Observing other businesses with multiple owners, I find they have problems sharing the workload and end up mad at each other for not doing what needs to be done.

The most valuable lessons are: be honest and trustful, provide good, consistent customer service and word of mouth is your best advertising.

Listen to what customers have to say and find ways to add to your product line or take out what is available at other retail places.

Our newsletter is now ten years old and we keep making improvements. We have asked customers for comments. Listen to what is needed.

Remember who you are. We are a high end, quality kitchen store, not a jewelry or funky store. Our customers want product knowledge and like it when we tell them how we use gadgets and recommend what works best.

Sigrid Wolm, *From the Kitchen to the Table, Orangeville, Ontario*

As merchants, we create and see a variety of signs in our shopping districts. Wouldn't it be great if we saw some types of signs more than others? What if we had the sign “BE NICE, OR LEAVE” on the front door of our stores? Or what if our customers entered our businesses with their own sign, “BE NICE OR I'LL LEAVE”? And what if our suppliers put in fine print at the bottom of their credit apps, “CREDIT LIMIT IS COMMENSURATE WITH HOW NICE YOU ARE TO OUR SALES REPS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE STAFF?” As my girlfriend says: “Nice is the least you should expect, not the most you should expect.”

Being nice is the lifelong lesson I've learned to be successful in business. But, then again, I probably measure success differently from many other people, who tend to use salary as their yardstick. I measure my success by the enjoyment I receive when I work with my staff, and when I educate my customers. I'm success when they tell me they love

my store and personalized service, and express their loyalty by coming back.

I do believe you can catch more bees with honey and that you eventually get back what give. My relationship with my sales reps exemplifies this approach. I trust them and they trust me, and, as a result, we help each other. I learned recently that I could really count on my reps when our neighbour, Kingsmills, was closing. It created a problematic ripple effect for small businesses in the city. I called on my sales reps to help. With some, there was an instant and instinctual response. Others were eager to learn about the relevant issues. Despite their various approaches, they all helped. Why? Because it was the right thing to do, and I had always been kind to them. Kindness inspires loyalty.

In the movie *Mr. Saturday Night*, starring Billy Crystal, Crystal's egotistical character tells his more vulnerable brother that he was the reason the brother had any success in life. “Yes,” the brother replies, “but you could have been nicer.”

Doing anything for people without kindness is meaningless. If we were all nicer – as owners, as employees, as customers, as sales reps – we could all measure ourselves as successful, both in business and in life.

Lawrence Burden,
Kiss the Cook, London

I have learned so many lessons in my career, and after 18 years I am still learning. Every lesson becomes most important at the moment when it's most relevant.

The key lesson would be to stay important and relevant at all times. Stay true to what you want your store to be and to what your customers expect your store to be. But don't forget to grow with your customers, and grow to gain new customers.

Retail is a tough business, and getting tougher, but it is not a stagnant business. It is always changing and evolving, and we must learn to evolve with it.

The first lesson is an all-time truth, the second is most relevant right now.

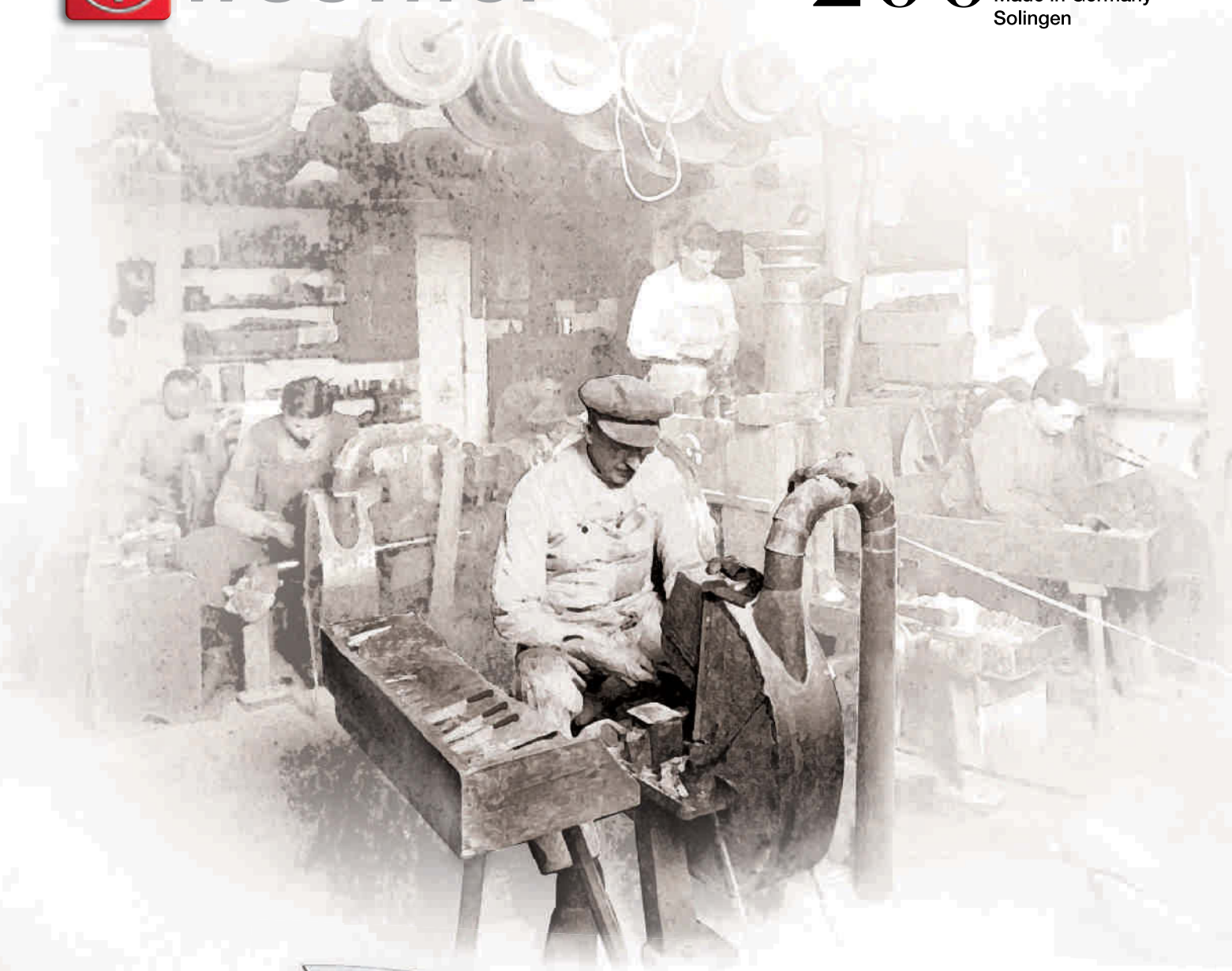
Claire Lauzon, *Ma Cuisine, Ottawa*



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SEVENTH HEAVEN

Just three years ago, the seventh floor of the Hudson's Bay flagship store on the corner of Queen and Bay in Toronto was a dusty enclave of abandoned offices and unused storage space. Today, under the guidance of creative director Arren Williams, the space has been transformed into a spectacular housewares department, anchored by the lavish new Kleinfeld bridal boutique and featuring a full-service retail gift registry that rivals some of the best in the world.

Called Home on Seven, the bright new space covers 28,500 square feet and features over 100 brands – each its own shop-within-a-shop. Previously spread out over several floors, Home on Seven

Hudson's Bay debuts *Home on Seven*, a spectacular new floor in the downtown Toronto store dedicated to housewares and anchored by the world-famous Kleinfeld bridal boutique

By Laurie O'Halloran





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Department Store Design



offers shoppers everything to “prep, cook, serve, dine and gift”. Positioned adjacent to the newly renovated area is a massive all-occasion gift registry that Arren says “is unmatched in Canada”. The result, he adds, is an unparalleled customer experience.

Prior to creating the concept for the new floor, Arren (who joined HBC two years ago) and his team of designers visited world-class retailers, such as Merci in Paris, to get ideas. They were inspired and motivated to come up with an amazing retail vision that has become Home on Seven. Arren stresses that new president Liz Rodbell has been instrumental in helping them strengthen and embolden their vision. “She has been fantastic to work with and I am so grateful,” says Arren. “For a retail designer, an opportunity like this only comes along once in a lifetime.”

Designed as an assortment of individual specialty shops, each of the HBC’s top 100 housewares vendors was allocated space based on how much busi-



Sections are divided by product category, highlighted with neon signs, right. The floor is easily accessible from a new escalator location, above. The base of the escalator is ideal for product displays.





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Department Store Design



The Au Courant collection, above, features gifts under \$50. The products are designed for impulse buying with staging by Arren Williams. Left, the centre runway is used to showcase on-trend table settings.

ness they had done together, their current product offerings, and how willing they were to work with HBC on colour themes, displays, etc.

“We treat this entire floor as a group of specialty stores and each display is designed to tell a story,” Arren explains. “The ‘runway’ down the centre of the floor will be changed with each season, or to showcase a specific brand.”

He adds that HBC’s private brands, such as Gluckstein Home, are very important to the company and as such, are showcased in the centre stage.

Traffic flows easily on the floor with its wide aisles, high ceilings and natural light pouring in from the window overlooking Bay and Richmond Streets, just steps from Toronto City Hall.

Bold colours against white walls draw the eye across the floor, with separate sections allocated for Gadgets, Coffee, Kitchen Tools and more, each identified with a bright neon sign. Sales associates are easily identifiable (including a barista) with their black aprons embroidered with the Hudson’s Bay logo.

A special demo kitchen and coffee bar allows customers to sit down, take a break from their shopping, and sample different coffees brewed from the ma-



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Store Design



chine offered for sale. A big screen TV in the demo kitchen provides tips and tools 24/7 on how consumers can become 'masters of the kitchen'. There are also regular live demonstrations by brand specialists and celebrity chefs.

Arren and his team have strategically placed blackboards throughout, featuring recipes, cooking tidbits, serving suggestions and other ideas to engage the customer. Sometimes it's a history of the product on display, or the company. The goal is to make the floor as interactive and entertaining as possible. Or as Arren says, "a place of discovery".

