

# HomeStyle

Canada's Housewares Magazine



May 2015

## WHAT'S BREWING IN THE *coffeemaker* MARKET?

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*Home*  
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IDEAS**

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## On our cover

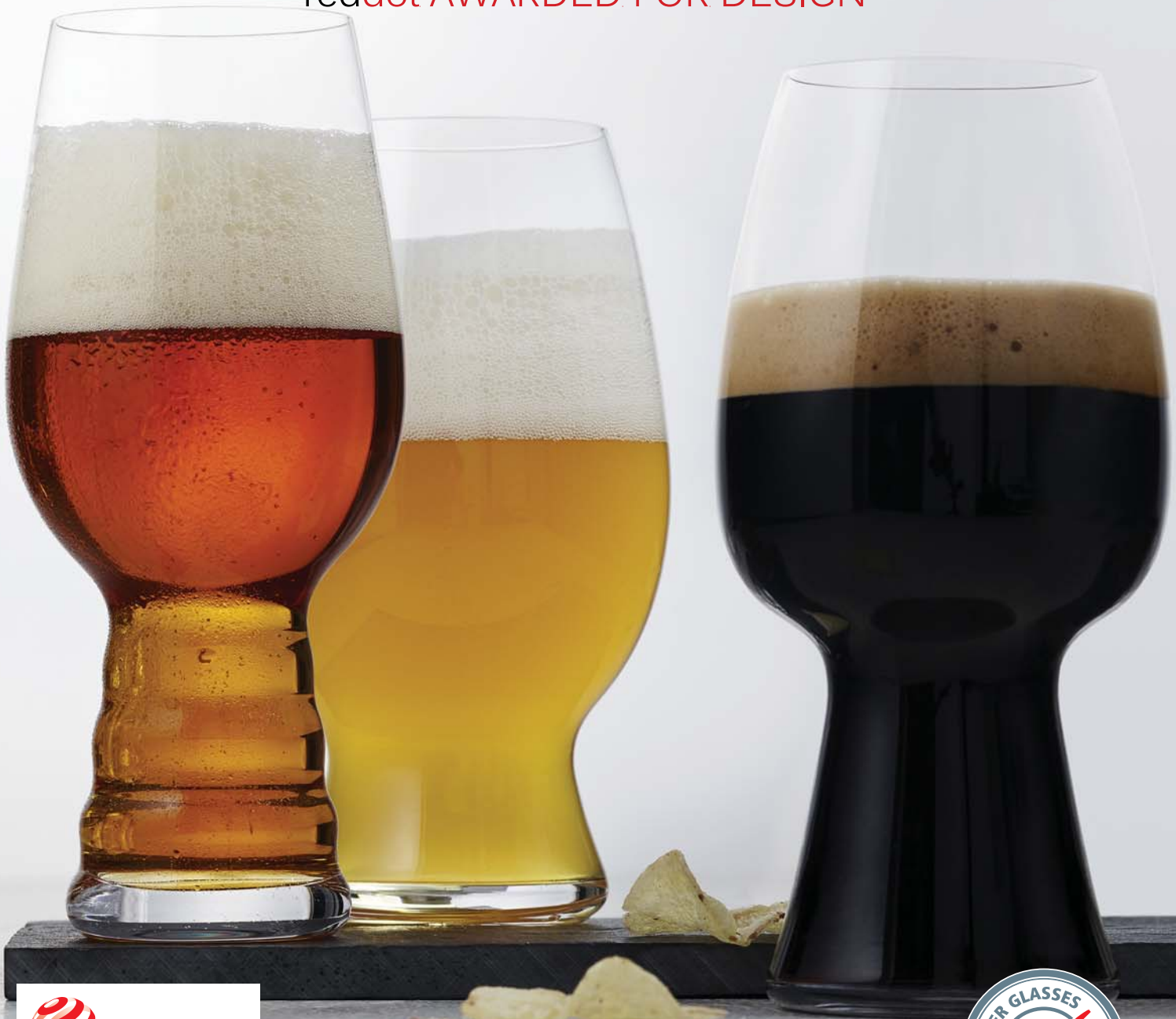


The Jura Impressa A9 automatic coffee/espreso machine has a new touchscreen display with intuitive control. It can make 12 specialty coffees.



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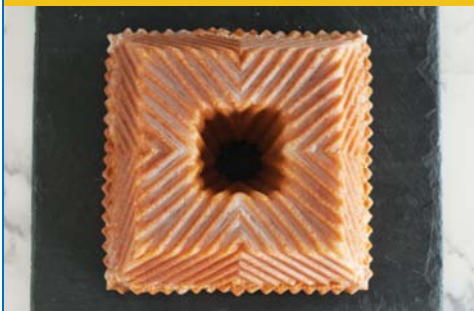
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## Opening Lines

### Trade shows keep us connected

Any one who thinks trade shows are a dying industry didn't visit the recent Ambiente Fair in Frankfurt or the International Home + Housewares Show in Chicago. Both sold-out events attracted record crowds and the much-needed buzz we all need to be inspired and motivated. But more importantly, they provide one of the last vestiges of physical contact in a world that is now dependent on digital communication. In other words, as human beings, we have an instinctive need to stay connected to each other to help our industry thrive.



Being together, talking and networking *in person* is so important not just to our careers, but also to our state of mind and our physical well being. In fact, research has found that people with strong ties to friends and co-workers live 50% longer than those with fewer social connections. In fact, socializing can give your mind a workout. Those with large social networks always score higher on cognitive tests and are nearly 20 times less likely to be depressed.

I know what it's like to work in isolation like so many retailers and small business owners. You feel as if nobody else understands the issues you face, and then you travel to a trade show or a conference and you discover that a lot of people are dealing with the exact same things. It's comforting to share your successes and failures with your peers, to learn from others and benefit from their expertise.

According to researchers, the benefits humans derive from close interaction – empathy and understanding – requires actually being in the same room. Our digital devices are terrific for gaining information, for scheduling our lives, for reaching people we like, and ignoring those we don't. But nothing can replace in-person relationships and real conversations because it's the only way to engender trust.

As someone who loves to talk (often too much for my own good), one of the many joys of my job has been the opportunity to interview so many fascinating people – both buyers and sellers – over the past 25 years. I never accept the answers to my questions in writing, I always want to speak to the person I'm profiling. It makes such a difference – the best quotes are always unscripted. They are windows into the life of someone who has made a difference in our industry and I never tire of telling their stories.

On the reverse side, one of my great disappointments each year is the fact that the Global Innovator Awards gala, of which I am a sponsor, is now held the same night as Canada Night in Chicago. For over two decades, this evening was a highlight of the year for me. I couldn't wait to hear all the latest gossip and mingle with friends, new and old. But the *gia* awards have given me an opportunity to form even closer friendships with retailers and trade magazine editors from around the world. I have been especially proud to represent Canada on the five separate occasions when my national retail winner went on to win a global award, as Hudson's Bay did this past March (see page 12). Whether or not they won the global award, many of those outstanding retailers have become close friends of mine, which is the real prize.

New products are the life blood of our industry but the relationships we share are the heart and soul. Trade shows are still the best place to find both. We see it happen in Frankfurt and Chicago, where we all welcome the chance to catch up, trade stories and celebrate the fact that we made it through another year.

Here in Canada, however, housewares vendors have faced some challenges at the Toronto Gift Fair, our industry's key show for independent retailers. Some have complained housewares hasn't received the attention it deserves. Happily, it looks like that is about to change. Starting with the August Gift Fair, Bed, Bath & Linen exhibitors will replace the fashion accessories in Hall 7 alongside housewares. There's also a chance the Kitchen Spotlight may move there as well, which would give the kitchenware category a real boost in terms of activity on the show floor. It's a step in the right direction and I'm hopeful it's only the first step of many.

Housewares, as an industry, doesn't have the benefit of a national retail association or a trade show of its own in Canada. We need the Toronto Gift Fair because we need to stay in touch with each other. It's that simple.

– Laurie O'Halloran  
laurie@homestylemag.ca



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• **Diane Lesiuk** has joined Danesco as product development manager. Diane will be responsible for a number of brands in Danesco's portfolio as well as private label for key accounts. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in the housewares industry.

• **Anita Schachter** has been selected as the new president of CanGift, replacing Peter Moore, who will be retiring at the end of June. She joined the association in 2010 following the acquisition of dmG World Media gift fairs and previously served as vice-president of Canadian Gift Shows. **Karen Bassels** has been promoted to vice president of trade fairs for CanGift.

• **Anne Drinkwater** is now vice president of sales for Danica in Canada and Now Designs in the U.S. She takes over from Jeremy Braude, who will retain his position as CEO. Anne has been sales manager for Danica for five years.

• Effective this spring, **Salton Canada** will take over retail distribution of the Nostalgia brand of products. For more details, contact sales@salton.com.

• **Joe Fresh** founder Joe Mimran is joining *Dragons' Den*. CBC-TV says the retail icon will be part of the next batch of business bosses fielding pitches on the reality series. Mimran recently stepped down from his day-to-day responsibilities with the apparel brand, but remains founder and brand ambassador. He has been behind many formidable brands including Joe Fresh, Club Monaco, Alfred Sung, Caban and – with his wife, Kimberley Newport-Mimran – Pink Tartan. The new season airs this fall.

• **Allan Meinecke** passed away on March 13th at the age of 83. The former owner of Embros Kitchen Shop on Yonge Street in Toronto had retired from the industry several years ago. He is survived by his wife Margaret.

• **Michael Graves**, one of the most prominent and prolific American architects of the 20th century, died on March 12th. He was 80. He became popular with mass consumers through his lines of commissioned home goods for Target and JC Penney. He had been paralyzed from the waist down since 2003 as a result of a spinal cord infection.

• **Stanley Cheng**, founder of Meyer, has unveiled his latest culinary enterprise, Hestan Commercial. Cheng will open a state-of-the-art 70,000 square-foot facility to produce the most advanced commercial kitchen appliances available.

• **Lifetime Brands** plans to acquire Massachusetts-based silversmith manufacturer Reed & Barton Corporation, which filed for bankruptcy protection in February. Lifetime has offered \$15 million to purchase the company's non-real estate assets. "Reed & Barton's business in flatware, crystal and serveware fits nicely with our own and also will immediately establish for us a strong position in the giftware category," says Lifetime Brands' chairman Jeffrey Siegel.

## Letters

How lucky are we as an industry to have you in our world?

I would like to take this opportunity to express a very sincere thank you for all of your hard work and for the truly fabulous magazine that you produce. We all look forward to receiving *Home Style* and pouring over every issue. It's absolutely outstanding every time!

Thank you again for all that you do for all of us and for your ongoing enthusiasm for the housewares industry.

*John Newton,*  
*Ventures International*

I wanted to let you know that I was so impressed with your editorial in the March issue about Target Canada's exit. You really nailed all of the points right on the head.

*Darlene Schmitz,*  
*The Metal Ware Corporation*



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## A global gia for Canada!

### Hudson's Bay honoured with Canada's fifth Global gia award

It was an exciting evening on Sunday March 8th as Canada was presented with a global *gia* award for the fifth time in 15 years. In addition to Hudson's Bay (primarily the 7th floor housewares department of the Toronto flagship store), the global honourees this year included John Lewis of the U.K., Koskela in Australia, Jumbo in Turkey and Presentes Rodrigues in Brazil. The winners were selected from 25 national honourees by a prestigious jury of retail experts and trade editors.

The *gia* program was created by the IHA and International Home + Housewares Show to foster innovation and excellence in housewares retailing throughout the world. Since the launch of *gia* in 2000, there have been over 320 *gia* retail award winners, from 40 countries on six continents. Since the very beginning, *Home Style Magazine* has been proud to sponsor the Canadian award. "Hearing our name called was an unforgettable experience. I was thrilled to have such an exceptional Canadian retailer recognized on a global level," says publisher Laurie O'Halloran.

Alison Coville, the senior vice president who represented Hudson's Bay at the Chicago gala, says "the evening provided us with a wonderful opportunity to see some of the best home retailers in the world. There was a very impressive list of competitors involved and it was an honour to be nominated. Winning a global award of this nature has meant a great deal to all of us who worked on the project."



Shown left, the Hudson's Bay buying team at the *gia* Canada display: l-r, Maurice Chelli, Shannon Hamilton, Francis Rego, Frank Querido, Alan Asbridge and Rob Thibeault.



Above: l-r, Alan Asbridge of HBC, Laurie O'Halloran of *Home Style*, Alison Coville and Eileen Dileo from Hudson's Bay with the *gia* award. Below: All the national *gia* winners for 2015 gather for a group photo after the dinner.