To that end, there is a new gifting area called Au Courant. It features fun, whimsical gifts to give or keep, each priced under \$50 and choreographed by Arren. The items make ideal bridal shower or hostess gifts.

Though the buyers do try to source Canadian-made products whenever possible, it's not always easy. Arren says they have great collaborations with various designers, however, and are always looking for new opportunities to showcase eclectic products for the home.

"Our customers expect us to edit the product offerings that are out there and bring them only the very best of what's available," says Arren.

The redesigned gift registry is anchored by Birks, Godiva chocolates and Kleinfeld (see sidebar). It has been pared down from more than 300 china patterns to just 80, including many more contemporary designs. There is an entire wall devoted to dinnerware but the focus is more on the casual lifestyle and entertaining at home. With the stunning new Home on Seven, which certainly rivals any top retailer in Europe, Hudson's Bay customers will find all the inspiration they need. 🐦

WHY I LOVE IT

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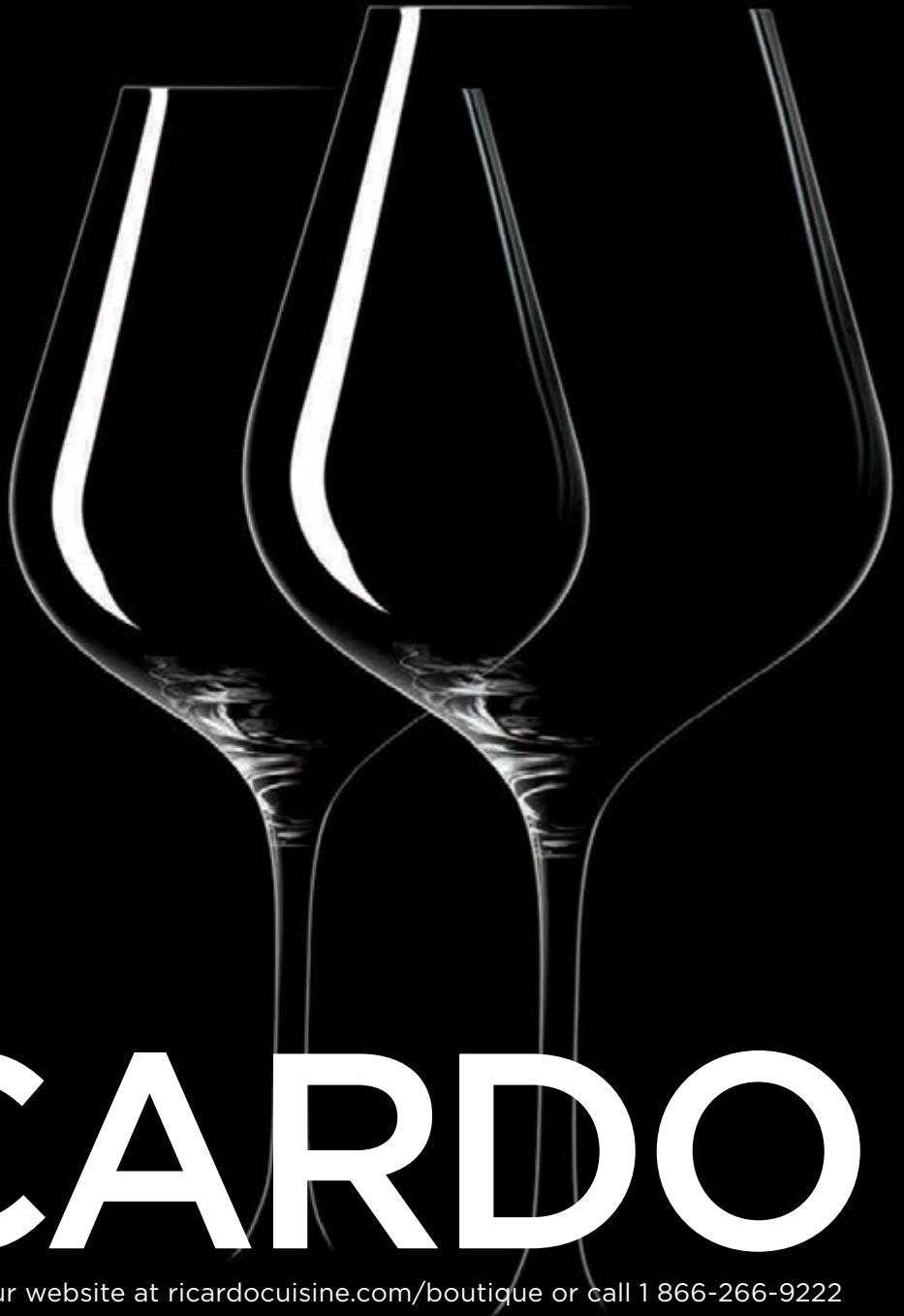
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Department Store Design

Rodbell outlines HBC's new retail strategy

At the recent Store Conference in Toronto, Hudson's Bay president Liz Rodbell (who was appointed just one year ago as a successor to Bonnie Brooks), discussed the company's three-point strategy that will "delight our customers today and create excitement for tomorrow". The new strategy is in response to a steady influx of new players to the retail market, a shift towards luxury spending and a rise in the fashion savvy millennial generation. (Rodbell says

millennials will make up 40% of Canada's population by 2015.)

One of her key goals is to address the digital side of the business and she has put a team in place to oversee e-commerce, online assets and digital marketing. But she also wants to improve the shopping experience in-store, and that's where Home on Seven comes into play.

"Just as digital is important, so is the in-store experience," says Rodbell. "Despite all the talk about digital or that our customers are more wired than ever stores still do matter, which is why we're creating memorable in-store experiences to delight and entertain our customers. (They've even had Justin Timberlake in the store to promote his line of jeans.)

"There's nothing like the social experience of shopping with your friend," according to Rodbell. "To keep consumers coming back we need the most beautiful and engaging environment they want to shop in, we need to deliver entertaining, must-attend events that will drive traffic. We need to deliver a remarkable experience so consumers know just how important they are."



Father's Day was being promoted at Home on Seven with displays for tableware and beer tasting sets, top. Above, the entrance to the coffee bar with seating area.

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Here come the brides

A recent survey showed that 162,000 couples will walk down the aisle this year. Hudson's Bay (which already boasts the country's largest gift registry) is hoping many of them will walk through their new bridal shop first.

This May saw the grand opening of Kleinfeld Bridal's first Canadian location, on the seventh floor of Toronto's Queen Street Hudson's Bay store. The first of its kind in the world, the 20,000-square-foot boutique also features a Maison Birks jewellery shop-in-store. By the time it opened, 2,000 appointments had already been booked.

Kleinfeld was made popular thanks to the hit TLC television series *Say Yes To The Dress*. Its 35,000 square foot Manhattan store is currently its only other location.

Characterized by natural light and modern interiors, Kleinfeld features skylights and an outdoor terrace as well as a 'twirling room'. The store employs wedding consultants, fitters, stylists, seamstresses and its own concierge. In addition to new scanners that make it easier for brides and grooms to register their wish list, there is a new bridal party gifting area as well.

Though the company will not reveal the size of its gift registry business, president Liz Rodbell says it is growing in the double digits and had 50,000 registrants last year alone. Kleinfeld is part of an ongoing bid by Hudson's Bay CEO Richard Baker to transform less productive square footage in the stores by incorporating boutiques such as the U.K. chain Topshop.

Kleinfeld's Manhattan store earns about \$1000 per square foot per year. If Toronto's salon achieves similar sales, it could become the most productive floor space in the flagship Hudson's Bay. Overall, sales per square foot have risen to \$145 at Hudson's Bay from \$133 in 2011. Baker's goal is to hit \$175 across the network, which will include Saks Fifth Avenue stores in 2015.



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Brotherly love

For over a century, the Setlakwe family has honoured the traditions first established by Aziz Sarafian, an Armenian immigrant who left his war-torn country behind to start a new life in northern Quebec

By Denise Gaze

Mixing business with friends or family is widely thought to be a recipe for disaster. For the Setlakwe family, it has been a recipe for success. To understand how this one family has been able to work together for five generations, you have to go back to the beginning, to 1904, when a young man left his war-torn country to find a better life in Canada.

Aziz Sarafian fled a turbulent and violent climate that had been brewing in Turkish Armenia since the 1880s. The Armenian genocide was orchestrated and carried out by the Turkish government against the entire Armenian population. It's estimated 1.5 million Armenians were slaughtered by 1915, including Aziz's five brothers, who were assassinated by the Turks. His close friend had managed to flee Armenia, however, eventually settling in Disraeli, Quebec. Aziz decided to try and find him.

Unable to speak English or French upon arrival in Canada, Aziz set up shop in Thetford Mines, a small mining community about 20 miles from Disraeli. He changed his surname to Setlakwe – which translates to *six brothers* in Arabic – to both honour his slain siblings and keep their memory alive.

Aziz started a small business traveling by horse and buggy, selling goods to farms and residents in smaller towns in and around Thetford Mines.

"In those days, a shirt or a pair of dress pants could be exchanged for a night's lodgings and breakfast in the morning," recalls Aziz's grandson, Stephen Setlakwe, director of operations



Stephen Setlakwe, grandson of the founder, is responsible for kitchenware.

at A. Setlakwe, the company his grandfather founded. (The A stands for Aziz.)

Aziz and his wife raised eight children, four sons and four daughters. He was also responsible for sponsoring and encouraging other Armenians to come to Canada. He became known as the Patriarch of Armenian Canadians but he could never have imagined such a lasting business legacy, carried on by his family and now in its 110th year.

Aziz's son, Calil (Stephen's father), was the driving force behind the business that Aziz started, along with his brothers Sam, Michel and Joseph (Stephen's uncles).

Calil's specialty was originally furs. He was extremely knowledgeable about

different pelts and the manufacturing of fur coats in Quebec and Montreal. He would travel to New York regularly to auctions and bid on pelts. He also bought skins from many First Nations traders in Northern Quebec.

His sons Stephen, 72, and older brothers Raymond, 85, and Richard, 80, continue to carry the torch. Richard recently retired as vice president, but all continue to have input into the daily operations.

Raymond (formerly Senator Setlakwe under Jean Chretien) was A. Setlakwe's president. He recently stepped down, passing the baton to his nephew, Andrew, in 2010. Although they have a new president, "nothing important is done around here without Raymond's input," insists Stephen.

There are now three Setlakwe stores in Quebec. The original 400-square-foot wood structure corner store in Thetford Mines was transformed into a free-standing building in 1937. It has expanded to 45,000 square feet, with approximately 15,000 housewares SKUs. But the stores primarily focus on fashion for the family.

The Setlakwe family also runs eight Silhouette Lingerie Shops in Quebec and the import company Les Importations Saint Hilaire, specializing in lingerie and swimwear from Europe. Between the two businesses, the family employs 150 people, many of whom have been with the company for years.

A graduate of New York University with a Master of Science degree in retailing, Stephen first worked for Eaton's

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in downtown Montreal. When his father Calil bought a store in Ste Marie de Beauce in 1965, Stephen became manager for nine months. “I was a little young for that responsibility so I went back to Thetford Mines. I have worked there for 49 years now,” he says.

Stephen’s primary responsibility is buying kitchenware and linens. The top selling categories at A. Setlakwe’s include stemware and regular glassware. “Knives are also an important seller along with unique kitchen gadgets,” adds Stephen. “We like to encourage our customers to browse and often they find the cheaper gadget initially tickles their fancy, but that leads them to the more expensive items.”

A. Setlakwe’s continued success is due to a number of factors but Stephen says the most important one is the simplest: “We had always agreed there would only be one chief, my brother, Raymond. When Andrew was chosen to



Though the 45,000-square-foot Thetford Mines store is mainly devoted to fashion, it also carries 15,000 housewares skus.

succeed him it was because we all agreed he was the most qualified in the family. We have never bickered over power, which has been the downfall of many businesses.”

In these difficult economic times, Stephen knows how lucky they are as a retailer. Their location has turned out to be a key contributing factor. The main store in Thetford Mines is located out of the way, on the South shore of the St. Lawrence and only an hour away from the U.S. border. “There is a Walmart here, but the major chains have not moved into Thetford Mines,” says Stephen.

Formerly an asbestos mining town, it started to diversify 25 years ago. A report by Desjardins Credit Union states that on a per capita basis, Thetford Mines is third in Canada as the city with the largest number of small businesses completely unrelated to mining. Diversification has been key not only to A. Setlakwe’s success, but also to the town’s expansion as a whole.

The Setlakwe family values have been passed down to each generation and Stephen is proud of what he calls an “old fashioned” work ethic.

“We run our business by old principles. We mean what we say and follow through,” explains Stephen. “If you say you’ll get back to a supplier, you should do so, whether you buy or not. Then they know your word is good, your word is your bond.”

He also believes strongly in the art of

negotiation and networking. He’s always looking for ways to build and improve the retailer/supplier relationship.

“Stephen is a well accomplished business man,” says Jacques Dubuc, president of Trudeau. “Through many years of working closely with him, I have discovered a generous man with a great culture. His sense of humour is unique – only those closest to him can fully enjoy this quality about him!”

Stephen, along with brothers Raymond and Richard, continues to ebb and flow with the changing times while others have failed. “People always told us we were situated on the wrong side of the street,” says Stephen. “But today, we’re the only business left in downtown Thetford Mines. All our detractors have folded or become something else.”

That doesn’t mean it’s always been easy. Retailing never is. As Stephen tells *Home Style*: “If you aren’t prepared to put in very long hours, then retail is not the business for you.”

For the family, it also helps that the Setlakwe name stands for something. “I have had to spell my name out so many times, but I am proud of it. It is well known and respected in the industry.”

Although the Arabic surname of Setlakwe was adopted in response to the devastating loss of five brothers, the family continues to preserve and maintain Aziz’s original vision. Five generations later, following family tradition remains the key ingredient in the Setlakwe recipe for success. 🐾



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The reinvention of Restoration Hardware

Saved from bankruptcy, CEO Gary Friedman has revitalized Restoration Hardware by focusing on the store's relationship with the customer and the in-store shopping experience

By Anthony Stokan



The stunning new Boston Restoration Hardware store, featured on these pages, is located in an 1862 Beaux-Arts building originally constructed for the Museum of Natural History.

Few of us could have imagined the profound changes that have taken place in the specialty store and shopping centre arenas since that fateful strike of the clock on January 1st, 2000 that marked the new millennium. There have been many casualties across categories and retail continues to evolve on a daily basis. There is no longer any margin for error when it comes to service or operational excellence. Competition is unforgiving and so is the customer. Loyalty is allusive, even more so if you factor in the new realities of e-commerce and social media.

Someone once said "you are only as good as your weakest part". To complicate matters, many retailers are in denial about the existence of their "weakest parts". The greatest challenge any retailer faces is staying relevant to their core customer. Fine tuning the merchandise mix seasonally, attracting new customers as well as maintaining loyalty are all daunting tasks in this technologically driven world.

No one has the privilege of hanging on to the old model of retail. If you do you probably won't survive to the end of this decade. Gone are the days of re-

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Retail Turnaround

tailers and brands having all the power. Shopping today is about so much more than just the store. Even a great location doesn't guarantee success. Today, the consumer has all the power. They have multiple shopping platforms to choose from. They are not buying for the sake of buying but are looking to be entertained and informed both in the store and online.

This was the challenge facing the continent's oldest department store chain, The Bay. But during the past several years, management has undertaken the overwhelming task of revitalizing the tarnished image of the brand with a new and improved Hudson's Bay chain that continues to see incremental gains every quarter.

It's no small task to turn any chain around these days. One of the more remarkable turnarounds of the past decade, however, was started prior to Hudson's Bay – the revitalization of Restoration Hardware. Both chains share more similarities than differences as they pegged their futures on trading up as opposed to getting caught in the downward spiral of endless markdowns and promotional sales.

Enter CEO Gary Friedman, who joined Restoration Hardware in 2001 from Williams-Sonoma as the company was near bankruptcy. Currently Friedman is rolling grand stores in high-income cities across the continent. The response from customers and investors has been equally enthusiastic; sales have been growing more than 20% a year since 2010, shares are up 50% in the past year, and analysts expect it to be profitable this fiscal year.

Stores are gradually being rebranded as RH and last spring the store in Boston, set in an 1862 Beaux-Arts building originally constructed for the Museum of Natural History, set the benchmark for his vision of the chain's future. It is four stories tall and 40,000 square feet, with fully staged bedrooms, living rooms and dining rooms, a library, cinema room, billiard lounge, nursery, and conservatory.

A glass elevator modeled after one



built in 1893 moves between the floors. There is a 24-foot-tall steel replica of the Eiffel Tower (found in a flea market and not for sale) and a vintage lightbulb tester that's been turned into a minibar (\$1,995). The cash registers are hidden in cabinets.

Friedman acknowledges the industry benchmark is still sales per square foot. This store format could ultimately have sales per square foot that are three times as high as the old store model. To achieve this, the strategy has evolved. It's not just about sales per square foot but the 'experience per square foot'. Instead of thinking about the path to purchase, RH is focused on thinking about the journey to a relationship.

Future stores will be even bigger, with wine bars and restaurants, performance spaces, courtyards, and

rooftop gardens. All will have free valet parking. RH is targeting \$25 to \$30 million a year per store for renovation.

"No one has ever built stores like this," Friedman says.

RH is on target to have a dozen stores (Friedman calls them "design galleries") open by the spring 2015 and will eventually open 60 to 70 in total in North America, replacing 62 existing ones.

Friedman opened an RH contemporary art gallery in Manhattan last November. He's also announced RH Atelier, a clothing and jewelry line, and RH Antiques and Artifacts, a collection of one-of-a-kind pieces. Much of the money for these projects will come from RH's advertising budget.

"Even if art never becomes a very big business, but it renders the brand more valuable, that's what you want to do

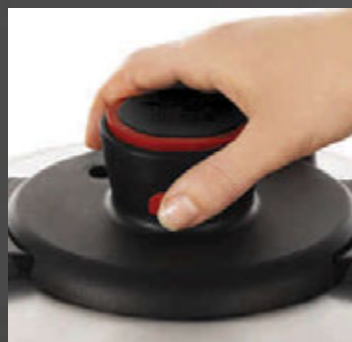
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Retail Turnaround



RH now offers catalogues devoted to categories such as leather, barware and tableware.



with marketing monies," he says. The RH wisdom is spend money to create a store experience that exceeds people's expectations and imaginations and instantly transports you into an awe inspired state. It's not about spending money on messages, it's about investing in execution. This parallels the philosophy of internationally successful fashion retailer Zara where the focus is on store interiors and visual merchandising to build a strong customer relationship.

This daunting process that Friedman embarked on has taken almost a decade. He first transformed Restoration Hardware into a curator of luxury furnishings by targeting people with household incomes exceeding \$200K. The company's prior iteration was a purveyor of giftware, collectables and design inspired accessories. He also closed some stores to open larger-format locations. These 'design galleries' are at least 20,000 square feet and feature home furnishings in upscale living settings.

Over the past three years, RH has continued to innovate, test and prove they can build a retail experience that defies the current conventional wisdom that everyone is moving to e-commerce and retail stores are dead.

At its five existing design galleries in cities including Boston, Los Angeles and Houston, RH sales continue to top its target of \$850 in sales per square foot of selling space. In some markets stores are exceeding more than \$2K a square foot.

These new format stores feature about a third of the overall assortment in stores 20,000 to 25,000 square feet in size. As store formats increase from 40,000 to 50,000 square feet in size they will be able to feature more than half of the current merchandise mix.