### Celebrating 15 years of national gia winners



2001 - To Set a Table

Canadian Tire

2002 - Cayne's Housewares

2003 - London Drugs

The Main Course

2004 - Home Outfitters

2005 - Pom Pom \*\*

2006 - Kingsmill's

2007 - Le Gnome

2008 - Muffet & Louisa

2009 - Les Touilleurs \*\*

2010 - Stark & Whyte \*\*

2011 - Cookworks

2012 - Kitchen Therapy

2013 - Linen Chest \*\*

2014 - Teatro Verde Cucina

2015 - Hudson's Bay \*\*

(\*\* Global Honouree)

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### CORRECTION



The description that appears on page 42 of the March issue does not correspond with the photograph shown of the Frigidaire 5-Speed blender (shown above). The correct information appears below. We regret the error and apologize for any confusion.

• • • • •

Combining true professional performance with premium features, the Frigidaire Professional Large Capacity 5-Speed blender is designed to get great results in the kitchen. It features five speed options, a 56-ounce capacity and a dishwasher-safe glass pitcher for quick clean-up. The inventive ribbed-design glass pitcher ensures even-blending performance while the easy-pour spout transfers your contents quickly and effortlessly with no mess.

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A no-fuss design allows for easy sealing and lid removal without a mess, leaving more time for entertaining and less time for clean-up.

The 600-watt motor gives consumers the professional power they need to handle tough ice, while making quick work of delicate blends on low power.

Sleek and modern, the metal die cast base on this Frigidaire blender contributes to a durable and great-looking design.

### North West expands its food offerings

The North West Company is planning a major \$150-million expansion over the next three years that will include new stores, products and services in Northern Canada.

The company is planning expanded fresh and prepared foods departments within its junior department stores, more children's and outdoor-living products, and a range of new financial and health services.

The Winnipeg-based company also plans to install more energy-efficient refrigeration and lighting systems in stores and add new warehousing space to allow more storage over the winter and to reduce air freight costs.

North West operates 224 stores in Canada, Alaska, the South Pacific and the Caribbean under the trading names Northern, NorthMart, Giant Tiger, AC Value Center and Cost-U-Less. The company is the largest, private employer of Inuit and First Nations people in Canada's North.

### David's Tea makes plans to go public

David's Tea has appealed to Wall Street titans to underwrite an initial public offering of its shares in the U.S. with the goal of raising \$75 million to fund its North American expansion.

The Montreal-based specialty tea chain was founded in 2008 by David Segal and his cousin Herschel Segal, founder of Le Chateau. They currently have 158 stores across Canada and the U.S., each offering 150 different loose-leaf tea blends.

The company expects to open 25 or 30 news stores in Canada and 10 to 15 in the U.S. this year with an eye to open 30 to 40 stores annually. This will put them directly up against Teavana, the American specialty chain acquired by Starbucks in 2012.

David's Tea plans to list on the Nasdaq exchange and in anticipation of the expansion, they have appointed industry veteran Sylvain Toutant as CEO. The

company has reported double digit annual same-store sales growth since 2011. Sales have grown at an annual compound rate of 50%, rising to \$141 million (U.S.) last year.

Tea is the second-most consumed beverage in the world behind water.

### Best Buy consolidates Future Shop stores

In a surprising move, Best Buy Canada has consolidated Future Shop stores and turned most of them Best Buy stores and websites. The company also unveiled an ambitious plan to create a multi-channel customer experience.

Best Buy Canada reviewed its real estate footprint and realized that a significant number of its Future Shop and Best Buy stores were located adjacent to each other, often in the same parking lot. As a result, the company has closed 66 Future Shop locations. An additional 65 Future Shop stores were temporarily closed for a week as they begin their transition to the Best Buy brand.

The company will now have a total of 192 locations in Canada, including 136 large-format stores and 56 Best Buy Mobile stores. As a result of the consolidation, about 500 full-time and 1,000 part-time positions were eliminated.

### Over half of WS sales are now online

With steady online growth in 2014, web sales now account for more than half of all annual sales for Williams-Sonoma.

The specialty retailer, No. 21 in the *Internet Retailer 2014 Top 500 Guide*, reported e-commerce revenue of \$2.371 billion in fiscal 2014, up 12.1% from \$2.115 billion in fiscal 2013. Web sales represent 50.5% of the company's net revenue of \$4.699 billion for the year.

Mobile commerce was a big factor in the chain's e-commerce growth during the year, increasing by 100% year-over-year. Williams-Sonoma is pushing its digital presence even further with the launch of the Williams-Sonoma *Recipe of the Day* App on Apple's App Store.

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### Retailers prepared for 50 Shades of Grey



The release this spring of the movie *50 Shades of Grey* prompted British home improvement retailer B&Q to prepare its employees for a possible rise in rope and duct tape sales. The erotic movie, which opened on Valentine's Day, features a scene of a couple purchasing products from a hardware store that can be used for bondage-related activities.

A memo to B&Q's 359 stores called "Staff Briefing – Preparation for Fifty Shades of Grey Customer Queries," urges staff to be polite if customers ask for products to help them recreate activities shown in the film. The memo notes that products are still recommended

"for their original designed purposes."

Staff were advised to deal with film-related queries in a "polite, helpful and respectful manner."

### Calgary market is hot despite low oil prices

Uncertainty related to declining oil prices doesn't seem to be affecting the appetite of retailers wanting to set up shop or expand in Calgary. A report by Barclay Street Real Estate indicates that in the last six months of 2014, retail vacancy rates in the city dropped from 2.7% to 2.2% and nearly 14 million square feet of new retail development is either being proposed or currently under construction.

"For a long time Calgary was in a bubble," says Jonathan Gheron, a retail associate with Barclay Street. "Our economy has been thriving. There's competition for current good space and

I believe most of it will get absorbed.

"Overall, the consensus for Calgary is still positive. There's still people who want to open stores. The economy is down but we haven't seen a slowdown in retail. It's still a very active market."

The report claims Target's departure from Canada will skew the current vacancy rate, roughly doubling the total vacant space in Calgary, as an estimated 725,000 square feet of retail space has come back on the market.

Total inventory at the end of 2014 was 36.3 million square feet, with 793,220 square feet vacant. Vacancy rates will likely increase to 2.5% by the end of the second quarter of this year.

### Loblaw plans to increase footprint

Canada's largest supermarket chain has big plans for expansion this year as it increases its footprint in the competitive grocery market. Loblaw Companies will build 50 new stores and renovate or improve more than 100 existing stores in 2015. The additions will be across the country, and Loblaw estimates it will create about 5,000 jobs at its corporate and independently owned stores.

The company will also make more investments in its e-commerce offering, supply chain and IT infrastructure.

The total amount Loblaw plans to spend on these initiatives this year is expected to top \$1.2-billion.

### Walmart to add 29 supercentre stores

Walmart plans to add 29 new supercentre stores in Canada over the next year. The expansion is expected to cost \$340 million and create 3,700 construction jobs, 1,000 in-store jobs and 300 new positions at distribution centres.

The \$340 million total includes roughly \$230 million on new stores, \$75 million to add distribution centres and \$35 million to beef up online offerings.

Walmart Canada's store count will rise to 396 by the end of January 2016, of which 309 will be supercentres and 87 will be discount stores.

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### Gift cards aimed at independent retailers

Square Canada has launched a gift card service aimed at small businesses that find it difficult to get into the convoluted game of gift card sales and redemption.

The service is available to any business that uses the Square Register mobile app to take in-store customer payments. From the online Square dashboard, store operators can create branded gift cards using a design template or their own submitted graphics. Square then prints and ships the gift cards for the retailer to sell, either in-store or online. The cards can be immediately read by Square Register, without the need for expensive specialized card readers.

Square's cards offer a fairly straightforward price structure. The company charges a flat rate of \$1-\$1.50 per card, depending on the quantity ordered. There aren't any monthly fees, software fees or redemption fees. When cards are

bought and activated, the amount purchased is deposited directly into the store owner's account, like a normal store purchase, rather than being held by a third party until the card is spent.

### Pick it up at Penguin

Penguin Pick-Up is a new delivery pick-up service offered by SmartCentres, Canada's largest developer of outdoor malls. The service is now operating at three SmartCentre locations in Ontario, with a plan to roll out nationwide at an average rate of one location a month.

Consumers can shop online at any retailer that delivers to Canada, but instead of having their order shipped to their home, they can have it shipped to a Penguin Pick-Up point for secure holding. Customers need to first register for the Penguin Pick-Up service and then choose the pick-up location that is most convenient for them.

IKEA saw its food sales rise 8.6% last year, and the retailer expects to see even more growth thanks to some new eco-friendly dining options. The company debuted a vegan version of its signature Swedish meatballs this spring, and all of the fish it sells will soon be certified as sustainably fished.



### HTI Conference attracts 65 retailers

More than 65 retailers attended the One Voice Conference hosted by HTI Buying Group this spring. It was held March 6, prior to the International Home + Housewares Show in Chicago.

At the conference, retailers attended several roundtable discussions on ways to analyze their profitability, better use of their HTI tools, discuss alternative retail models and a range of other retail topics during an open forum. Motivational speaker Bob Phibbs encouraged retailers to engage customers of all ages and capitalize on the locally owned, independent store element.

HTI also used the conference to announce its new Gadget of the Month program and highlight several other benefits of membership.

Two new retailers have joined the organization. One is Artichoke in Cincinnati. It's expected to open in early 2016. The other, Eversharp in Minneapolis, focuses on cutlery and accessories.

Kitchenware retailer Sur La Table will add a "Mix and Match" feature on its website this summer. It will let shoppers design their own table settings online and is one of several changes aimed at encouraging return visits.

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Sarin Keusseyan poses with the Le Creuset Vespa – in Marseille blue – at the Chicago show.

### Inspired by Marseille

Known for its leading-edge colour palette, Le Creuset traditionally unveils a new hue each year. This year, the company took a look back for design inspiration and formed a new strategy with the relaunch of its Marseille blue colour for the first half of 2015.

Originally introduced as a new colour in 2012, the exceptional market demand for this blue-hued cookware is the driving force behind the decision to not only bring Marseille back to the forefront but also develop a more supportive marketing strategy around it.

One of the highlights of the marketing package is the company's first-ever "Look Book," which highlights Marseille, France, and the inspiration behind choosing the colour. Le Creuset has also added a variety of different in-store merchandising tools, including bags specifically for Marseille purchases and display literature, to give retailers the ability to make the collection stand out.

### Lenox and Kate Spade unveil kitchen line

Kate Spade is expanding its license with Lenox Corporation with a new housewares collection called *All in Good Taste*.

The company will be adding cookware, bakeware and food prep items through its license with Lenox Corporation. The brand already offers a tabletop line with Lenox. The new collection will be available in August 2015.

In addition, new licensed home collections will include bedding, bath, furniture, fabric, wallpaper and rugs. New licensing agreements include DWI Holdings, which will manufacture and distribute bedding and bath.

"We are intently focused on our two key axes of growth – product category expansion and geographic expansion – and reaching customers across our four category pillars, women's, men's, children's and home," says Craig Leavitt, CEO of Kate Spade. "This robust expansion of home decor offerings is an important step towards our vision of becoming a powerful, global, multichannel lifestyle brand."

### Charles Viancin adds new linen assortment

Charles Viancin is expanding its assortment with new multifunctional linens to complement its existing collections. The company will introduce a chef's apron and towel that provides extra heat protection with built-in silicone potholders.

In addition, the chef's apron features an oversized ergonomic pocket to hold additional kitchen gadgets handy. A new chef's towel also includes the built-in silicone potholders. Both the apron and towel are machine washable and are made from 100% cotton and silicone.

The line is available from Port-Style.

### Now Govino can go in the dishwasher



Cuisivin has launched new Dishwasher-safe version of the popular Govino drinkware. Set to debut this summer, the patented collection includes five shapes: 16 and 12-ounce stemless wine glasses, a champagne flute, a beer glass and a decanter. The difference between the original and the new dishwasher-safe version is imperceptible. The line features thin walls, clarity, a flexible design with a thumb-notch, and is BPA-free. The new packaging will make the attributes of each product clear. The collection targets retailers who have admired the product but were gun-shy about the handwash aspect. Distributed in Canada by Cuisivin.

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## Trend Tracking

### Consumers using more mobile devices

Traditional computers such as laptops and desktops are the most prevalent devices for consumers looking to shop online around the world, but the mobile contingent is growing quickly.

According to a survey of 800 consumers in eight global markets (U.S., the U.K., Australia, Canada, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands and Japan) by OHT-Mobile, traditional computers were used to access online commerce sites by 62% of consumers overall. However, mobile usage cannot be ignored.