Sales associates are all trained to build relationships and to put customers at ease as they simultaneously shop a bricks and mortar design gallery and augment that purchase online at the RH website. RH believes relationships lead to transactions. Sales associates understand that going after the single sale and skimping on the relationship is to miss out on an entire community of customers and future transactions.

RH continues to defy the rules. The company currently publishes 13 RH Source Books, consisting of five inspirational lifestyle books and eight categorical books. Each book showcases product in luxurious settings that are simultaneously inspirational and inviting.

RH cleverly allows customers to embrace the lifestyle they have curated by simply purchasing an item or two – or an entire room. The RH Tableware collection consists of dinnerware, flatware, glassware, entertaining pieces and linens. Product is intentionally presented as curated style at its best.

RH has taken its cues from couture fashion legends and applied the mystique to creating coveted residential decor. It doesn't matter if it's a simple piece of cutlery or a custom leather upholstered sofa, you have a sense of purchasing an item that has been carefully crafted and somehow has some sort of vintage provenance attached to it. RH is not about selling the product, it's much more about selling the dream.

The new catalogues will be mailed through UPS, allowing the company to better communicate with customers and avoid damage or loss. Friedman stated recently to the investment community "We're willing to destroy today's reality to create tomorrow's future," and is confident this \$1.6 billion-company has the potential to more than double in size by the end of this decade.

RH has focused on creating experiences that add value. In this reciprocal new path where retailers balance stores, technology and social media, all communications focus on courting the customer, not selling to her. It takes an enormous leap of faith to make the purchase secondary and invest in relationships first.

We are witnessing the emergence of a new generation of retailers committed to meeting the demands of the connected consumer who are convinced relationships will build social currency. That social currency will pay off in immediate sales and loyalty down the road. As retail polarization continues – value versus luxury – more retailers face the daunting task of embracing a turnaround. Recognize that the consumer has the power. It's all about her! 🍷

Restoration Hardware Holdings announced double digit growth in its fiscal first quarter for this year, ended May 3, 2014. The retailer reported a net revenue increase of 22% to \$366.3 million from \$301.3 million in the first quarter of fiscal 2013. Adjusted operating income increased 204% to \$14.0 million and adjusted net income increased 217% to \$7.2 million.

"RH continued to outperform the home furnishings industry by a wide margin," says CEO Gary Friedman, noting that comparable brand revenue increases represent an industry-leading 57% increase over a two-year period.

Anthony Stokan is a retail and shopping centre expert, consultant, speaker and writer. info@anthonyrussellinc.com

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Water world

An Overview of the Canadian Beverage Maker Market
by Armin Begic, Manager, The NPD Group



KitchenAid has entered the home carbonation category with the introduction of the Sparkling Beverage Maker, developed in collaboration with SodaStream International, the world's leading manufacturer and distributor of home carbonation systems. Echoing the curved, streamlined silhouette of the brand's iconic stand mixer, this beverage maker features all-metal construction. It offers four carbonation settings, a one-liter BPA free plastic bottle, and a 60-litre CO2 tank. It will be available this summer in contour silver, empire red (shown above) and liquid graphite.

"Working with SodaStream brings together best-in-class technology with our stylish design signature to offer a premium product for consumers worldwide," says David Elliott, G.M. of KitchenAid.

The Source is the latest unit from **SodaStream**, right. It was designed by Yves Behar with a sleek, modern design. It has a responsive touch system with three levels of fizziness, visible LED display and snap-lock mechanism.



An increased focus on health, wellness, innovation and convenience has been a recipe for success for home beverage appliances. Over the past two years, home beverage appliances such as single-serve coffee makers, countertop blenders, and juicers contributed to most of the growth, but that has slowed. Enter a new beverage segment to add a little fizz to the mix.

During the first four months of 2014, the top four kitchen appliance categories based on unit growth were carbonators (+140%), mixes/syrups for home soda machines (+117%), soda machines (+104%), and home soda bottles (+37%). Even though growth has been dynamic, those segments combined make up about 4% of total dollars in kitchen appliances year-to-date through April.

While home soda makers generate much smaller sales than single serve brewers, the two have a lot in common. Home soda maker growth resembles single-serve brewer growth when that segment started to take off in Canada. Both stimulate repeat store visits – which retailers love – and both are very seasonal items. In fact, 32% of home soda machine sales in 2013 happened in December and more than 50% sold in Q4 which makes it the second most seasonal kitchen appliance category behind stand mixers. Usage frequency is also similar; NPD's *Inside the Canadian Home: Appliances We Own and Use Study* found that nearly half of home soda maker owners use the appliance at least once per week.

Where a consumer lives also seems to be impacting home soda machine purchases. NPD's new POS regional data service shows that although Western Canada represented 34% of total kitchen appliance revenue year-to-date in Canada, it accounted for nearly 40% of home soda machine sales – which was larger than Ontario – indicating higher than average demand from consumers in the West. Syrup and carbonator attachment rates across the regions reveal that although Quebec has the lowest attachment rates for syrups-to-machines, it has the highest attachment rate for carbonators-to-machines, indicating a higher preference for carbonated water. The West had the highest syrup-to-machine ratio indicating more of a preference for flavoured soda.

Home soda machines are on track to sell roughly 210,000 units in Canada in 2014. While this is still smaller than most kitchen appliance categories, it's a category to keep your eyes on, especially after recent announcements from beverage juggernauts Coca Cola and Keurig Green Mountain. The best appears to be ahead and the category may still be in its infancy.



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Water world



Cool Gear's new Arise cap features Autosip technology. With one touch of a button, the innovative cap opens quickly and easily. The button releases the sanitary cover that keeps the silicone sipper germ-free. A new 14-ounce Tyke model, right, is offered in addition to the 28-ounce Wave and 20-ounce Arise Double Wall bottles.

The Hydrate Mate 16-ounce water bottle from Full Circle is available in three trendy colours: green, blue and purple. The eco-friendly bottle has an easily removable top. The curved shape and silicone base protect the bottle if it's dropped and the compact size makes it small enough to fit in a car cup holder. Distributed by Danesco.



The Mosa Soda Splash Set from Browne includes a stainless steel carafe, right, a funnel, stopper and charger holder. This versatile carbonating device is safe and easy to use. The threaded storage stopper provides a tight seal and the carafe can be stored in the fridge for later consumption. It can be used with tap water or a mixture of syrups, juice or wine.



Punch up flavour with the 36-ounce Citrus Zinger Biggie from Zing Anything. Designed for large citrus fruits, with just a twist, users can be sipping water flavoured with orange or grapefruit. Distributed by Don Schacter + Assoc.



A new vacuum insulated hydration bottle from Thermos, left, provides maximum temperature retention with a durable stainless steel interior and exterior. A hygienic rear push button lid offers one-handed operation. It also has a locking switch, integrated carrying loop and a silicone spout for comfortable drinking. It keeps beverages cold for 18 hours. Another new hydration bottle from Thermos, right, features an innovative, gravity-fed filtration system that allows water to pass through the filter naturally, not by force. It removes contaminants and will last for 20 gallons. The open spout design allows great water flow rate with no squeezing required.





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Under pressure

Pressure cookers are perfect for today's health-conscious cook



Breville's Fast Slow Cooker uses less energy than conventional cooking methods. This multi-purpose appliance offers the option of two techniques – pressure cooking or slow cooking. It also has a built-in sear function to sear meats or sauté vegetables directly inside the six-litre non-stick removable pot. It also includes a stainless steel steaming basket and trivet.

This 5-in1 electronic pressure cooker from **Salton** lets you cook low-fat, healthy meals in a fraction of the time. The five functions include: pressure cook; warm; brown; steam; and slow cook. The pressure regulator is one of seven safety devices for worry-free use. A Delay Start programmable timer delays cooking for up to eight hours. The heavy gauge pot with non-stick Teflon coating distributes heat evenly while the stainless steel exterior remains cool to the touch.



LACOR has added 12-litre and 15-litre sizes to their existing line up of pressure cookers. Each features safe and classic European design with clamps on either side to ensure ease of use and exceptional flavour. Each unit is made with a 3mm triple-ply encapsulated bottom, double stamped 18/10 stainless steel and an aluminum plate contained within for even heat distribution. Made in Spain, they're available exclusively from **Gontara**.



The **WMF** Perfect Plus pressure cooker set includes a 6.5-litre and 3-litre size. Made in Germany of 18/10 Cromargan stainless steel, the cooker has built-in safety features that won't let users open the lid until all of the pressure has been released. Fast and easy to use, these units can reduce cooking time by up to 70%. A unique, detachable handle makes clean-up a breeze. The lid and pot base are both safe for the dishwasher. Available from Royal Selanger.

Tramontina has introduced a new pressure cooker, right, with a large, six litre capacity. Made of stainless steel, this Brazilian-made pressure cooker is suitable for all cooktops, including induction. It has two handles for safe handling and easy lifting. Distributed in Canada by Canitra Agents.





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Stovetop Cookware

What's hot in metal, enamel and cast iron cookware and skillets



Cuisinart's CastLite lightweight non-stick cast iron cookware is available in both red and blue in a variety of shapes and sizes. This non-stick line weighs up to 50% less than traditional cast iron, while offering the same great heat distribution and retention. CastLite cookware is stovetop and oven-safe up to 500°F (260°C) and can be used on all cooking surfaces.

Designed with a rich red metallic exterior and professional stainless steel interior, this new cookware set from Cuisinart has an aluminum-encapsulated base that will heat food quickly while eliminating hot spots. This set is stovetop and oven safe up to 400°F (204°C) with glass lids oven safe up to 350°F (176°C). It's also available in Metallic Black.



T-fal introduces the innovative Ingenio gourmet cookware collection. Versatile and convenient, T-fal Ingenio lets cooks transfer food from the stove to the oven to the table, and then into the fridge – all in the same dish. With a convenient click of the removable handle, the pans even goes in the dishwasher for easy clean-up. They stack neatly in the cupboard to save storage space. Made of 18/10 stainless steel, all Ingenio sets are induction-capable. The fry pans feature T-fal's patented Prometal non-stick coating, safe for metal utensils, and Thermo-Spot technology to let users know when the pan has reached optimal cooking temperature.



The new large-capacity **All-Clad** D7 slow cooker from Groupe SEB is perfect for browning or searing at high temperatures. The high, straight sides allow for the addition of liquid and accompaniments. The pan's distinctive domed lid holds in the heat and circulates moisture, delivering tender, flavorful results and the flared edges allow for drip free pouring.



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Stovetop Cookware



Offering the taste experience of **Staub** Cocottes' famous self-basting spikes, this new sauté/braiser pan from **Zwilling**, left, has a unique Chistera drop-structure. The innovative spike shape on the inside of the domed lid ensures moisture consolidates and is evenly redistributed over the food. A special matte black enameled interior is ideal for browning or braising. It's available in six colours and two sizes. Zwilling Sensation also expands with a new 12-inch wok, below. Made in Belgium, the 5-ply SIGMA Clad construction delivers rapid, stable heat distribution. The textured handles are securely welded eliminating messy rivets for easy clean-up. A glass lid available separately. Both new items will be available for fall 2014.



Aubecq PFOA-free cookware from **Daneco** features Pixel, the ultimate coating protection. A new 20cm pan, above, was recently added to the collection. The Pixel meshing high performance coating guarantees non-stick results and has a high resistance to metal utensils. The unique honeycombed design allows fat to flow to the bottom of the pan for leaner, healthier cooking results. All Pixel cookware uses Whitford coating to increase the life expectancy of the pans. Safe for all cooktops, the 3-ply bottom consists of two layers of stainless steel with aluminum in the middle to save energy.



Counseltron is launching a new 11-inch Seasoned Steel Griddle by Lodge Manufacturing. It is pre-seasoned with soy oil and has a durable a steel riveted handle, which makes it easy to achieve a perfect sear or delicate crepe with this durable griddle. It also features low sidewalls and wider cooking surface.

The Nature Trust Everyday Pan from **Paderno** is styled like a deep *au gratin* with a cover that is ideal for stovetop or oven. Made in Canada from 18/10 stainless steel with an enviro-friendly ceramic coating, it's safe for all stovetops including induction. A portion of all sales goes toward preserving Canadian trees and wildlife.



This premium quality, Brazilian-made Solar Stockpot from **Tramontina** features a unique Lock and Drain lid. Made of stainless steel, it has a large 7.7-litre capacity and is suitable for all cooktops including induction. It's ideal for draining pasta, beans, vegetables and corn. Distributed in Canada by Canitra Agents.

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Stovetop Cookware



The GreenLife Foodies collection from **Jascor Housewares** is designed to brighten any kitchen. These stylish Thermolon ceramic non-stick pots and pans are fun, colourful and straightforward. The white coating is a perfect contrast to the on-trend colours. The bright handles will not get hot and the straight-line design accentuates the lightweight body of the pans. Targeted to the young, and the young at heart, Foodies offers affordable quality for home chefs.



KitchenAid will introduce its first own collection of kitchenware this year. Available this July, the collection encompasses nine distinct lines, all of which are induction capable. The cookware includes induction-capable aluminum with a polyester silicone coating; forged hard anodized aluminum; stainless steel clad; copper clad; colour-accented stainless steel, and copper core stainless steel. The company is also launching a cast iron line, above, in three designs and seven fashion colours.



Orly Cuisine has enhanced their Le Cuistot range with the Aujou'hui and Terroir lines. Made of high quality enamelled cast iron, the pans have a tempered-glass lid that is oven safe up to 350° and riveted stainless steel handles. Each piece goes from the stove or oven straight to the table with its elegant design and colors. The pans, offered in several colours, are perfect for roasting or simmering on all heat sources, including induction.



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Swiss Diamond's induction series includes a square griddle pan (below) and a square fry pan. Made in Switzerland, each pan uses a patented technology reinforced with real diamonds. With their natural non-stick properties, diamonds conduct heat better than metal to brown food evenly. Made of cast aluminum pans have a thick bottom for even heat and thin

walls to reduce the weight, and a thick rim to reduce drips and spills. The handles are ergonomically-designed for added comfort. Distributed by **Browne**.



Swissmar unveils the Mauviel 1830 series of premium skillets. The M'cook round fry pan, above, and the crepe pan, below, are made of five layers of 18/10 stainless steel and suitable for all cooktops. The ergonomic oversized stainless steel handles stay cool on the stove top. The long-lasting Eclipse non-stick coating ensures easy cleaning. The rim edge facilitates pouring. Each pan has a lifetime warranty.



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On the Table

Dinnerware designed for casual entertaining

The new Ambience collection from **Portmeirion** includes dinnerware, serving pieces and accessories – over 46 items in total. The dinnerware is offered in four-piece sets in four colours: pearl, stone, aqua and linen. The serveware features a mix of wood, glass and porcelain.



Portmeirion unveils the brand new Sophie Conran Christmas collection this summer. With a warm, festive feel, the mix and match porcelain line is available with traditional red and green decorations. The gorgeous patterns were inspired by Sophie's favourite antique finds and take on the traditional English spongeware technique. The range includes everything needed for the holiday table, including a 12-piece dinnerware set. All items are available in four patterns: snowflake, sugar plum fairy, Xmas star and candy cane. Each piece coordinates beautifully with the Sophie Conran white collection.



The new Monsoon Kitchen Collection from **Denby** features unique patterns from their archives and combines a range of mixed materials such as ceramic, tin, textiles, glass and cork mats for an eclectic look. All are presented in premium branded packaging. Shown above, the Cordoba is a fashion forward colour story with

soft mustard and navy in three graphic patterns. Antalya, above right, is a clean, fresh colourway in shades of aqua and navy. Each has a Moroccan feel and can be mixed and matched with all Monsoon patterns. With straight sides that pick up on traditional kitchen shape, each piece is made of fine china ceramic.

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On the Table



Universal Expert by Sebastian Conran includes this range of porcelain serveware and dinnerware. Made of durable super white porcelain, the collection includes a sharing platter with oven-proof base and beechwood serving board, baking dishes that go from oven to table and contemporary dinner plates and bowls, right, designed to showcase foods beautifully. Distributed by **David Shaw Design**.



Emile Henry has added a new colour, Grenade, to its Natural Chic collection of tableware. Each piece in the line is safe in the oven up to 520°F. It's perfect to prepare, cook, serve and freeze. It's also safe to go in the dishwasher for easy clean up. Made in France of high resistance ceramic, the collection is available from **Browne**.



Cuisinart will launch three new tabletop categories in Canada this year including dinnerware, glassware and flatware. The dinnerware is offered in both stoneware and porcelain. The Elite flatware, pictured above, is made of fine heavy gauge 18/10 stainless steel. It comes in a wide array of patterns and designs to add sophisticated style to the table.



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On the Table



Bulk flatware by Josef Strauss is now available in elegant new designs. Made of 18/10 stainless steel, the thick gauge flatware comes in two patterns: Monica (shown above) and Glasgow. The collection includes six spoon sizes, two forks and two knives. Distributed in Canada by **Orly Cuisine**.

InterContinental Mercantile has introduced a new collection of flatware designed by Guy Degrenne. The sleek, contemporary line comes boxed and is available in several different mineral shade colours to give the flatware enhanced radiance and brightness.



The Skandia collection from **Hampton Forge** is a fun, trendsetting series of flatware, cutlery and coordinated accessories. The designs are reminiscent of nature's beauty, such as the Birch pattern, shown below. Featuring delicate handles that resemble the graceful lines of a winter forest, Birch is one of three patterns available. Each 20-piece set includes four each dinner forks, dinner knives, dinner spoons, salad forks and teaspoons. Made of mirror-polished 18/10 stainless steel.



La Cite by **Rosanna** evokes the old-fashioned cocktail glamour of the 1950s, above. The metallic detailing of the barware and trays in this collection make a stunning addition to any modern tablescape. The bowls and plates can be used for dessert or appetizers. Also new from Rosanna is the Savour set of pasta bowls, left. Each bowl is embossed with the name of a traditional pasta.



On the Table



Four exclusive sets of everyday dinnerware have been unveiled by **InterContinental Mercantile**. Each of the 16-piece sets (serving for four) is designed to suit the most sophisticated decor with subtle patterns and textures. The sets are beautiful and practical for casual dining, offered at an affordable price.



Living Art by Stoneage introduced the Moya collection of casual dinnerware, below. Each piece in the 16-piece set is made of fine porcelain and finished with a protective glaze for durability. It's distributed by **DanESCO**.



The Living Art Bora Bora collection, below, is also made of fine porcelain with a protective glaze. These stylish tabletop pieces add a touch of modern elegance to everyday living.



The Chef's Table 65-piece flatware set, above, is made of 18/10 stainless steel with a hi-lustre finish and full-bodied handle design. The Citrus dinnerware line, right, offers an explosion of colour for the table. It's available in sets or open stock in four bold colours from **Everyware Global**.



Spice it up

What's new in pepper mills and spice grinders

The Finum line of spice mills from **Fox Run** feature an outer design that is elegant and attractive. Available in four colours, each with a ceramic grinding mechanism.



Cuisinart's new single mill design, left, allows users to grind sea salt, pepper and other spices at the touch of a button. The single mill has two grinding containers, one on the top and one on the bottom of the unit. To grind, simply press the ON/Off button. This single rechargeable stainless steel mill rests comfortably in the charging base, ensuring that the unit is fully charged and ready to grind. It adjusts from fine to coarse grinds quickly and easily for perfect results every time.



The David salt and pepper mill set from Ad Hoc is designed with Acacian wood and stainless steel. The manual mills each have a high-tech, corrosion-free, spring-loaded ceramic grinder and lifetime warranty.



The Muskatino mill, above, has a stainless steel and acrylic design with a special storage container for nutmeg. A sharp steel blade planes off nutmeg while a powerful spring-loaded bracket forces it over the blade. This set of Goliath mills, below, features an elegant, timeless design. Offered in four sizes, each mill has a fully adjustable ceramic grinder. The Ad Hoc line is from **Browne**.