In the U.S., 63% of consumers shop online via a traditional computer, compared with 33% who use a mobile device. Other countries, including Canada, have similar differences, with upwards of 60% accessing via computers and a third accessing via mobile device.

### Paula Deen partners with Robin Shea

Paula Deen has announced a partnership with healthy lifestyle re-inventor Robin Shea. Shea, best known for her 80/20 lifestyle – 80% clean, healthy eating and 20% indulgence – will be added to the new Paula Deen digital network as Deen begins preparing her signature Southern dishes with a healthy twist.

As part of the partnership, all of Shea's video content will be available through the Paula Deen Network and her product line will be available through Deen's general store.

The main goal is to bring the program to people who have been unsuccessful with healthy lifestyle re-invention.

Meyer recently announced the relaunch of the Paula Deen line for 2015 with a new color, yellow. Shea also just launched her own line of cookware and tableware with Luminarc.

Stratus Investment debuted this unique home Olive press at the Chicago show in March. The countertop appliances makes fresh, pure, cold-pressed artisanal olive oil as needed.



### Restaurants see drop in regular coffee brew

Servings of hot brewed coffee have fallen by 2% at foodservice establishments since 2010 while specialty coffees have grown by 4% and iced specialty coffees have jumped 8%, according to NPD.

In 2014 alone, out-of-home customer servings of brewed coffee declined by more than 3% from 2013, though the number of overall customer visits to coffee shops remained unchanged.

Establishments such as Tim Hortons and Starbucks have made up for the dip in drip coffee by growing their assortments of specialty and frozen drinks.

Consumers seem to be getting into the coffee category at an earlier age. Millennials (aged 19 to 34) have proven to be robust coffee drinkers, but post-millennials, those 16 to 19, are more drawn to the coffee-based drinks marketed like desserts, usually with whipped cream.

Overall coffee consumption at restaurants in 2014 is at the same level it sat in 2010, at 2.1 billion servings of foodservice coffee. Hot brewed coffee makes up 77% of the servings at foodservice, compared with 14% for hot specialty coffee and 9% for iced specialty coffee drinks.

Americans today spend less time preparing home-cooked meals than they did in the past, according to NPD Group. Last year, less than 60% of dinners eaten at home were home-cooked. Thirty years ago, nearly 75% of dinners were prepared at home. In addition to cooking fewer meals at home, the average couple now spends 110 minutes cooking each day, compared to 140 minutes in the 1970s.

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### Vegas market partners with buying groups

Las Vegas Market has announced the formation of two new retail partnerships, one with the Gourmet Catalog Buying Group and the other with HTI Buying Group. The partnerships have been formed to help promote the launch of the new C11 showroom floor dedicated to gourmet housewares, tabletop and specialty food lines, at the Summer 2015 Las Vegas Market, set for August 2 to 6, 2015.

Gourmet Catalog is working with Las Vegas Market to develop specialized programs involving a mix of networking and social events, customized market tours, personalized concierge services, buyer scholarships and dynamic educational opportunities. The group represents some 344 retail locations nationwide and partners with more than 200 vendors, the company said.

Las Vegas Market is also working with the Housewares Training & Information Group (HTI Buying Group), which is expected to further bolster the debut of the new housewares floor.

Under the new partnership, HTI's leadership will work to develop specialized programs similar to Gourmet Catalog for its western retail members who will be attending the summer market.

"Our three-year strategic plan culminates this summer with the addition of a new boutique showroom on floor C11," says Dorothy Belshaw, IMC president of gift and home décor. "For its August debut, C11 will showcase a gift-oriented assortment of housewares and tabletop

items, including melamine tableware, gadgets, serveware and specialty food, presenting a compelling, cross-category assortment designed to appeal to our existing gift and home décor buyers, as well as offer a new market opportunity for specialty gourmet retailers from the western region."

### NY NOW ranked 'best in show' by BizBash

NY NOW, the Market for Home + Lifestyle, has been ranked New York City's top trade show as part of *BizBash's* "New York's Top 100 Events 2015," a list of the industry gatherings that make the most impact in New York each year.

Based upon economic impact, buzz, innovation and the event's prominence within the communities it intends to serve, BizBash selected NY NOW as the top trade show in its "trade show and convention category."

"We're pleased and proud that NY NOW is one of the elite events named to BizBash's 2015 Top 100," says Scott Kramer, NY NOW co-director and vice president. "NY NOW has long been ranked among the exposition industry's largest events and we're delighted to extend our recognition to include excellence among the city's top activities."

The fall edition of NY NOW will run August 15 to 19, 2015, at New York City's Jacob K. Javits Convention Center. Information is available online at [www.nynow.com](http://www.nynow.com).

### Paris fair celebrates 20th anniversary



MAISON&OBJET Paris came into being 20 years ago, opening the doors to new market and business opportunities for designers, craftspeople, manufacturers, brands and distributors from the decor and design sectors. To accomplish this mission, the show has grown and evolved around five key themes:

- Intensified international scope: making Paris an international platform for meeting and dialogue;
- Diverse disciplines: a comprehensive exposition ranging from objects to interiors, not just product displays;
- Stunning scenography: creating attractive, convincing, consumer-oriented atmospheres;
- Inspiration and trends: producing exhibitions and conferences on the up-and-coming trends in today's creation.

The 20th anniversary edition of the Paris show, which was held January 23 to 27, pulsed with a vibrant dynamic as it welcomed over 78,000 visitors.

The next edition of MAISON&OBJET is scheduled for September 4 to 8, 2015.

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# Join now! A look at subscription based business models

By Candace Sutcliffe, President, C.A. Paradis/The Chef's Paradise



Subscription based businesses are gaining huge popularity with entrepreneurs in virtually all industries at the moment. As consumers are looking for the most value from a company, and companies are looking for an ongoing connection with their customers, we are seeing a shift in how consumers consume. Netflix, Dollar Shave Club, Amazon Prime, Zipcar, MunchBetter, BirchBox – the list goes on.

Interestingly, this business model dates back to the 16th Century, when British aristocrats would subscribe to cartographers in order to receive the latest world maps as the borders of the British Empire were continuously being redrawn.

Startups and established businesses alike are profiting from a huge revival of subscription based business, which can improve/generate cash flow in virtually any economy while increasing the lifetime potential of a customer. While technology has advanced the efficiency of this business model, it has also repopularized it.

SaaS is the buzzword for software as a service or storage as a service, developed by software providers who needed an alternative to costly and quickly outdated out-of-the-box applications. Instead of an expensive one-time purchase with a limited shelf life, software providers have all essentially moved to a monthly or yearly renewal program. This gives the end user the most up-to-date versions with very little upfront costs. In the IT world, it also ensures that developers are continuously innovating and communicating to avoid the

dreaded “unsubscribe”. Provided that the product remains pertinent, relatively low cost and convenient, subscription based products or services have tremendous growth potential and profitability.

H.Bloom, a luxury floral service, was founded in New York in 2009, during the height of the recession, by two software guys who had no prior experience in the floral market. Originally hired by a local florist to improve their online ordering system to compete against FTD and Teleflora, Bryan Burkhardt and Sonu Panda saw tremendous potential in a massively overpopulated industry that had seen very little technological innovation. Within a year they opened their first bricks and mortar location, (now one of ten across the U.S.), hired a few floral designers and learned as much as they could. They quickly spotted the biggest weakness – spoiled flowers. In response, they developed a software system that would automate their floral inventory and deliveries by selling “subscriptions” to companies that would require recurring orders. That list included restaurants, hotels, retailers and corporate customers.

With subscriptions available in weekly, bi-weekly or monthly bundles, the average transaction increased from \$29.95 to over \$4000 with a three-year revenue growth of over 1850% (\$375K in 2010 to \$7.2M in 2013). The owners now refer to themselves as the “Netflix of flowers”.

E-commerce is fuelling the growth of a subscriber based economy. Birchbox, a cosmetics company with over 400,000 members, sells monthly deliveries of personalized sample cosmetic boxes for

\$10/month + \$4.95 S&H.

Leading the way in the subscription box concept, the delivered goods are completely tailored to individual preferences in hair care, makeup and fragrances, allowing customers to discover new products before buying the full size. The personal information collected also gives the Birchbox an indepth profile of their customer base and a serious competitive edge. They have led the way in incorporating sample subscriptions with full size product sales; the company is on track to triple their online revenue in 2015.

Birchbox has set the example for similar concepts in coffee, tea, healthy snacks, candy and even men’s socks to replicate their success. Starbucks recently launched their own subscription service of freshly roasted, reserve blends in Seattle, testing the model for future markets. Coffee lovers are paying higher prices than the traditional store bought blends, in search of the perfect brew. The exclusivity appeals to a growing consumer base that want their favourite brands tailoring products to their individual tastes.

While a subscription base alone may not be enough to sustain a business longterm (remember Columbia House?) service based companies must adapt before falling behind. Success lies in the simplicity, convenience and value that a company can provide to the customer, and the predictable, recurring sales the customer brings to the business. ☺



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# Best of both worlds

A popular destination shop for home chefs and professionals, Williams Food Equipment is known in Windsor, Ontario, as *'The Candy Store for Cooks'*

By Laurie O'Halloran

For most small business owners looking to the future, succession planning can present a real challenge. That wasn't the case for Williams Food Equipment in Windsor, Ontario. Catering to both professional and amateur chefs, the company was founded by the late Richard (Dick) Williams, who began his career selling meat slicers to butchers and grocers in 1945. Today, the business is run by two of his four sons, Rick and Robert, as well as three of his grandsons. But it was Rick who spearheaded the company's commercial growth and expansion into the retail side of the market after joining the company almost four decades ago.

Rick was born and raised in Windsor, Canada's southernmost city located just across the river from Detroit. After graduating from high school in 1970, he decided to follow one of his brothers and studied geography at the University of Windsor. The goal was to one day become a teacher.

In 1974, with a degree in hand, he was able to find a job supply teaching for a year but, with limited long-term prospects, he decided against teacher's college. Instead, he took a full time job with Redi-Mix Concrete and focused on making money.

After two years, Rick decided he needed to take a break and "find himself". He quit his job, sold everything he owned, and set off to travel across Europe. It was, he remembers, an incredible experience and he met some fascinating people. But upon his return to Ontario, he found it difficult to find a job that was suitable for someone with a degree. He started buying antiques and furniture at auctions, refinishing and reselling them. But he was living at home with his parents and it was getting a little crowded. So in the late 1970s, Rick returned to the concrete company and moved to Guelph.

At the time, his father had been operating his company, now incorporated as Williams Food Equipment, quite successfully for many years. Then the government legislated the conversion from the Imperial to the Metric system in Canada, and grocery scales across the country had to be upgraded or replaced at a rapid rate. In 1979, Rick returned to Windsor to be with his girlfriend (and future wife), Gail. With nothing to lose and everything to gain, he decided to join his father's firm, helping to service the slicers and scales. He had learned a great deal watching his dad work over the years so he decided to try his hand at sales as well. If it didn't work out after a couple years, he'd simply leave.



Above and left, the exterior of Williams Food Equipment in Windsor.



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## Retailer Profile

Shortly after Rick came on board, Dick Williams lost one of his biggest accounts. More and more independent butchers were going out of business so Rick started looking for new opportunities. One arrived when a customer asked if he could help a friend who was opening a new restaurant. He needed to outfit it from top to bottom with all the necessary equipment, and Rick was happy to oblige. It was his first introduction to the restaurant business, and it helped alter the company's future.

Throughout the 1980s, Rick aggressively pursued the commercial restaurant trade. "At first, we didn't have a lot of lines, and the ones that we did carry were more geared to grocery stores" he recalls. "We started to expand and include more large equipment and soon, restaurants became critical to our growth. We wanted to become a full service supplier and added glassware, dinnerware and cutlery to our mix."

Before long, he hired his first employee, Judy Markham, who is still with them today. He also started to follow the good advice of his peers, especially Pierre Paradis, owner of C.A. Paradis in Ottawa, whom he considers his mentor.

By 1988, Dick Williams was pondering retirement and Rick was ready to take the helm. They had outgrown his

father's small office in Windsor and Rick was already contemplating how to turn Williams Food Equipment into a self-service restaurant supply store. He was tired of travelling from restaurant to restaurant selling his wares. They needed more space to warehouse and showcase their growing inventory.