Salton introduces the Delfino Intelligent coffee and spice grinder, left. Offering hands-free operation, this grinder features a quiet but powerful motor, high speed stainless steel blade and five precision grind settings. The retractable cord eliminates counter clutter. Another new coffee and spice grinder, right, is available in black or white. It has pulse control for perfect grinding and stops automatically when the lid is raised or the on/off control is released.





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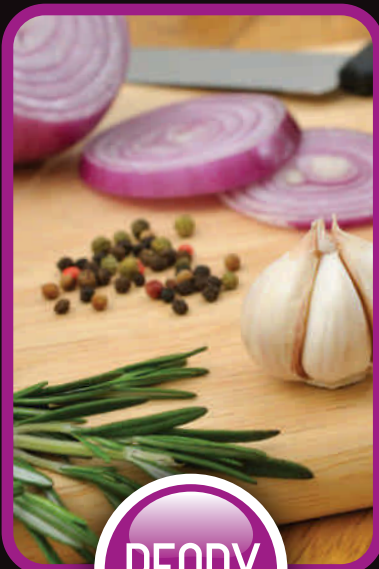
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The innovative GEFU Aromatico spice grinder from **David Shaw Design** has a flip-up handle design that makes it easy to fill, above. It features a ceramic grinding mechanism and a clear upper portion that shows the fill level. It comes with five pre-printed spice labels and one blank label.



Trudeau is expanding on the popularity of its Graviti mill with the launch of the new Graviti Plus series. The sleek design of these new automatic mills fit comfortably in the hand and is ideal for food prep. The LED light illuminates food. Just tilt the mills to grind – no buttons, effort or mess. Each mill has a rust-proof ceramic grinder and fills from the top with a large 50g capacity. The batteries are easy to replace.

The Oxley one-handed mill from Cole & Mason, below left, features a one-handed squeeze system for ease and convenience. Made of brushed stainless steel, it has rasp mechanism designed for longevity and performance.



The Hudson spice carousel, right, is made of glass and chrome and includes 16 air-tight containers in a dispenser that is easy to use and looks attractive on any counter. Also new, the Morley set of beechwood precision crank mills features a diamond-cut ceramic mechanism for salt and hardened carbon steel for pepper. All Cole & Mason mills are distributed by **Danesco**.



This new collection of mills from Carl Mertens is designed by Carsten Gollnick and made in Solingen, Germany of 18/10 stainless steel. Distributed by **Canitra Agents**, the salt (right) and pepper mills incorporate canvas and leather with ceramic grinding mechanism. Each is beautifully gift-boxed.



The new Paris u'Select mill from Peugeot is made of beech wood with a chocolate finish. The contemporary design is suitable for all kitchens.

The mill is offered in six sizes and features a two-stage channelling and grinding process that cracks the peppercorns before they're ground for the freshest flavour. Distributed by **Swissmar**.

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Toronto Gift Fair

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There is always plenty to see at the Toronto Gift Fair, but this summer, kitchen shop owners are in luck as award-winning retailer Jill Wilcox will give an encore presentation on the second day of the show. You can attend her complimentary seminar, "Real Life Re-

tail: For All Retailers" on Monday, August 14th at 10 a.m. in meeting room 105, Hall One of the International Centre.

Other complimentary seminars cover topics such as how to integrate your marketing, how to make over your store on a budget, and how to use social

media successfully. Check the CGA website or the show guide for more details.

The summer edition of Canada's biggest gift fair will feature over 900 exhibitors in the two locations. We look at some of the new housewares products being launched on these pages.

Orly Cuisine will be showing the full assortment of Prestige bakeware by La Patisserie. This professional series of bake pans features a silver ecological non-stick coating with no PFOA or PTFE. Each premium pan is durable and easy to clean. **Visit Orly Cuisine.**



KitchenAid will present a new line of commercial quality metal bakeware that is reliable and safe to cook everything from cookies to muffins. It features a long-lasting non-stick coating that is dishwasher durable. The corrosion-resistant metal keeps the bakeware looking beautiful for years. A new stovetop kettle comes with a well-crafted handle for easy pouring. With a graceful contoured profile, the kettle is available in six colours.

Visit the KitchenAid exhibit.



The Lulu microfiber mitt by Vigar, below, is designed to clean all surfaces. The mitt can easily be washed in the washing machine using a PH neutral detergent. A new Moo dish brush with soap dispenser and a Moo spatula set will also be on display, right.

Soap is dispensed by pressing on the belly or nose. **Visit Counseltron at booth 7229.**



This elegant 11-litre drink dispenser from InterContinental Mercantile is designed for entertaining.

Made of glass on a footed pedestal, it can be used for all kinds of fruit punches or iced tea as well as alcoholic beverages. It's easy to add liquids with the removable glass top. It comes in a full colour gift box. **Visit the InterContinental exhibit.**



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Show Preview: Toronto Gift Fair

Jascor introduces the Homegrown Gourmet line by Architec, centred around growing, serving and storing homegrown produce. The range includes harvest aprons, grow bags (below), a strawberry patch tower and drying/infusing station.



This polyglass serving bowl and spoons, below, is also part of a new range of gourmet gadgets from Architec that includes cutting boards and Nylacork tools.



After a successful launch in Chicago, Jascor will showcase an expanded Messy Mutts collection. Designed for pampered pets and attractively packaged, the range includes silicone feeding bowls, cleaning gloves, water feeders and these chenille mats and towels.



Rapid Infusion with the iSi Gourmet Whip offers a new way to infuse flavours into liquids. The technique is simple and fast. It preserves freshness and taste because it doesn't require heating. The recipe possibilities are endless. **Visit Jascor at booth 7209.**



Gontara will showcase two new products made in Space by Ibili. The glass and stainless teapot with filter is designed to make a perfect cup of tea. Simply place tea leaves or tea bags in the self-contained filter and add water. The 18/10 stainless steel bottom is made for conventional stovetop heating methods and is also suitable for induction. A new adjustable rolling pin, below, takes the guesswork out of rolling the ideal thickness every time. The design is simple, just insert one of the three rings onto each end of the pin and roll for consistent result. The rings clean easily and stay attached for storage. **Visit the Gontara at booth 7237.**



David Shaw Design will debut several new items from the Arcadian Rope collection. The stylish oval-handled tub, above, is made of cast aluminum with nickel plating and is ideal for entertaining. It can be used to chill multiple bottles of wine or can be used as a floral container.

This beautiful 'antler' tray from Just Slate is hand-cut and honed in Scotland. The European slate surface is sealed with a food lacquer to maintain the integrity of the natural stone. A full foam backing protects delicate surfaces. It features cast stainless steel accents and antler-shaped handles and comes in a presentation gift box. **Visit David Shaw Design at Booth 7314**



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Show Preview: Toronto Gift Fair



Port-Style will debut Stirr, an automatic pan stirrer, above. At the push of a button,

this unique gadget rotates by itself and travels around the pan stirring sauces, soups, gravy and more. The battery-operated tripod design operates with three speed options and the legs are easily removed for washing. Also new is the Super Smash mortar and pestle, left. The bigger pestle fits the curve of the mortar better to achieve a larger grinding surface. The bowl base is made of durable porcelain and allows plenty of room for crushing spices and adding oil to make tasty dressings. **Visit the Port-Style Enterprises exhibit.**



The new Sensui chocolate fondue set from Swissmar, right, offers some Asian inspiration for the table. The set includes a bamboo wood base, ceramic fondue bowl, ceramic rechaud, four ceramic serving bowls, four wooden handle forks and a tealight candle. It's ideal for holiday entertaining or gift giving. Also new from Swissmar is a set of 'Wisk Tongs', below. Part of the Swissentials collection, this ingenious, multi-functional kitchen tool works as both a whisk for



whipping and beating while the tongs are perfect for serving pasta and other noodle dishes. **Visit the Swissmar exhibit.**



Innovative blade shapes are a highlight of the latest additions to the Zwilling Pro knife series. A 7-inch rocking Santoku knife bridges the functionality of a chef's knife with the precision cutting angles of a Santoku. It comes complete with Grantsons for the most effective cutting performance to date. Also coming this fall is a 5.5-inch perfect petty/utility knife, 9-inch chef's knife, 7-inch Chinese chef's knife and a two-piece carving set with a 7-inch fork and 8-inch carving knife. All knife blades have been precision-forged from a single piece of special formula German stainless steel and incorporate an innovative contoured bolster for a more comfortable grasp plus Zwilling's famous cutting edge. **Visit the Zwilling exhibit.**



Paderno will introduce the new Lawrence-town kettle, below. It's made from superb quality stainless steel and is safe for all stovetops, including induction. The classic design suits any kitchen. This large capacity, 2.6-litre kettle features an old-fashioned whistle and is backed by a 25-year warranty. **Visit the Paderno exhibit.**



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Show Preview: Toronto Gift Fair

The Final Touch Watermelon Keg tapping kit turns any watermelon into a drink dispenser. Ideal for picnics or bar-



becues, the shank and faucet combo is easily installed into a standard, hollowed-out watermelon or pumpkin to provide hassle-free dispensing of cocktails. Also new in the Final Touch line, these stainless steel double wall shot glasses. They provide superior insulation without condensation for cold beverages and allow hot beverages to stay hot longer. Each has a brushed stainless finish with a mirror finish interior. **Visit Product Specialties.**



A new 14-piece Swiss Army swivel block knife set will be showcased by Victorinox. Available in dark and light wood, each knife features a razor sharp blade and contemporary handle made of a Fibrox material that is slip-resistant, ergonomic and certified by the National Sanitation Foundation.

Visit the Swissmar/Victorinox exhibit.

The Heritage Hill 2-gallon beverage dispenser from Everyware Global comes with a removable chalkboard template. It's size and clarity allows users to be colourful and creative with their refreshments.

Also from Everyware, the 'canning jar' beverage line, below, adds a touch of country when entertaining. The 16-ounce jars have a comfortable to hold handle and are dishwasher safe.

Visit the Everyware Global exhibit.