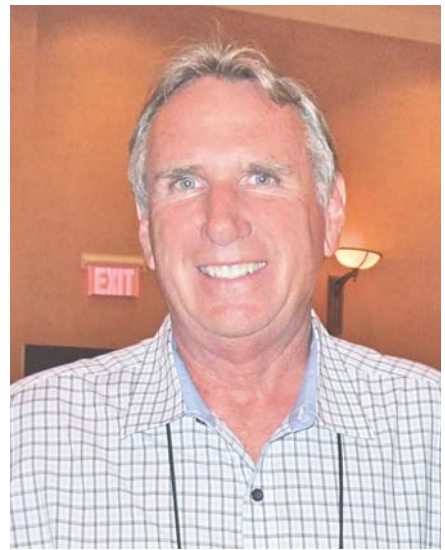
Rick purchased the company that year and then found a larger, 8,000-square-foot location in the core of the city. By then, his younger brother Robert was also working at the company, along with 12 other employees.

In 1994, it was time to grow again and they moved into the current, 18,000-square-foot site. It sits on two acres and offers plenty of free parking. More importantly, it allowed Rick to pursue his dream of attracting the home chef.

Staples and Office Max were just starting out in Canada around that time and Rick really liked their merchandising strategy, targeting both office professionals and the general public.

"The retail store had become a core part of our business," he explains. "Encouraging the public to come into our store seemed like a natural transition. At the time, our major competitor in the area was strictly commercial, and they remain so to this day."

It was also the beginning of the food



Above, owner Rick Williams.

Below, and next page: Williams Food Equipment offers one-stop shopping for everything from gadgets, cutlery, tableware, cookware and bakeware to major restaurant equipment.

revolution, with celebrity chefs fuelling growth in the industry. Rick took advantage of the timing. But he is the first to admit there are very big differences between the commercial and the retail trades. "A commercial customer comes in looking for something specific and they want to get in and out quickly," he says. "The consumer comes in and wants to browse. He wants service and that requires a lot more staff."

Fortunately, Rick had developed a good understanding of the retail business after working for an independent grocer as a teenager. And though commercial accounts still represent the lion's share of dollar volume, there is some cross over between the two customer groups. A good knife, for example, is a good knife whether you're a professional chef or a homeowner. But the homeowner doesn't really care about an insert pan for a steaming table.

So why cater to the public at all? Because it's interesting and it's fun, Rick says, with his typical enthusiasm.

"In a small market like Windsor, if you don't diversify, you're dead," he explains. "The margins on the commercial side are very tight and it's very difficult to survive on that alone any more."

He adds that each side of the business requires different buyers and suppliers and although he focuses more on the commercial, he spends time in the store whenever he can simply because he



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## Retailer Profile



loves dealing with customers. Although they now have 34 employees, during the busy Christmas season, Rick is in the store every day and often works more than 60 hours a week. It's this drive and dedication that have helped make Williams the 'go-to' store for foodies.

A two-month long customer appreciation event kicks off every November, when the store stays open seven days a week, instead of six, and offers plenty of in-store specials and product demos. They also host an open house every May for both commercial and retail customers. And although they do occasionally offer cooking classes, Rick finds it's a lot of work to reconfigure the store's kitchen to accommodate the students.

Last year, they hired a new company to manage their social media presence. They do have a good website but Rick knows they have to do more in this area.

Knife sharpening clinics are one way Rick has been able to draw a crowd on a regular basis. Every year they sponsor a

charity drive as part of the clinics, charging as little as \$2.50 per knife for sharpening. Last year they donated over \$5000 to a local charity. Little wonder cutlery is one of the store's best selling categories. They carry all major brands, including Zwilling, Wusthof, Global, Victorinox, Mac and Shun.

According to Mrinal Sharma, president of Zwilling J.A. Henckels, "Rick is one of the most humble, down-to-earth merchants I've had the pleasure of working with but make no mistake. He is extremely competitive, driven and tenacious. These are the qualities that have helped Williams Food Equipment emerge as a progressive and innovative business model in today's marketplace."

That marketplace has become much more competitive since Williams started, and the city of Windsor, once an automotive manufacturing hub, has undergone drastic downsizing. With high unemployment, Rick knows you have to keep reinventing yourself because

doing the same thing over and over doesn't work. He's always looking for the next big opportunity and his exceptionally strong work ethic is an inspiration to others, including his three sons, Ty, Dylan and Reid, who all work for their father full-time.

Reid, who joined the retail side of the business three years ago, describes Rick as "a solid guy who has always had my back. He is honest and trustworthy and well-respected by his customers. If someone ever told me 'you are just like your father', I would be very proud."

Now 61, Rick says he was planning on stepping aside later this year but has since decided to delay retirement. He and Gail have a cottage in Muskoka that he would like to enjoy more often, but for now, he knows there is still work to be done in the family business. His insatiable hunger for success keeps him motivated. And though he's been gone for 20 years now, Rick says he can still feel his own father guiding him. 🐾



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# Thinking outside the box

When the single-serve craze hit, ECS Coffee was already an established retailer of K-cups and capsules. Now that they've successfully added kitchenware and appliances to the mix, owners Neil and Sinead Madden can provide a complete culinary experience.

by Denise Gaze

First comes love, then comes marriage, or so the story goes. But for Neil and Sinead Madden, the owners of ECS Coffee, love was just the beginning of a flourishing business empire. Together, they have created a company that started as a vending machine service and has grown into a four-store chain selling coffee, kitchenware and small appliances.

These high school sweethearts first met while attending St. Ignatius of Loyola High School in Oakville, Ontario. Neil says that's where he found the love of his life – and his eventual business partner – Sinead. That was also where he discovered he had a natural talent for sales.

One year, Neil's high school ran a contest where the person who sold the most chocolate almonds won a CD player. Neil, who by his own admission 'likes to think outside the box', literally took a good look at the actual box of almonds he was selling. He noticed there was a coupon for Burger King on the packaging, so he went straight to Burger King and began selling the boxes in their parking lot. His strategy worked and he went home with that coveted CD player.

Neil's first job as a student was at Licks, a local burger shop. After graduation, he continued to pursue his love of selling and customer service by accepting a full time position at General Mills.

Not busy enough with his day job, Neil approached his father-in-law, who ran a successful coffee service busi-

ness, for advice on starting a vending company. Using the synergies of both companies – and the initials from *Esquire Coffee System* – Neil started a part-time venture supplying vending machines to factories and offices. And while ECS was a stand alone company, Neil benefitted from the expertise of a well-seasoned businessman. At least he didn't have to travel far to get to his second job. He operated ECS Vending out of his garage.

In 2000, Neil was able to leave his day job to concentrate on ECS full time. By 2003, he was ready to head in a completely different direction. Noting the trend towards better quality blends in the hot beverage market, he started supplying bulk coffee to offices and other commercial establishments.

A true coffee lover himself, Neil learned a lot about the industry over the next five years and developed an impressive

list of suppliers around the world. Anticipating the potential for single serve machines in the home market, he bought out his father-in-law in 2008 and formed a completely new company called ECS Coffee Inc. His timing was perfect.

Always ahead of the curve, Neil focused on K-cups for single serve machines at a time when few grocery stores were devoting shelf space to these new coffee pods. Of course, when the category did explode, Neil was right in the thick of it, offering the widest choice of brands and flavours on






ECS Coffee owners Sinead and Neil Madden, above, met in high school and have been running the company together for 18 years.

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## Retail Profile: ECS Coffee



Above, the newly expanded appliance and kitchenware sections. Below left, the tasting bar where customers can sample either hot or cold beverages.

the market, all merchandised in open-stock, self-serve bins that allow customers to mix and match and sample the latest blends.

A state-of-the-art website, unveiled in 2009, helped him reach a greater audience than ever through online sales, now a significant part of the business.

By March of 2012, Neil was ready to try bricks and mortar retail. He opened an ECS store in nearby Ancaster, followed by another in Kitchener that October and one in Burlington in December. A fourth location in Milton, a fast-growing community west of Toronto, opened in the fall of 2013. (The Burlington store is about 5,000 square-feet while the other locations are each 3,000 square feet.)

With an innovative try-before-you-buy philosophy, consumers were drawn

to the 'complete home beverage-making experience' that ECS provided. If Neil heard about an interesting new coffee grower, he didn't hesitate to hop on a plane, fly down and meet with him. He also established good working relationships with Canadian distributors, and was usually first to market with the latest coffee or tea blends. He also carried a range of top quality coffee brewers that would appeal to a true coffee aficionado, with brands like Keurig, Nespresso, Cuisinart and Breville.

Today, Neil's workplace garage is but a distant memory. In addition to the four retail stores, ECS has a 20,000 square-foot building in Burlington, Ontario, which the Maddens own. ECS has also gone from one employee (Neil) to 65, and all shipments are now processed through the company's distribution cen-

tre and warehouse.

With the help of a great operations manager and store managers who know how to pick winning products, the company continued to evolve by keeping on top of the trends and offering the latest products. In fact, ECS was ranked as one of *Canada's Fastest Growing Companies* in 2013 and 2014 by *PROFIT Magazine*.

However, Neil knows that you have to always think ahead and be prepared to modify your business model to meet changing consumer expectations.

"I have learned that you need to be thinking at least five years ahead," he explains. "As retail changes you need to look further ahead than ever before."

He adds "when we first opened the retail store, things were a lot easier. We hit the single serve market at the right time and came on very strong. Since then, it's changed considerably. There's been the maturation of the home beverage category, of course, but retailing has also changed. It's become much more Omni-channel than it used to be."

Neil is always working full throttle with his team to find the latest innovative products in order to keep the customers coming back into the store. 'Customer experience' is a term he finds overused in the industry. He says the new buzz word is 'retail-tainment'.

"You can no longer sit back and hope

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## Lunch Tote

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## Leak-Proof Food Jar

A double-wall means food never comes into contact with plastic.



## Retail Profile: ECS Coffee

a customer comes in and picks something off a store shelf," he explains. "Stores have to be interactive today."

One of the most important retail lessons Neil has learned along the way is that sometimes 'good is not good enough'. He feels ECS can always do better, and that's why in November of 2014, he and Sinead decided to expand on their original coffee vision and move into products for the entire kitchen.

"One of the great things about owning a smaller company is that you have the ability to embrace change, rather than fear it," says Neil. "You have the ability to look at trends and add some things you love to the business."

It just so happens Neil and Sinead love fine wine and good food as much as they love coffee. It was time to create a new mantra as they evolved into a full blown housewares shop.

As Neil said in a post on the ECS website last fall: "What started as 'Making Coffee Better' became 'Home Beverage Specialist'. Now we are going one step further. 'Coffee, Cook, Wine, Repeat' is our new mission statement."

He visited trade shows to source new high end housewares suppliers, and, after making a few modifications to the interior space of the Burlington store, unveiled a complete assortment of cookware, bakeware, small appliances, barware last fall. The other three stores followed suit this spring. Though he still carries 800 coffee SKUs, Neil has added

4,000 brand new products from the likes of Le Creuset, Lodge and Metrokane.

As with the original concept, the stores continue to offer a "Just Try Me" program. Any one of the store's trained 'home beverage specialists' is now happy to help customers take a juice extractor or blender for a test drive. And just like his original coffee blends, Neil is careful to only carry premium blends and as much as possible, sources items made in North America and Europe.

At the Burlington location, the coffee bar was busy during *Home Style's* visit with customers sampling a variety of coffees and teas while the staff demonstrated how a certain coffeemaker works. ECS stores are happy to educate customer with events such as Vitamix classes, and regularly post instructional You Tube videos online.

As president, Neil still does most of the buying. "I also consider the input of my wife – who plays an integral role as financial manager – my operations manager and the store managers," he says.

ECS is not only well versed in e-commerce, the company also has a strong following on social media, which has become a great tool for advertising.

"When Facebook started it was basically free to reach your 'fan' base," says Neil. "Now you have to pay to have your followers see your page but in return you can target your audience much more effectively."

Trying to keep people coming through the doors of the bricks and mortar stores is something Neil constantly thinks about.

"It's not just kids who are not going

outside the home," he notes. "We now have adults who are too wrapped up in their iPads and don't head out to shop. Shopping competes with the screen which is why we keep developing reasons for people to come to our stores."

Despite the impact of social media, Neil doesn't ignore traditional advertising methods. He has promoted ECS in print with magazines and local newspapers as well as on billboards, radio and television. They have also produced two full colour 16-page brochures in-house to promote the new kitchen product assortment. They distributed two million of the brochures through local media.

ECS is trying to emphasize the fact that they are not just a 'single serve' coffee operation anymore. But that doesn't mean coffee has lost its significance at ECS, which is seen by suppliers as a trend-setter in the industry.

Brent Toevs of Marley Coffee, says "Neil is always looking for great opportunities and is usually the first to market with great products. He really supported our brand in Canada and has been a big reason for our success."

Another supplier, Rusty James of Mother Parkers, has worked with Neil for three years. "The joint working relationship we have with ECS Coffee has been excellent. Neil runs a first-class business from top to bottom, and as a result he is a leader with a business concept he developed and made his own".

As a primary retail source of K-Cups in southern Ontario, Neil has definitely seen a shift in how consumers view the product's environmental impact.

"Customers buying pod machines are

The new bakeware aisle and the front desk of the Burlington store, below.



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## Retail Profile: ECS Coffee



concerned, and they do ask questions," he says. "We are working with a number of manufacturers in this area and we are very close to having a compostable, recyclable product. We have one product now that's 98.6% compostable and we have made it clear to our vendors that our customers want change."

ECS does carry a recyclable K-cup for tea that comes apart so the plastic can be recycled. It's produced in Canada by Mother Parkers under the Higgins and Burke brand, who are expected to introduce one for the coffee market shortly.

Neil and his family have also initiated a tree planting program which has already planted over 66,000 trees. The ECS philosophy is about doing whatever it takes to be different and stand out.

"We are about creating solutions for people and providing education and opportunities. We are not about selling 'stuff' that people don't need."

Making sure he carries only the best in each category is a clear point of differentiation for ECS. And now that single serve coffee sales have started to slow, Neil has seen many customers move towards more traditional and artisanal prod-

ucts like the French Press. As for housewares, his best sellers are kitchen gadgets priced under \$20.

As with all bricks and mortar retailers, Neil admits they are going through a transitional period as foot traffic declines. "The problem is you are not just competing with mass merchants and chain store low ball pricing. You also have to deal with online competition and practices such as showrooming. But I believe if we are going to be showroomed, then let's embrace showrooming and sell at competitive prices."

He adds: "The future of retail requires a real ability to understand how technology will influence your business from an Omni channel perspective, and understand the complexities of each".

"We have invested a great deal of money in our systems," he says "We are ready to scale the business and move forward, we just need to develop the model for the way we want to do it."

To sum up his personal philosophy, Neil offers a favourite quote from Abraham Lincoln: "Give me six hours to chop down a tree, and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe."

What he means is that preparation can make the difference and determine whether you're productive or not.

A self-described workaholic with little time for hobbies – other than coffee, food and wine – Neil's passion is to build something that will keep the consumer engaged on an ongoing basis. He knows his business is going to mature over the next five years and plans to stay ahead of the curve, as always.

ECS offers a unique 'mix and match' coffee pod merchandising system, above left. Above right, the exterior of the Burlington store, the largest in the chain.

Sinead (who also handles administration and human resource management for the company) says that Neil never turns ECS off completely. He listens to both his staff and his customer and if someone has a good idea, Neil does not hesitate to act on it.

"Often we have heard what is missing in a certain category, particularly in coffee," says Neil. "One supplier contacted us because they were having an internal debate about what product to launch and under what name so I told them to talk to my staff. They came in, they listened to my team, and that product became a number one seller."

An eternal optimist, Neil believes there is still an opportunity for independents to do well, even competing with the majors. "We provide a certain level of customer service that people will never get at the big box stores."

Neil simply wants to keep his customers engaged, and he is certain that ECS will continue to evolve into an interactive retail space that will encourage customers to come through the door.

Though he no longer has the CD player that he won after selling all those chocolate covered almonds, Neil *does* still have his high school sweetheart, and a very successful, always innovative, business that will hopefully sustain them for many years to come. ☺



Above: ECS distributed two million copies of this 16-page brochure through local newspapers in March.





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# Making Coffee

## Single serve saturation?

By Dave Adamchick, The NPD Group

It is an interesting time in the coffeemaker market. The total coffee machine market declined in Canada by 15% in dollars (year-over-year) in 2014, largely driven by single serve coffee machines, which declined 17% in the same period. The decline was even greater in the fourth quarter. This makes sense to me.

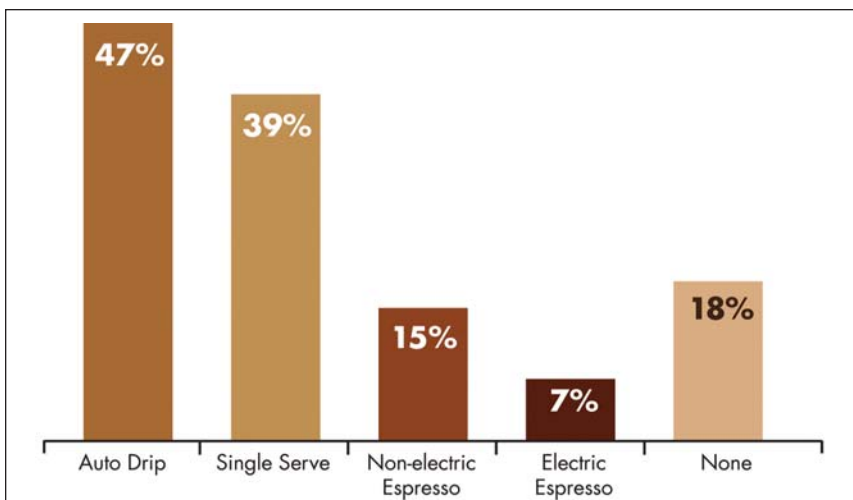
When single serve coffee machines first came to market, they were considered new and exciting and were often seen as hot gift items. Today, the market is more mature and the number of new customers to the category is declining.

In NPD's February omnibus consumer panel study, we found 42% of respondents currently own a single serve coffee system, and less than half of those consumers intend to replace their machine in the next three years. Also, of people without a single serve machine, 75% have no intent to purchase one, and only 10% intend to buy one in the next year. It looks like there aren't many first time buyers left in the single serve machine market.

Despite the maturity in the single serve market, there are some interesting bright spots that point to further opportunities. In many households, a single serve machine has been a gateway into the world of coffee. Some consumers use a single serve on weekdays for speed, and then a more labour-intensive manual method (such as pour over coffee, French press, or cold brewing) on the weekend. Coffee grinder sales may be an indicator of the growth of these non-electric methods of coffee brewing, having grown 7% in units year over year in 2014.

Some of the more exciting products I saw showcased at the International Home and Housewares Show in Chicago in March included a new electric siphon coffeemaker and an electric pour-over machine – making these traditionally manual methods easier for the end user.

Overall, seven out of 10 Canadians have at least one coffee or espresso maker product at home. Interestingly, drip coffeemakers' year-over-year declines have been steadily shrinking since August 2014. If this trend continues, drip coffee may start to recover some of the volume it has lost to single serve over the last few years, and with new innovations bringing premium or gourmet coffee brewing methods into more homes, the coffee world remains as exciting as ever.



This whimsical block wooden sign from **Abbott** would make a great gift for the coffee lover. Available in a variety of sizes.



**InterContinental Mercantile** recently entered the coffeemaker market with the Canadian launch of the Ekobrew system. Targeted to the environmentally-conscious consumer, this machine has a patented plastic, reusable K-cup style filter. It's the only universal brewer that also accepts all K-cups, including the 1.0 and 2.0. The reusable filter is easy to clean and remove. The machine has a variable height to accommodate travel mugs and a 40-ounce removable water reservoir. It's programmable for 6-ounce, 8-ounce or 12-ounce brews and has a patented water heater for an instant brew. Internal surge suppression ensures a delicious cup of freshly brewed coffee every time.



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The Saeco's VariPresso brewing group chamber will automatically adjust the pressure, adapting to suit up to 16 special drinks for a great coffee variety at home.

# Making coffee



A new 8-cup Pour Over coffee brewer from **KitchenAid**, left, provides exceptional performance with unique heating technology and 24-hour programmability. The design, featuring automated pour over coffee technology, includes a progress bar, roast selector, cup selector, brew basket clip and cord wrap. It comes in three colours with an 8-cup glass carafe and starter pack of filters. The new 8-cup Siphon machine, right, offers automated full immersion siphon brewing for a bright, rich flavour. The stand securely holds the brew unit. It features premium glass construction with stainless steel siphon tube, magnetic locking seal and reusable stainless steel filter. It has a dual purpose lid and 360° rotation removable base and comes with a clean-brush and coffee scoop.



Designed to fit Keurig brewers, the Liqueiseal single-serve travel tumbler, shown right, is distributed by **DanESCO**. This travel tumbler features three silicone seals to ensure no spills. The double wall construction improves thermal retention and the no-drip drinking spout is contoured for comfort. The soft, non-slip grip give users a secure hold when on the go. It can accommodate a wide variety of car cup holders. It comes in three stylish colours.



**Trudeau's** new coffee press offers a personalized infusion, below. It's made of heat-resistant borosilicate glass and features an 18/8 stainless steel filter system. The handle has a heat guard for safety and there is a protective base. It's ideal for brewing cold beverages as well.



This new 4-cup French Press coffee maker from **OXO**, left, has an innovative grounds lifter that catches brewed coffee grounds and removes them in one easy step. The sturdy stainless steel housing contacts a traditional borosilicate glass carafe to ensure a pure brewing and serving experience. The soft, comfortable, non-slip grips on the handle and on the top of the filter plunger make brewing and pouring easy.

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# Making coffee



The Oster Optimal Brew coffeemaker infuses artisan-style coffee brewing with the convenience of an automatic coffeemaker. A unique "blooming" process saturates the coffee grounds for optimal flavour, heating up to 205F° for a richer tasting coffee. It brews up to 20% faster than standard coffeemakers with Light Bar Technology that shows exactly how much coffee is left in the carafe. The Optimal Brew is built with expert design and functionality to brew with precision.



Hamilton Beach will launch several new FlexBrew coffeemakers this year. The FlexBrew single serve programmable coffeemaker brews hot coffee or can deliver hot, boiled water with one-hand dispensing. It can be programmed 24 hours in advance and can be up to 14 ounces with ground coffee or 10 ounces with a single-serve pack. A more compact version, below, is ideal for coffee drinkers who want flexibility. This convenient machine offers a fast, 2.5 minute brewing time with regular or bold brewing options. The adjustable cup rests accommodates any size mug and it comes in red or black.

The Grind Control from Breville, below, has a unique calibration function that customizes grind size and coffee volume. This 1100-watt brewer uses stainless steel burrs for a precision grind. It can tailor the coffee brew for cup, travel mug or carafe.



Breville's new Duo Temp Pro features a unique automatic purge feature that clears the heating system after steam frothing to ensure the ideal temperature is reached for espresso extraction. The Italian 15-bar pump provides the appropriate pressure, while PID digital electronics control the Thermocoil heating system for temperature stability throughout extraction. Low-pressure pre-infusion technology gently infuses the coffee puck with brew water to expand the grinds, prior to extraction at full pressure.





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# Making coffee

This 8-cup auto drip coffeemaker from **Nesco**, below, is simple to operate with an anti-drip feature, swing filter basket and water level gauge. It also has a keep warm function and on/off switch indicator light. The coffeemaker is programmable with a 24-hour digital timer. The machine includes a permanent filter and scoop.



**Paderno** has unveiled a new line of travel coffee mugs. They are available in five vibrant colours and can hold 500ml. The mugs are insulated to keep beverages hot.



This convenient single serve travel coffeemaker from **Salton**, left, is perfect for people on the go. The stainless steel design fits a variety of mug sizes. It can also heat hot water for tea or soups.

The permanent nylon filter and filter basket are removable for easy cleaning. The six hole shower head extracts maximum coffee flavour. Salton is also launching a new cordless frother this year, below right. It has built-in minimum and maximum measurement lines and one-touch button operation with automatic shut-off. It includes two whisk attachments.



The Aerolatte Cafetiere French press coffeemaker from **Port-Style Enterprises** features a durable borosilicate glass carafe and stainless steel base that's easily removable. It's designed for true coffee lovers.

This 1.5 litre vacuum insulated carafe from **Thermos** is great for entertaining and parties. It can keep beverages hot for up to 12 hours and cold for up to 24 hours. It features a comfortable handle and one-push stopper for one hand pouring. The carafe is dent-resistant and durable with a stainless steel interior and exterior. The exterior is sweat-proof and stays cool to the touch.





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# Making Coffee



Ted Baker and **Portmeirion** have joined forces to create the Geo collection, above, and the Rosie Lee collection, below. The collaboration brings together two iconic British brands for a collection of floral prints that can be mixed and matched (below) or bold geometric prints, such as the coffee mugs above.



The Zyliss milk frother from **Swissmar** easily froths milk for cappuccinos, lattes, or shakes. The unique basket design allows more air to flow into the milk for better results. To use, simply heat a small amount of milk and insert frother to the bottom of the cup. Switch the frother on and watch as milk expands three times in just 30 seconds. It uses two AA batteries.



The Final Touch double-wall coffee series offers the same insulating abilities as travel mugs in a simple, stylish design. The superior insulation allows hot beverages to stay hot longer while the exterior stays neutral and easy to handle. Available from **Product Specialties**, the cups are made of commercial grade stainless steel.