The Instant Pickler by VacuVin offers a fast, easy way to pickle any vegetable. Simply make a mixture of vinegar and seasoning, pour it into the 1.25 quart container with prepared vegetables, and extract the air to create a vacuum with pump lid before placing in the fridge. VacuVin has also created a simple new tool to open coconuts safely and easily. The tip will puncture the soft 'eye' of the coconut so the liquid can be poured out and the blade is then smacked on the shell to divide the coconut in half. **Visit VacuVin.**



The drinkware in the Stripes line by Zak are textured, allowing users to feel the stylish lines, not just see them. They're made from durable materials for use indoors or out. The tall, slim tumblers are available in a 22-ounce Hi-Ball and an 11.5-ounce DOF size. Both sizes are designed to stack and store securely. **Visit the Danica exhibit.**



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NY NOW – the Market for Home & Lifestyle

August 16th to August 20th, 2014 • Jacob K. Javits Center, New York

An influx of first-time exhibitors and companies returning from a Market hiatus is expected to bring some 600 new suppliers to the summer 2014 edition of NY NOW, the Market for Home + Lifestyle (formerly NYIGF). These newcomers will be among some 2,800-plus exhibiting companies presented throughout NY NOW's four Collections – HOME, LIFESTYLE, HANDMADE and NEW!

“Exhibitor interest is at an all-time high,” says Christian Falkenberg, NY NOW director and GLM senior vice president. “At this pace, we expect to increase the number of new-to-market resources from the usual 400 companies to a record 600 companies returning or making their NY NOW debut.”

The NY NOW HOME Collection, located on Level 3 of the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, showcases some 1,000+ suppliers in two sections; Home Furnishings + Textiles and Tabletop + Gourmet Housewares and Accent on Design. Notable newcomers and returning companies within Home Furnishings + Textiles and Tabletop + Gourmet Housewares include Arte Italica, AURATIC, Bella Notte Linens, Modern History, Natural Curiosities, Noir Furniture, Pine Cone Hill and Sagaform.

NY NOW's LIFESTYLE collection showcases 1,100+ exhibitors featuring a wide range of products in four sections: Baby + Child, Gift, Personal Accessories and Personal Care + Wellness.

NY NOW HANDMADE is comprised of 150 exhibitors in Global Design in the Javits Center's Level 4 River Pavilion, and 350 exhibitors in Designer Maker in the Javits Center North.

NY NOW's NEW! Collection will present some 200 first-time exhibitors in all lifestyle categories at Pier 94.

NY NOW, the Market for Home + Lifestyle, will run Saturday, August 16 through Wednesday, August 20, 2014, at

New York City's Jacob K. Javits Convention Center and Passenger Ship Terminal Pier 94. Some 33,000 attendees from more than 80 countries worldwide are expected. Information and registration is available online at www.nynow.com.

Open House exhibit highlights four key trends

Four key home design trends for 2014-2015, representing various uses of colour, materials and cultural inspiration, will be showcased in the third annual “Open House” exhibit, which returns to NY NOW this August.

The themes – Brass Tactics, Straight Out of Gibraltar, Prints Charming and Lakeside Living – were identified by media partner Progressive Business Media, publishers of *Gifts & Decorative Accessories*, *Home Accents Today* and *Home & Textiles Today* – and colour, trend and e-commerce partner One Kings Lane. The merchandising team from One Kings Lane confirmed the trends and paired each with a colour forecast. They then reviewed and selected NY NOW exhibitor products most reflective of each of the following trends:

Brass Tactics

Offering a fresh alternative to silver and gold, designers are looking to all things brass. With its weight, polish, and warm color, this metal has an especially modern luster. Copper and bronze are alternatively used for similar effects.

Straight Out of Gibraltar

This season, the Moorish and Arabesque designs of lower Spain, Northern Africa, and the Arabian peninsula are entering interior design. The motifs from this region – graceful arches, intricate geometrics, and calligraphic lines – can be used in classic or playful treatments

Prints Charming

Small printed designs are being used to break up solid blocks of color. These tight, scaled-down prints draw heavily from florals and nature motifs. Seen up close, they are full of charm while, at a distance, they blend in smoothly.

Lakeside Living

Focus is shifting from the beach house to lakeside living. Instead of nautical and oceanic motifs, celebrate coastal living in the interior with greens and earth tones, a woody mood, and Americana accents.

The “Open House” trend display, which is located in the North Concourse at New York City's Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, will be open Saturday, August 16, through Wednesday, August 20, 2014, during all NY NOW Market hours.

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NY NOW is the source for one-of-a-kind items

A comprehensive, multi-media group of new artisans has been accepted into the juried HANDMADE Collection for the summer 2014 edition of NY NOW. A total of 39 new exhibitors will make their NY NOW debut as part of nearly 500 exhibitors featured in the HANDMADE Collection's Designer Maker and Global Design sections.

Additional related highlights during the summer market include the launch of the new "Maker Project," which promotes artisans and their hand-crafts, a five part seminar series hosted by CRAFT (Craft Retailers & Artisans For Tomorrow), and the return of Artisan Resource, a trade-show for volume import handmade resources.

Located in Javits Center North, Designer Maker will showcase 350 limited-production makers across all categories and media resources from 37 states and nine countries. In addition to these handmade in America resources, artisan groups from France, Germany and the United Kingdom will bring some 40 additional individual designer makers to the summer market. A showcase space for HANDMADE's "Emerging Makers" will spotlight new designers in business for a year or less, as well as artisans who are entering the wholesale marketplace for the first time.

A range of media are represented among the 32 'Designer Maker' exhibitors, including ceramics; glass; paper; metal; and textiles.

Seven companies have been accepted into Global Design, which includes 150 exhibitors from around the world with a focus on traditional craftsmanship, design, and community building through fair trade practices.

NY NOW SHOW PRODUCT PREVIEW

American Stonecraft has crafted a line of gorgeous serving ware from field-stones gathered at local farms. The Bowlder, right, is a food-safe serving dish with gently sloping sides.

Visit booth 9435



The Mango wood ribbed salad bowl is perfect for fruits or vegetables. Made from eco-friendly mango wood in northern Thailand, artisans take 60 days to hand-craft this food-safe bowl. A coordinating mango wood ribbed serving tray is also available, below, from Circa Asia.

Visit booth 3353



Hand block printed and embroidered linen tea towels by BZD are made of unbleached linen. Each style is made in three colorways: black on natural, brick red on natural, mustard gold on natural. Embroidery is done with a contrasting linen yarn and block printed with global organic certified textile inks.

Visit booth 9146



Caroline Gardner will be introducing a stylish new kitchen apron featuring the popular Ditsy design. It's made from a hard-wearing 100% cotton canvas and features an adjustable strap, double-fronted pocket and decorative silver eyelets. One size fits all. Each apron comes beautifully packaged in a gift box with a calico ribbon.

Visit booth 7579



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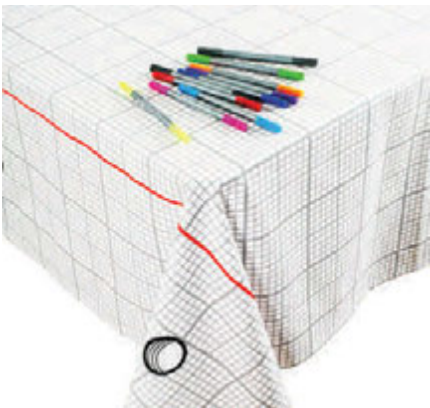
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Show Product Preview: NY NOW



Creative Women will display the company's signature handwoven textiles in elegant new neutrals. The charcoal and ratan kitchen towels, above, have a rich, warm design. **Visit booth 201**



Doodle By Stitch is a UK company that creates tablecloths and placemats that can be customized using doodle wash-out pens. The tablecloths are made from 100% pre-shrunk cotton twill and feature the iconic doodle graph paper print, above. The placemats are double-sided and come with 10 wash-out pens. Simply wash to get a blank canvas and start drawing all over again. **Visit booth 7766.**



The Vivace range of beautiful glass leaf plates come in two sizes and two shades, blue and green. Inspired by nature, these handcrafted, food-safe serving pieces add a distinctive character to the table. **Visit Dynasty Gallery at booth 2862**



The new Bubbly Celebration Border Caroline apron from Jessie Steel features a fun, colourful motif of confetti and champagne. The half apron has an enhanced, printed border with chic pink trim. Made of machine-washable, 100% cotton, it has a wide waistband, side pocket, gathered skirt and waist bow ties. **Visit booth 3668**

Harry Barker's new Sweetgrass basket collection are available in cool, coastal colours. The striking new range includes food storage canisters, treat tins, bowls and canvas toys for pets. The tins are made of recycled steel. The biscuits are made in the U.S. using all natural ingredients and hand packed by people with disabilities. **Visit booth 7413**



Traditionally used in bathhouses called hammams, foutas have long been a staple in North Africa. They are the ultimate multi-tasking textile. Made from high quality Egyptian cotton, they come in a myriad of colours and textures and are hand-fringed. The towels can also be used as small table cloths. Available from Focalpoint Home, the company follows colour trends closely to stay on target. **Visit booth 532**



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Show Product Preview: NY NOW



Lorena Gaxiola will unveil the Soft Rocks range of glassware, left. Each glass is crafted to represent jewels, from lime to royal blue. Available in three sizes, each mold is individually mouth-blown.

Visit booth 3009



The Granville collection from Libeco Home is 50% Belgian linen and 50% wool. This limited edition linen/wool blend line features a hand-drawn blanket stitch detail. It's available in a range of pillow covers and blanket options. **Visit booth 2448**



This handmade 18/8 stainless steel water pitcher has a high polished finish and exciting geometric design. It's dishwasher safe and never needs polishing, from Mary Jurek Design. Also new from Mary Jurek is this elegant 18/8 stainless steel serving tray, below. It has an etched basket weave interior pattern and is decorated with blue onyx stones. **Visit booth 3144**



The Bistro line from MayaMam features handwoven twill bistro aprons and hache kitchen towels. Bold stripes combine with pinstripes for a modern look. Available in celery, butter, blue or sophisticate, in sets of two. **Visit booth 439**



Kevin O'Brien Studio will show an array of luxurious throw pillows in rich velvet. The simplicity of the patterns are Moroccan inspired to add a glamorous feel to any home. Each has a zipped closure and a feather/down insert. **Visit booth 2644**



LU Prints will show two new items, a birchwood tray and a Napanee canister, above. Designed by Ulla Clark, it's made of ceramic with kiln-fired decal and a wood suction lid. It's food safe and dishwasher-safe. **Visit booth 9455**

Show Product Preview: NY NOW



Merdinger House of Design will debut this tableware collection called Arabesque. The pieces are crafted from 18K gold, titanium and fine bone china. The luxury collection includes dinnerware, flatware, stemware and coffee accessories. **Visit booth 3425**



Solinglass, a small Vermont studio, will show two new glassware pieces at the New York show. The one shown above is called Aquos Flat and measures 14 inches high. It's made from hot blown glass shaped off the pipe. Various coloured glass particles are combined with silver leaf for an abstract expressionist painting look. **Visit booth 9381**

The Pirouette, below, serves as a display for Stone-Stemmed Wine Glasses and keeps them close at hand and easy to enjoy. It combines the warmth of cherry wood and the timelessness of granite. It inspires consumers to get their glassware out and put it on the countertop, ready to use and relish. Set on a high quality ball bearing, the Pirouette spins gracefully as it securely holds the Stone Wine Glasses, made from recycled glass. **Visit Sea Stones at booth 3766**



The On The Rock set will be one of several displayed by Canda's own Product Specialties. The 10-piece set offers a new way to enjoy 'on the rocks' and includes four silicone ice balls, four glasses, a glass whiskey decanter and a whiskey stopper. **Visit booth 3666**



My Méz is redefining home accents, tableware and art, by custom-crafting trays and end tables that also hang as wall art. Users can decorate the wall with it or use it as a table or tray; all while displaying their favorite style of photography. Shown below: a nautical tray in distressed white. **Visit booth 1479**



You can create instant elegance with Modgy's Lumizu wine glass shades, below. The shades are made from frosted plastic and slide easily over water-filled wine glasses. They fit any standard 12 to 16-ounce glass and come with water-activated, floating LED candles to add ambiance to any table. **Visit booth 14025**



Show Product Preview: NY NOW



The Aldemere egg tray from Peg & Awl is available in two shapes. Each holds one dozen eggs and is built from reclaimed Cypress from 19th century mushroom farms. The company's pinch bowls, below, have a buttery finish made of Ambrosia ghost maple. They're made from reclaimed wood and finished with olive oil. **Visit booth 9202**



Spotlite candles from Paramold combine the traditional tea light look with innovative designs for the new age. The design process allows the image to remain in place while the candle burns, keeping the desired look for the entire life of the candle. There are 88 designs to choose from. **Visit booth 7874**



Creo Smartglass bowls and bakeware by Full Circle are highly resistant to thermal shock through the first ever combination of tempered borosilicate glass interior and ceramic exterior. Each piece can safely go from freezer to oven to table. Four pans and a set of four nesting bowls are available in five colour families. **Visit booth 3368**



The Ebonized Oak collection from Stinson Studios marries the clean simplicity of a traditional round salad bowl with an edgy, modern aesthetic thanks to the striking black finish. The bowls come in four sizes. **Visit booth 9426**



Xen pillow offers sleep wave cradling therapy on one side and cervical comfort support on the other. The multi-contoured feature is designed to alleviate neck, shoulder and back discomfort. **Visit Xenpillow at booth 10037**



A perfect gift for the entertainer, the G-Half drinking glass is adorned with a "Half Full/Half Empty" and Optimist/Pessimist'. Sold in sets of four. **Visit Vagabond Vintage, booth 2240**

Reid Foods will introduce a new 16-ounce French Onion soup with great depth of flavour. It's soup is vegan and made from all natural ingredients. **Visit booth 3671**





Fab Habitat's Montego rug is made from handcrafted flat woven recycled cotton and displays subtle elegance using simple and classic design. All rugs are engineered to withstand everyday use and are made using sustainable practices. **Visit Tapas Waves, booth 1358**



Zoku ice ball molds prevent dilution of mixed drinks. Simply fill the mold, freeze and open to remove the ice sphere. Zoku's new slush and shake maker, below, makes frozen drinks in as little as seven minutes. Designed to store easily in the freezer. **Visit booth 3508**



The Freckles napkin set from Walter G is inspired by traditional techniques. Each napkin has been hand block printed and 100% naturally dyed by artisans. **Visit booth 2472**



The Wabi Sabi bowl is made with a stunning gold leaf. The bowl is 12 inches in diameter and combines forged steel, enamel paint and 23k gold leaf. **Visit Susan Madasci at booth 9144**



The Oliver Gal Artist Company offers more than 350 blueprints inspired by real vintage patent drawings and illustrations. The archival-quality print is on acid-free matte with a premium black wood frame. **Visit booth 1758**



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Nadine Legault

Sales Representative, Groupe Marketing



It was during the Montreal Gift Show at Place Bonaventure that Nadine Legault first discovered her love of selling. She was helping her father, Gilles Legault, serve refreshments in one of the permanent showrooms when a retail customer asked if she could help her. Though she was only supposed to assist in the lunch room, Nadine helped the customer place an order, and thoroughly enjoyed the process. Both her father and the customer were impressed with her initiative, and rightly so. She was only 12 years old at the time.

Born and raised in Montreal, Nadine is one of those people who has such a sunny, upbeat personality that you can't imagine anyone not liking her. She loves to help others, a trait she learned caring for her brother, Jonathan, who is 13 years younger.

Her positive attitude has always served her well. When the family moved to Toronto for Gilles' job in 1985, Nadine was not happy about having to finish high school in a new province. But she made the best of it, and although they only stayed a year, Nadine made many friends, some of whom she still stays in touch with to this day.

Back in Montreal, she got her CEGEP diploma in law and then went to university to study accounting. She had always been good with numbers, but soon realized that the accounting world was not for her so she switched to marketing. After graduation, she got a job as a rep with an electronics firm. That lasted until 1993, when her father left Danesco and asked Nadine if she would like to help him set up a new housewares sales agency, Groupe Marketing.

"Of course I said yes," she recalls. "It was a dream come true to work with my father and I was thrilled to be there when he started."

Nadine was just 24 years old but Gilles quickly sent her on the road. She took on all the independent Quebec retail accounts, travelling to small towns across the province. They worked out of Gilles' home, initially representing Himark, Danica and Umbra. (Though Himark has vanished, they still represent Umbra and Danica today.)

After a couple of years, they moved into new

offices and hired someone to handle administration and customer service. Nadine and Gilles continued to sell, taking on more lines and growing the territory as well as their reputation with retailers and distributors.

"Quebec retailers like to have a sales rep who looks after them personally," Nadine explains. "They expect good customer service, and ideally, they want someone who speaks French and understands the nuances of this province."

In that regard, Groupe Marketing has excelled, and now represents 10 top brands, including Zwilling, Fox Run, Bodum and Atlantic Promotions. And although Nadine admits it's not always easy to work with family, over the past 21 years, the two have built the company into one of the top agencies in Quebec, with nine employees (including brother Jonathan, who now works in I.T.).

The truth is, Gilles probably pushed Nadine harder than most, but that's because he truly believed in her. He never gave his daughter special treatment, but then again, she didn't need it. She was a quick learner.

"Gilles has always been my mentor," says Nadine. "I have followed him around since I was very young," she says, "watching and listening to him talk to customers. I soaked it all up. I learned the value of relationships, and that you have to earn the customer's trust in order to gain their loyalty."

She admits it wasn't easy at first, but she's grateful that Gilles never gave her any special treatment. "He made me the person I am today," she says.

That person is one who is very well respected in this industry, known for her honesty and professionalism. Kathy Rutt at Linen Chest says: "Nadine is a very caring and professional person who always looks after her customers with a lovely smile! Whenever I have asked for special support, she is always eager to help. Nadine is like a pearl – very precious, rare, admirable and a valuable part of our industry."

Richard Filtreau, housewares buyer at Stokes/Fenton's concurs. "Honesty is key in our business," he says. "Nadine is able to listen, understand and evaluate our needs. That's

why I trust her suggestions when it's time to evaluate new products."

He adds that she is always able to find ways to solve any kind of problem. "Those skills have made her a very talented and knowledgeable sales person."

It's high praise that's well deserved, but that doesn't mean Nadine is naive about the challenges of a shrinking retail base. She acknowledges that the business has changed, but she's a resourceful optimist and is confident that there will always be a need for sales agencies like Groupe Marketing. It's their personal touch that makes the difference.

"Our level of customer service is what sets us apart," she says. "We take the pressure off the companies we represent because we can deal with all the little issues that come up. The retailers don't need to bother the vendors or contact head office. They can come to us for answers."

Right now, Nadine, who is the proud mother of 18-year-old Kevin, says she is in a good place in her life. "I feel lucky to have had such a great career and also be able to raise such a wonderful son on my own."

But that doesn't mean she doesn't have her eye on the future. That future will likely include a change of ownership, with Nadine and co-worker Celeste Poirier taking over the agency. Of course that is only if Gilles decides to retire, which won't likely happen anytime soon. But how fortunate that when he does, he knows he will leave his business in very capable hands.

"The customers trust Nadine because she is genuinely dedicated to their success. Her energy and positive approach have always been an asset," says Gilles. "When she joined me 21 years ago, it gave us the potential to grow our sales very quickly. Today, she has become our link to the future." 🐾

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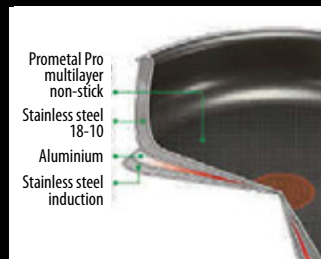
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