**Abbott** offers a range of coffee accessories including a line of old-fashioned tin cups with a vintage enamel look, above. The company also carries this Mad Hatter unique white porcelain stacked creamer/mug set. The set is both attractive and whimsical for entertaining or personal use.



# Making Coffee

## Cuisinart unveils new machine to media



Chef Jonathan Collins shows guests how easy it is to use the new Grind & Brew.

The new Cuisinart Grind & Brew single serve coffeemaker was officially unveiled at a special media event held at Toronto's St. Lawrence Market on April 14th. Renowned chef Jonathan Collins was on hand to demonstrate the coffeemaker to gathered guests, retail customers and press. In addition to the Grind & Brew, the company debuted a new combo steam/convection oven, an International Chef crepe pan and the Griddler Deluxe (we'll have more on these in our next issue.)

The new single serve machine addresses a major environmental concern in the marketplace – K-cups that can't be recycled – while adding the flavour benefit of freshly ground beans.



## Coffeemaker grinds and brews a single cup

From beans to cup – that's the recipe for freshness that Cuisinart hopes to achieve with its new generation of single serve coffeemakers. The innovative Single Cup Grind and Brew Coffeemaker freshly grinds coffee beans for each individual cup of coffee for a personalized experience in minutes. You simply add beans, add water, press grind and brew.

"Coffee has become a staple of a Canadian's daily routine and we each have our own unique way of enjoying it," explains Kami Bosland, Director of Sales, Cuisinart Canada. "That's why we are so passionate about the Single Cup Grind and Brew Coffeemaker; not only does it allow you to enjoy fresh ground taste with every cup, but it also delivers it in just minutes."

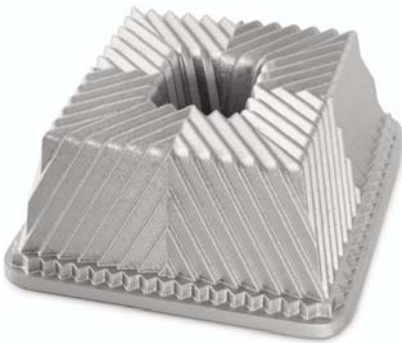
The Cuisinart machine features an interior blade grinder that automatically grinds whole beans and dispenses ground coffee directly into the filter basket for brewing. Users can switch the bean type for each cup simply by rinsing the filter basket, refilling the machine and starting again. It has removable parts that are dishwasher-safe and a grind-off feature for use with pre-ground coffee. The removable drip tray accommodates most travel mugs. The machine brews up to 16 ounces at a time.



Cuisinart sales director Kami Bosland, above left, welcomed the media to the event at the start of evening. He's shown with Clem MacMullen and Tony Najjar of Cuisinart and Frank Querido of Hudson's Bay, far right. Left: Soman Sukhu of Cuisinart, far left, welcomes Jerry Cayne, Jami Steele and Carole Steele of Cayne's Super Housewares.

# Home baking

*Fresh from the oven! What's hot in bake pans and accessories*



Beautiful baking for beginners or professionals is possible with a Bundt cast baking pan from **Nordic Ware**. New addition to the Platinum collection include a 10-cup squared pan, shown left, with bold, dramatic lines to create a unique shape. The Baby Bunny cake pan is part of the spring seasonal collection. It bakes up a bunch of bunnies in three different ways with a 4.5 cup capacity. The adorable results are shown above. New in Nordic Ware's holiday seasonal collection is the frozen snowflake cakelet pan, shown left middle. It's the perfect way to add sparkle to any family gathering.



**Danica's** retro-styled bakery boxes, left, are supplied in a variety of vibrant colours to give any kitchen a chic, vintage feel. They're made from powder-coated galvanized steel, a durable, protective coating will ensure the storage container lasts a lifetime. Danica also offers these bamboo utensils, right, a sustainable material known for durability and strength. A set of five utensils is dipped in assorted colours. They are the perfect tools for mixing, flipping and sautéing.



# VITRIFIED CERAMIC BAKEWARE



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- 5 Year Limited Warranty

## VIBRANTLY COLOURED FINISH

- The vibrantly coloured exterior brings a distinct accent to any kitchen

## OVEN, MICROWAVE, AND FREEZER SAFE

- This bakeware is safe for cooking or reheating food in the oven and microwave. It can be used for storing prepared meals in the freezer or reheated at a later time
- Oven safe up to 500°F/260°C

## DISHWASHER SAFE

- Designed to stand up to rigorous dishwasher use
- Evaluated using one of the most thorough dishwasher tests in the market: 500 cycles



**KitchenAid®**

# Home baking



The Mastrad silicone rolling pin from **Swissmar** with rings is made in the French style. It has no handles so it's perfect for pie crusts, pizza, fondant, tarts, cookies and flat pasta. The non-stick silicone surface ensures easy rolling, as well as easy clean up. Four sets of rings allow perfectly even rolling every time, from a super-thin 1/12 of an inch to a thick 1/3 inch.



**Le Creuset** has introduced a new professional-quality metal bakeware collection that offers the perfect shapes for sweet or savory baking. Each pan has a durable PFOA-free non-stick coating so food slides out or off with ease. Heat spreads gently and efficiently for even baking without burning. The wide rims feature heat resistant silicone for added grip, making it easier and safer to transfer full pans to and from a hot oven. Manufactured with superior materials and expert craftsmanship, the new bakeware is offered with a limited lifetime warranty.



Also new from Swissmar, these Mastrad baking cups offer a unique 'cleaver' design' in non-stick silicone. A distinctive line that is marked in the moulds can be used to measure the amount of mix required. When the sides are folded down, the muffin cups easily convert into small tart moulds. They're sold as a set of six.



Duralex OvenChef thermal tempered baking dishes come in three sizes. Distributed by **InterContinental Mercantile**, the dishes are thermal shock-resistant and safe for the freezer, microwave and dishwasher. Made in France of 100% hygienic non-porous glass.



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# Home baking



Fired at over 2200°F, this new range of non-porous ceramic bakeware from **KitchenAid** won't absorb oils, odours or sauces. The durable commercial quality of the vitrified process ensures it won't crack, stain or fade after years of use. Available with a 5-year chip resistant warranty, all ceramic dishes come in a variety of signature colours to match the stand mixer. All pieces are dishwasher, oven, microwave and freezer safe.



Kitchenaid's new .8mm metal bakeware has an ILAG ultimate nonstick coating. This three layer, ceramic-reinforced scratch-resistant nonstick coating provides a durable finish and exceptional cleanability. This professional-grade metal bakeware has an enduring design with a folded square design and a metal rod that prevents warping.



Emile Henry is launching six new shapes and colours for its ovenware and bakeware collection. Distributed by **Browne**, the ovenware is made of high resistant ceramic for use in the oven up to 520°F. The highly resistant glaze makes each pan perfect for both sweet or savory dishes. Shown clockwise, from top left, the ruffled tart dish, square baker, pie dish and cake/loaf baker. Each pan is available in clay, brick, blue pavot, nougat, nutmeg, grenade and pepper colours.



The OXO double pastry wheel from **DanESCO**, shown left, has a smooth gliding, stainless steel design that cuts through dough in wavy or straight patterns. The fluted edge is perfect when stylizing cuts for pies and pastas. The handle has a soft, comfortable, non-slip grip. Also new from Danesco is this innovative SwitchScale by Joseph Joseph, below. This multi-functional scale offers two options: you can place items directly on top or flip over the integrated lid to create a measuring bowl. It features a back-lit LCD display and touch-sensitive controls.





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Airfryer Viva Collection

# PHILIPS

# Home baking



**Trudeau** has debuted a set of six reusable muffin cups that are decorated for beautiful presentation. Each cup is flexible for easy release and is made of heat-resistant silicone that is both stain and odor-resistant. Also new from Trudeau is this small icing spreader that is ideal for cupcakes and small treats. Able to create a smooth finish easily, it has a stainless steel blade and a non-slip ergonomic handle that offers two comfortable positions. It's also safe to go in the dishwasher.



This spring **Counseltron** is introducing a new cake and muffin decorating set by Metaltex. It lets users bake like a professional baker. The set includes two bottles, three nozzles, one double corer and two caps to bring fun and creativity to baking.

Counseltron's new mixing bowl splatter screen by Metaltex keeps ingredients in the bowl and the mess off the countertop. This item fits over the bowl while the blender is placed in the silicone opening. While mixing cake ingredients, the splatter screen helps to keep the baker and the kitchen clean.



The **Norpro** cookie stamper is made of silicone and measures three inches in diameter. It comes with two silicone stamps: Home Made and Love Cookies. It's perfect for decorating stamped cookies with frosting, sprinkles, sugar icing and fondant. It's boxed with a hang tab.



Stainless drizzle spoons from Norpro (Ventures International) come in two sizes to create a variety of eye-catching designs. They make it simple to drizzle sauces, creams, dessert topping, chocolate or caramel. Users can also combine sauces for a multi-coloured effect. The spoons come boxed with a hang tab.



The **Swift Sure** from **Fox Run** is a new spin on an old standby. It's designed to aerate flour with a pull cord to give it more volume or sift to combine spices. Easier and faster than stand sifters, it collapses for easy storage.

# Home baking



**RICARDO** stackable cooling racks, above, allow cookies or cakes to cool evenly while saving countertop space. Foldable legs make storage easy and the closely-set wiring prevents cookies from slipping through. The racks are coated for easy cleaning and are dishwasher safe. The latest RICARDO bakeware, centre left, is made of aluminized steel and features a silver PFOA- and PTFE-free non-stick coating. The pans un-mould baked goods in perfect shape. And this new RICARDO cookie cutter set, left, will create a 3-D house from any cookie dough in no time. The stainless steel blades easily cut through dough, for clean and even shapes.

Made from solid 18/10 stainless steel, this handy pancake batter dispenser from **Paderno** makes cooking breakfast fun. It features a 600ml capacity and is ideal for creating perfectly round pancakes or fun shapes for young children.



## COMING THIS JULY...



**A who's who of the Canadian housewares industry, this special issue is being published to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Home Style Magazine.**



Find out how you can take advantage of this unique, one-time opportunity to have your company profiled in Home Style Profiles. Featuring corporate information as well as an overview of your products and sales reps, Profiles will serve as an ongoing resource guide for housewares retailers and store buyers across Canada.

For details contact Michael O'Halloran at [michael@homestylemag.ca](mailto:michael@homestylemag.ca) or Laurie O'Halloran at [laurie@homestylemag.ca](mailto:laurie@homestylemag.ca)

# That's entertainment!

Showcasing the latest in serveware, trays, appetizer plates and party accessories



Left, **David Shaw Designs** is debuting a copper cheese knife set from The Just Slate Company. The set of two 16cm. copper knives comes gift boxed. A new appetizer bowl, shown above, comes with four stainless steel 'twig' serving picks. It's made of acacia wood and comes packaged in a premium gift box.

Solid wood boards from **OnOurTable** feature a half-inch lip around the perimeter to keep your olives, gherkins and nuts in order. The new collection of Template Trays includes five contemporary shapes milled out of edge grain walnut. Shown left, the new Charceuterie tray provides the beautiful simplicity of solid wood for casual entertaining. OnOurTable is fully committed to local manufacturing and makes 100% of its products in a wood shop in Alberta. The company only uses ethically harvested American black walnut.



**Royal Selangor** offers several stylish items to add panache to any party. The Tete-de-Moine cheese curler, left, from Boska is made of European white oak and stainless steel. The Boska three-tier cheese tower, right, is crafted from slate and white oak. Below, this lovely Boska cheese serving board is made from Ashwood bark. Royal Selangor also offers a range of crystal appetizer plates and bowls as part of the Aperitivo series by Nachtmann.



# That's entertainment!

New Mastrad cocktail picks from **Swissmar**, below left, are sold as a set of 12. The colours allow users to identify their own pick, making them reusable and hygienic. It includes a dispensing box. Swissmar has also unveiled the versatile Locarno eight-person pizza raclette party grill, right. Combining Italian cooking with Swiss tradition, this raclette features upper and lower heating elements so users can grill on the top stone surface and melt cheese or cook perfect pizza at the same time.



**InterContinental Mercantile** offers an easy way to keep condiments cold with this acrylic, BPA-free four-section dish with ice tray, left. Also new is a three-tier drink dispenser, right. Perfect for parties, it offers ice storage in the base to keep drinks cold and three individual dispensing tabs for each beverage. Easy to use and refill, each layer can also be used separately.



**Abbott** offers a variety of entertaining products. This polished wood tray, left, has rope handles for a uniquely nautical look. A range of large mirrored trays, below, are ideal to display keepsakes or serve food and these delicate fish-shaped glass plates, right, come in three coastal colours.



# Floor care



**Hoover's** Air Cordless 2-IN-1 stick and handheld vacuum offers the power of a high-performance stick-vacuum with the versatility of a handheld. The stick vacuum instantly adapts to multiple floor types for optimal performance with the touch of a button. For hard to reach places, such as couches, car interior, stairs, and more. The Removable Handheld Vacuum or crevice tool, offers a deep clean. Powered by a 20V Lithium-Life battery system, this dual purpose vacuum weighs less than seven pounds. The lightweight handheld vac (shown above) includes a powered turbo tool for enhanced suction around stairs and furniture. The handy crevice tool cleans tight spaces with precision and ease. The battery can also be used on any other LithiumLife product from Hoover.



**Dirt Devil** introduces the 360 Reach bagless stick vacuum, right. The lightweight design and extended reach arm allows convenient clean-up from floor to ceiling. This 4-in-1 stick vacuum uses a cyclonic filtration system, creating powerful suction that can cut through any mess. The Vac+Dust Tools capture heavy dirt and debris, while the SWIPES micro-pads eliminate all traces of dust. Just snap on the Crevice Tool to extend the cleaning reach and wipe dust from book shelves, curtain rods, ceilings, cupboards, and everything below. The Pivoting Extension Tool provides precision control for those hard-to-clean areas. With the detachable hand vac, difficult jobs like cleaning the car interior are made easy.



The BOLT from **Bissell** is a new 2-in-1 stick vacuum that features edge REACH technology. It will divert suction on the edge of the vacuum to clean all the way to the edge of the room while uniquely shaped bristles sweep dirt out of the corners. Available on the BOLT ION and ION XRT models, users can go from normal to enhanced edgeREACH cleaning with the touch of a button. The two-way folding handle flexes forward to clean under furniture and backward to store compactly. A removable hand vacuum allows users to switch from a stand-alone stick.





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# Ambiente expands its international appeal

Frankfurt Spring Fair visitors were welcomed by a sea of pale watery blues and aqua greens this February as exhibitors displayed a clean, refreshing palette in tableware and gourmet accessories. A 'back to nature' approach was also evident in the range of sustainable products as well as small appliances designed for healthy living.

These latest trends in the Living, Dining and Giving sections plus an impressive line-up of events with famous stars and industry designers, were the defining features of Ambiente 2015, which closed its doors on February 17th with an increase in the number of exhibitors and a record level of internationality on both the exhibitor and visitor sides.

For the five days, 4,811 exhibitors from 94 countries presented their latest products to the global consumer-goods market. Altogether, 135,000 buyers from 152 countries made their way to Frankfurt for the leading trade fair of the consumer-goods sector.

"Ambiente was more international than ever before. The standard of visitors here is outstanding. Despite the challenging economic and political climate, the indicators in Germany and worldwide are pointing to 'consume'", says Detlef Braun of Messe Frankfurt.

This year, the proportion of trade visitors from outside Germany reached 51% – more than ever before. The top 10 visitor nations after Germany were Italy, France, the Netherlands, Great Britain, Spain, the USA, Switzerland, China, Turkey and Poland. There was an increase in the number of visitors from important European consumer-goods markets, such as Denmark, France, Portugal and Spain.

Compared to last year, the degree of



With the U.S. as Ambiente's partner country this year, Oscar winner Helen Hunt was the special guest of honour on "USA Day". She's shown with Detlef Braun of Messe Frankfurt.

visitor satisfaction with the fair rose by one percentage point to 97 percent, the highest level ever. Executives, the key to order placement, accounted for 80 percent of all visitors. And this was also noticed by the exhibitors.

This year's Ambiente Partner Country was the U.S.A. and American product design was honoured in a special presentation created by Brooklyn-based designer Scott Henderson (see photo on next page). Additionally, there were a variety of activities and events revolving around the Partner Country on "USA Day". The guest of honour was Oscar winner Helen Hunt, who had the opportunity to discover modern design for the kitchen and table as she toured the vast halls of Ambiente.

Peter B. Cameron, CEO of Lenox Corporation, was delighted with the show and the VIP visit, saying "we had great traffic and great diversity with lots of different countries being represented in

the trade. We also had a lovely visit with Helen Hunt and lots of press. That was a very positive experience. We had a great show."

Colour combinations this year spread over many product groups. The powdery pastel shades of a retro style were prevalent in dinnerware as well as on cast iron or enamelled cookware. Another colour to join the yellows, pinks and light greens is a powerful mint green. In addition, a palette of intense colours has been extended and now covers almost the entire spectrum of the rainbow from red, orange and yellow to blue and lime green and, once again, purple. A new feature was the increased use of copper or copper-like materials in the glassware and decoration sections. To go with this, there are also warm earth and smoky tones that are stamping their mark on housewares products. The 'on the move' theme and the storage of food is another growing trend area.

Colour and surface texture played a major role in the field of glassware. Water is offered in monochrome glasses – from strong colours to earthy and smokey tones. Water glasses are either smooth, or with relief motifs on them. The shapes of the plain, clear wine glasses, on the other hand, are becoming more organic.

At the end of the fair, it was announced that Italy will be the next Ambiente Partner Country. The official handover of the "Partner Country Globe" was attended by several special guests including the Consul General of the U.S. as well as American actress Helen Hunt and designer Scott Henderson.

Ambiente 2016 is scheduled for February 12 to 16. For more details contact Neeta Correa at (905) 824-5017.



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# Frankfurt Fair Highlights



As part of their role as official partner country, the U.S. was invited to present an artistic display of images and symbols that were representative of America in the concourse outside Hall 4. Designer Scott Henderson of Brooklyn created "Seashore Galore", above, to represent a dramatic New England seascape. It featured three giant Adirondack chairs and eight organic tables flanked by two classic U.S. mailboxes.



Bigger is always better and Ambiente exhibitors tend to make it a production. Shown above, one half of the dramatic WMF exhibit. The other half, located across the aisle, features a full-service restaurant and bar. Shown below, a space age theatre at the Leifheit exhibit featured blue-haired dancers paired with laundry drying racks!



North American visitors to Ambiente 2015 in Frankfurt celebrated opening day at the annual party sponsored by the International Housewares Association and Whitford.



Ingrid Mohn of Sagaform joins Marc Delman of Emerald Exhibitions (NY Now), centre, and Peter Braley of Browne & Co.



Left to right, Phil Brandl, IHA, Pedro Canelo and Raquel Santos of A Metalurgica, Dick Adler and Joan Peris of Whitford.

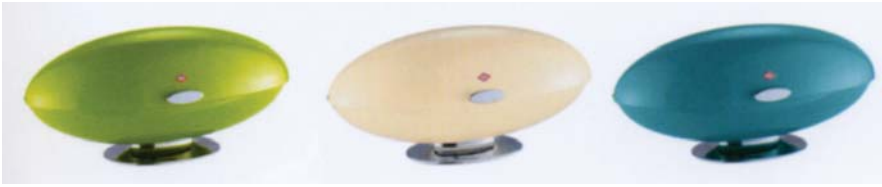


Piritta Torro of the IHA (Finland office), left, and Pascal Glorieux of Glop Studio in France, right, with trade editors Sophi Lamigeon and Blandine Le Guennec.



Pam Plant of the IHA's UK office, centre, with Lucy Hotston of Tarsus Group, left, and Jo Howard of Progressive Housewares.

## Frankfurt Fair Highlights



The Space Master breadbox is the latest addition to **Wesco's** Metal Space collection. With its lean shape, the breadbox fits perfectly on any kitchen counter and comes in eight colours. Distributed in Canada by United Sales & Mktg.



Retro tableware was a top trend at Ambiente this year. A classic look gets a fresh twist with this ceramic collection from **T&G** of Britain. New additions for spring include a garlic jar, baking shaker, pint jug and tea bag caddy in old green or old cream.



Since the fair took place over Valentines' Day, it was only fitting that **Bialetti** promote its heart-shaped Cuore espresso machine. Available in red, black and white, it features a patented 20-bar dispensing system that guarantees perfect extraction for an espresso with a dense, velvety cream. The Cuore also has an electronic system to regulate coffee temperature.



The sleek iZac Cool Coffee Dripper (from **Dkinz**) is designed to 'match the consumer's living space' with a unique form that is also functional. It consists of a water container cap and water holder, a stainless steel needle valve, a coffee can and the iZac server. A special 'balance water container' controls water pressure from the main container, dropping it at regular intervals for maximum flavour extraction. The stylish carafe is made from borosilicate glass that is heat-resistant.



The Spreader Knife Air, designed by **Bosign** of Sweden, minimized the mess on kitchen surfaces during. The design of the handle keeps it raised during use. It's offered in two sizes in solid, bacteria-resistant wood or stainless steel.

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# Record numbers attend sold-out Chicago show

The 2015 International Home + Housewares Show received rave reviews from buyers and sellers. Held in March, the sold-out event featured 2,115 exhibitors from 46 countries and recorded an increase in total buyer attendance from U.S. and international markets.

"The Show kicked off with high attendance on Saturday and the positive buzz continued throughout the exhibit halls until Tuesday," said Phil Brandl, president of the International Housewares Association, which owns and operates the Show.

"The Saturday morning opening is a proven success and was supported by the New Exhibitor Preview event, which allowed 60 new exhibitors to engage with hundreds of buyers and news

media in advance of the official 10 a.m. opening," Brandl adds.

The show also included a series of thought-provoking educational sessions, including keynote programs on the convergence of housewares and giftware, an overview of consumer trends by Tom Mirabile of Lifetime Brands, and former Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney speaking at the annual Industry Breakfast.

In addition, the Innovation Theater offered 21 presentations on social technologies, retail design, branding, intellectual property protection and global lifestyle trends.

The 2016 show will be held March 5th to 8th at McCormick Place. For more information, visit [www.housewares.org](http://www.housewares.org).



Celebrities at the Lakeside Centre included Sarah Ferguson, the Duchess of York (shown above with *Home Style* publisher Laurie O'Halloran). She was promoting her "Duchess Discoveries" line of small appliances through Tristar Products. She claims the Xcelerator fusion juicer was a big factor in her recent weight loss.



Celeb trainer Harley Pasternak was on hand at the Salton booth to demonstrate the company's power blender which bears his name. He's shown above with Salton's Jason Hutton, right.

This year's Housewares Charity Foundation 18th annual gala on March 9th raised more than \$2.3 million for charity. Proceeds from the event, held at Chicago's Navy Pier during the show, benefited The Breast Cancer Research Foundation, the HCF's legacy charity, along with Save the Children, an organization that invests in childhood every day, in times of crisis and for the future. This year's gala honoured Richard Baker, governor and executive chairman of Hudson's Bay Company, and Brian Kelley, CEO, Keurig Green Mountain, as Humanitarians of the Year.

## Vendors honoured for innovation

Thirteen housewares suppliers were honored as winners of the IHA Innovation Awards in Chicago. The winners in each category were announced on the first day of the Show. They winners include:

- Bath + Personal Care: **simplehuman**, Adjustable Shower Caddy
- Cleaning: **FusionBrands**, Wave Rack
- Cook + Bakeware: **Frieling USA**, BLACK CUBE Cookware
- Floor + Carpet Care: Techko Maid, SuperMaid
- Home Décor + Gifts: **Paint Handy**, Paint Handy
- Home Organization + Storage: **YouCopia**, StoraStack
- Household Electrics + Home Environment: **Miro**, CleanPot
- Kitchen Electrics: **Boyd Coffee Company**, Brazen Connected 8-Cup Brew System by Behmor
- Kitchen Hand Tools + Cutlery: **IMCG**, Butter Mill
- Kitchenware: **Bruer**, Cold Bruer
- Personal Care + Home Healthcare: **Crane USA**, Mini Travel Humidifier
- Pet Products: **DOMO Elektro**, Dog Biscuit Maker
- Tabletop: **Metrokane**, Rabbit Push Muddler

In addition, more than 500 products were entered in the IHA Innovation Awards competition. Three suppliers were winners of the **gia** Global Innovation Awards for product innovation. They include:

**Best Collection Design:**

**THAT! for Heat THAT!**

**Best Product Design:**

**Eva Solo for Digital Kitchen Scale**

**Joseph Joseph for Can-Do Can Opener**

**THAT! For Scoop THAT!**

**Martin M. Pegler Award**

**for Best Booth Design:**

**Sage Vertical Gardens**

# Chicago Show Highlights



## A stroll down memory lane

Ford Nixon of Nixon Agencies Alberta (left) was delighted to visit the Chicago show with his father, Keith Nixon. Keith, who started his career selling baby safety tables in the 1950s, retired in 2004 at the age of 75. He joined the Weil Company in B.C. in 1980 where he carved out a new territory on the west coast until the company closed down in 1994. He then launched his own sales agency where he represented brands such as Wusthof.

## Chicago chef demos new Microplane tools

Members of the media were introduced to the latest new products from Microplane at a special event held on the Sunday afternoon of the show. The company's CEO, Chris Grace, addressed the audience (below) and introduced executive chef Joseph Heppel (right) of Chicago's Oak & Char restaurant, who demonstrated Microplane's super-sharp hand-held graters and cutting tools.



The Groupe SEB Canadian sales and marketing team (at the Krups exhibit) included, left to right, Rick Simpson, Dan Laing, Jasmin Dugal, Maggie Bettinson, Humaira Lasi-Kassam, Noel Gallegos, Amanda Georgakis and Alex Cheung.

## Housewares & giftware: a perfect partnership

As the retail and supplier communities search for ways to engage and inspire consumers, the convergence of housewares and giftware products will continue and likely increase in the years ahead, according to a panel of retailers and suppliers at the 2015 housewares show. The group spoke during the keynote presentation, *How Housewares and Giftware Are Coming Together...And Loving It*.

The panel included gift retailer Mary Liz Curtin of Leon & LuLu; Gary Schermann of Creative Co-Op; housewares designer Sid Ramnarace of Savora/Lifetime Brands; and housewares retailer Martha Nading of The Extra Ingredient. Warren Shoulberg of *Gifts & Decorative Accessories* and *HFN*, served as moderator.

According to Shoulberg, research indicates that stores that sell housewares are growing their gift businesses and vice versa.

There's also been movement to elevate the design of traditional housewares products into products that feel more like a gift than a functional staple.

"We all want to cook," agreed Nading, "but often times, what we really do is assemble it." That opens the door for more unique items to help prep and serve food and drinks, and decorative items for the kitchen, serving areas and tables.

## World's largest measuring cup



World Kitchen officially marked the 100-year anniversary of the Pyrex brand with the unveiling of the World's Largest Measuring Cup on March 8. The cup (which holds 3,000 cups!) was unveiled during an anniversary celebration at the booth which featured a toast by Kris Malkoski, North American president of World Kitchen, and Guinness World Record adjudicator Philip Robertson who made the proclamation on site. As part of the anniversary, a line of limited edition Pyrex products were launched at the show.

# Chicago Show Highlights

## Celebrity chefs keep retail visitors entertained



An exciting line-up of chefs got cooking in Chicago, with local favourite, Rick Bayless, leading the way, above. Paula Deen, above right returned after a two-year absence to tell the audience about her plans for the New Paula Deen Network. (Deen was able to purchase her old shows from The Food Network and will air some of them as 'vintage episodes'.) After she was embroiled in a racial controversy, many retailers abandoned her branded products but she remained very popular with online customers. Meyer reintroduced the Paula Deen cookware line in Chicago with 10 open stock items and a 15-piece set. The Pioneer Woman, Ree Drummond, also made an appearance, right.

## Lifestyle forecaster Tom Mirabile explores coming trends

In order to innovate and succeed in today's complex marketplace, housewares manufacturers need to focus their strategy, listen to the consumer, deliver more value, enable creativity and experience and engage consumers in new ways, IHA's lifestyle trend forecaster Tom Mirabile told show attendees.

"You have to ask yourself: 'Am I just putting a product out on the market or out on my store floor? Or am I enabling people to live the kind of lives they want to lead?'" Mirabile told a packed crowd at his seminar "Back to Basics: The Essentials of Success." Mirabile is also senior vice president, global trend and design at Lifetime Brands.

Pulling together insights from the worlds of fashion, television, restaurants, retail, housing, social media and much more, Mirabile shared top lifestyle trends and key opportunities for the housewares industry.

One such trend is the increase in both multi-generational and single households. The marriage rate is at its lowest point in over a century. The majority of Americans over age 16 are now single and 40% of weddings are for older consumers who are remarrying.

In addition, shopping is increasingly an omni-channel experience. "The average consumer has about 10 different touch points for every purchasing decision, meaning they're looking it up online, they're seeing it in the store, they're seeing an ad or reading a magazine," he explained. "Yet online purchases only represent 5% of all retail spending in the U.S. Even among shoppers who do that, 77% still go to a bricks and mortar store to make an actual purchase." That gives re-

tailers tremendous opportunities to engage consumers, share knowledge about products, and influence spending behavior.

It's a myth that Generation Y only shops online, he said. They actually love to shop retail, especially in an interactive environment where different items are grouped together. However, it's important to keep in mind that many in Generation Y are still defining their style, are more sensitive to price and are generally design savvy.

Generation X is largely the family generation and they are more focused on trading up or making their lives more efficient. They are looking for opportunities to improve their personal and their family's well-being, increase connectivity and take part in experiences.

Mirabile said it's also beneficial to look at generational commonalities: a desire for global stewardship, interest in health and wellness, a shift in trust from brand-generated content to consumer-generated content, a search for "the good life" (a back to basics approach to family, friends, home and life), thoughtful consumption, life balance goals and a desire for products personalized to themselves.

The omni-channel environment gives retailers opportunities to engage with their customers in new ways. Yet according to the 2015 Insight Survey conducted by Mirabile for IHA, social media is still an under-utilized resource in the housewares industry. Only 16% of respondents were fully invested in social media; 64% said their social media plans were somewhat strategized but not fully executed and 20% said they had no strategy at all.

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# Canada Night 2015

Always a highlight of the International Home + Housewares Show, Canada Night in Chicago attracted a diverse range of buyers, retailers, vendors and sales agents this year. Held on Sunday, March 8th at the InterContinental Hotel, the annual event drew a crowd of close to 300. It's organized by a group of housewares industry sponsors and managed by the Canadian Hardware & Housewares Manufacturers Association.



Left to right: Nicol Sterling, Bill Minna and Cathy Brugnone of The Shopping Channel, Taylor Simms-Brown of Jascor, Wendy Pos-Cerveira of TSC and Chris Shipton of Jascor.



Chris Everett of United Sales & Marketing, left, with Carol Steele and Jami Steele of Cayne's Super Housewares and Gervais Jurchuk of Sensio.



Representing Hamilton Beach, from left to right: Louise Sauve-Nicholls, Eric Beam, Angela Timewell, David Holden and Kelly Westlake.



Warren May of Sterilite is flanked by Lyne Vinet of Living Home Solutions, left, and Cathie Logan of Libbey, right.



Sherrie Lawson of Trudeau, left, with Tori Schofield of Linen Chest.



Kelly Duffy, left, and husband Chris Meyrick, far right, of On Route, with Tom Bogart and Jill Wilcox of Jill's Table in London, Ontario.



John Newton of Norpro, left, with Fred Pritchard and Howard Goldstein of Golda's Kitchen and Brigitte Nielsen of Everywhere Global.



Paul Pogor of United Sales & Marketing, left, with Shannon Dameron and Christina Bono of Today's Bride Magazine and Dave Simmons of Jarden.





Craig Hamilton of Trudeau, left, with Lyne Vinet of Living Home Solutions and Vince Menchella of iQ Living in Toronto.



Evan Feldman of the Accent Fairchild group is shown with Deana Creglia, co-president of the Lifetime Brands division.



Richard Filteau of Stokes/Fenton Gourmet, left, with Charles Bertrand of CAB Marketing.



Richard Koskiniemi and Marlene Koskiniemi, centre, owners of The Kitchen Nook, with daughter Mariah Koskiniemi.

Wendy Hanson of Neatfreak, left, visits with Angelo Carreira of Loblaw, Chris Everett of United Sales & Marketing and Tom Crosby of Neatfreak, far right.



Pierre-Etienne Codere and Sophie Paquin, left, of Rona, with Kathleen Bray, right, of Accent.



Fontaine Wong of Ming Wo in Vancouver chats with Trevor Kidd of Browne Co.

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# Sylvio LaMattina

National Sales Manager, Danesco, Montreal



As the eldest son of Italian immigrants, Sylvio LaMattina learned to appreciate the importance of food and family. Growing up in Montreal (his parents were both born in Palermo, Italy, but didn't meet until they arrived in Canada), he was an industrious young man who worked several part time jobs. It was while working as a dishwasher at a busy restaurant during high school in the 1980s that Sylvio first realized he was destined to work in the culinary world.

After graduation, he joined the restaurant full time as a line cook with the goal of one day becoming head chef. By 1994, when his parents retired to Florida, Sylvio was well on his way to his goal. At just 24, he was already a chef at a popular restaurant on Montreal's West Island. But sadly, four years later his father was diagnosed with cancer. Sylvio and his brother dropped everything to be by his side. They were with him when he took his last breath in 1998, after which Sylvio returned to Montreal with a heavy heart.

Thinking perhaps it was time to try something new, he took a sales job in the promotion industry, selling golf shirts, key chains and other premium items. Personable and approachable, with a calm, reassuring manner, Sylvio found he was well suited to sales.

"Selling was completely new to me but I liked the challenge," he recalls. He quickly worked his way up from customer service to inside sales and finally to outside sales. Then in 2008 he got a call from an old family friend, Bill Ferguson. Bill was president of Danesco, one of Canada's top housewares distributors, and the company was looking to expand into the premium/incentive business. He wanted Sylvio to head up the new division and Sylvio, now married (to Buffy) with two daughters, was ready to move up to a bigger company. With his background as a chef, he was particularly intrigued by the company's culinary product line-up.

Over the next year, Sylvio tried his best to get the new division off the ground, but promotion can be a finicky business and he quickly realized it would never be a big part of Danesco's revenue. He enjoyed the job,

but was open to new opportunities when, at the end of 2009, he was offered the one he had always been waiting for. A friend wanted Sylvio to become a partner with him in a trendy new Montreal bistro called Bobo's.

Intrigued by the idea of being an actual partner, Sylvio had conveniently forgotten the crazy pace of the restaurant business. As co-owner, he was on site seven days a week and his children complained they never saw their dad. Sylvio quickly realized his mistake. Fortunately, one of his best customers at the restaurant had been Bill Ferguson, who came to his rescue a second time in January of 2011. Bill agreed to take Sylvio back on at Danesco as a 'booking analyst'. He was charged with the task of overseeing bookings and buying plans with major retail chains.

At the time, Rose Muhr was national sales manager. When she left Danesco a year later, 42-year-old Sylvio took over her position, demonstrating how much confidence Bill had in someone with fairly limited sales experience.

Nervous but determined to succeed, Sylvio rose to the challenge, quickly endearing himself to Danesco's nine sales reps, most of whom were much older and had been selling to retailers for decades.

Initially, Sylvio was not sure what he could offer these experienced reps so he did what he does best – he listened. "I didn't want to be a dictator and tell them how to do their job," he says. "I wanted to be their support system, their resource if they needed help. I didn't push myself on them, I learned from them and it has worked out well."

That would be an understatement. As veteran sales rep Gail Hough explains it: "If you could describe the characteristics of the perfect boss, you would be describing Sylvio. He is wonderful to work for."

Though he's known as a 'calming influence' in the office, Sylvio is also very competitive and willing to do whatever is necessary to keep customers happy. Quebec sales rep Manon Lapointe says "he is always available if we need an answer and he knows how to solve problems calmly and quickly. I just hope he stays until I retire, which won't

be for another 20 years!"

With 19 brands in Danesco's portfolio, including Joseph Joseph, OXO, Cole & Mason, and Durobor, Sylvio feels the diversity of their products is what gives the company its competitive edge. He also admits it can be challenging at times, but credits his chef's training for helping him keep everything organized.

"There's *nothing* more stressful than working a Friday night shift in a packed restaurant," he says with a laugh. "The senior chef yells a lot, the pressure is intense and you have to be very strong to survive. Retailing is tough, that's for sure, but if you can make it in the restaurant business, you can make it anywhere."

The chef experience also taught him how to work effectively with different personalities, while his mentor, Bill Ferguson, taught him to believe in himself and his decisions. Though Bill left Danesco a couple of years ago, Brigitte Roy, the new president, is just as enamored of Sylvio's management skills.

"He has a winning attitude and is very easy to work with," she says. "We're very fortunate to have him on our team."

Working mostly with smaller independent retailers, Sylvio is dismayed by how many stores are closing, but he's amazed at the dedication of those who survive. "It incredible how hard these retailers work and to see their dedication and drive, after all they've been through, is so inspiring to me."

An eternal optimist, he feels the passion of these store owners is what will help them thrive in the years ahead. So many of them have become like family members and Sylvio wouldn't have it any other way. Though he enjoyed the restaurant business, he really loves his job at Danesco. So do his daughters, Samantha and Julia, who are thrilled to finally have their dad home for dinner every night." 🐾



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