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Canada's Housewares Magazine

May 2017

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Contents



We visit the owners of idrinkcoffee.com in Milton, Ontario, on page 24



21



24

Features

- 24 Catering to the coffee connoisseur**
When he couldn't find a good quality, traditional espresso maker, coffee lover Slawek Janicki decided to fill a void in the market by opening idrinkcoffee.com, offering a huge selection for both consumers and commercial customers.
- 44 Frankfurt Fair provides first signs of spring**
Attendance from Canada was up significantly at Ambiente in February as retailers hope to be the first catch the hottest spring housewares trends.
- 48 Housewares show attracts international crowd**
This year the focus was on the Smart home at McCormick Place in Chicago. We bring you all the highlights from the show floor, the *gia* awards and Canada Night.
- 58 Necessity leads to a new mother's invention**
We salute the entrepreneurial spirit of Kim Cole, inventor of The Gleener.



46

New Product Reviews

- 30 Coffeemakers and Espresso Machines**
- 38 Bakeware, Cake Pans and Decorating Accessories**
- 40 Cleaning Products and Floor Care**



54

Departments



30

6
Calendar of Events

8
Opening Lines

10
People In The News

12
News in Review

17
Trend Tracking

21
Hall of Fame Luncheon

57
Advertisers Index

58
Entrepreneurial Spirit



42

On our cover



Nordic Ware's Heritage Bundt Pan is one of several new items available in luscious metallic tones, including gold.

May/June 2017
Volume 28 • Number 3

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PRINTED BY
Lowe Martin Group
Ottawa, ON

HOME STYLE is published
six times a year by
Lorell Communications Inc.
146 Cavendish Court
Oakville, ON L6J 5S2

www.homestylemag.ca

Canadian Publication Mail Sales Product
Agreement No. 40011823

Canadian Home Style Magazine is a registered
trademark of **Lorell Communications Inc.** The
magazine is distributed on a controlled basis to
4,000 Canadian housewares buyers, retailers,
vendors, and others related to the industry.
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Offered on a limited basis only to
qualified recipients in the Canadian
housewares industry. Contact Laurie
O'Halloran at 905-338-0799 for details.
Others are directed to the digital edition
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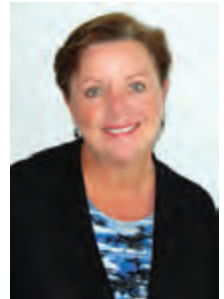


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Opening Lines

Let's create some buzz

Where else but in the Canadian housewares industry would you find a group of competitors coming together to produce a social event for their customers in another country— and keep it going for 68 years? That's Canada Night in Chicago, and the reason it's so special is because, even after seven decades, no one person or company owns this event. It is run as a team effort by a rotating group of volunteers and supported financially by 29 industry vendors with Maureen Hizaka of the CHHMA as our hard-working organizer. It is a unique evening and I am so proud to act as chair because it reinforces what I have always known to be true: there is no better industry than housewares and I am so lucky to be a part of it.



The collective force of our little community has become even more evident now that I'm involved with a new group called "Housewares in Hall 7". Comprised of key housewares exhibitors at the Toronto Gift Fair, this group is still in its infancy but the combined enthusiasm of these industry leaders is incredible.

It all started in Frankfurt three years ago. Housewares vendors were not happy with the gift fair and an impromptu meeting was held with Jacques Dubuc of Trudeau and Daniel Oehy of Swissmar taking the lead. Talks continued at the spring shows and into 2016. But by then, several top exhibitors had pulled out of the show, including Browne, Fox Run, Microplane and Groupe SEB (All-Clad).

Last January, knowing something had to be done to protect what was left of the housewares section, Daniel teamed up with Brigitte Roy of Danesco, Anne-Marie Trudeau of Trudeau and myself in an effort to rally the troops. An early morning meeting was held with a dozen exhibitors and it was decided that, with the support of CanGift, we'd work together to energize Hall 7, starting with the August show.

Through regular conference calls, sub-committees have been established with two goals: to enhance the networking opportunities with an off-site social event and to improve the retail customer's overall experience on the show floor. Of course, we also hope to entice those companies that left to consider returning to Toronto and re-establishing themselves as part of our Canadian housewares community.

It's only been four months but witnessing this grass roots group in action has renewed my own enthusiasm for our industry. To see the presidents of Canada's top companies – some of the busiest people I know – taking down the minutes from our meetings or looking up the contact names and email addresses for fellow exhibitors in order to create a master list is nothing short of amazing. Out in the field, they are all fighting for the same retail dollar yet here they are, united in their desire to make a positive contribution.

I am confident this concerted effort will make a difference. It has to. The Toronto Gift Fair is the only trade show we have left in our industry yet too many retailers are opting to skip the August show in favour of Chicago. That's a shame, and it's something I hope our committee can change by offering a special event that brings our industry together – buyers and sellers, competitors and co-workers – to network face to face in a comfortable, relaxed environment. (Be sure to visit the "Housewares in Hall 7" Facebook page for regular updates.)

Our industry revolves around products that make life easier. But for me, it's the people selling those products who make life interesting. We need to talk and, more importantly, we need to listen to you and your needs as a retailer. By organizing a Housewares Happy Hour that is funded by a committed group of exhibitors, with free admission for retail customers, we are taking the first step towards a better show experience for everyone.

– Laurie O'Halloran

(If you are interested in helping the committee or sponsoring the Monday night Housewares Happy Hour please contact me at laurie@homestylemag.ca, Daniel Oehy at danielo@swissmar.com, Brigitte Roy at royb@danescocoinc.com or Anne-Marie Trudeau at am.trudeau.com)

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• Lodge Cast Iron has announced several new initiatives, including the appointment of a new CEO and building a new foundry. **Henry Lodge** has been promoted to CEO, succeeding **Bob Kellermann**, who has been CEO since 2001. Kellermann will serve as Lodge CEO emeritus until he retires in December. Henry Lodge will retire at the end of 2019. After Lodge's retirement, the company will have its first ever non-Lodge/Kellermann family members in senior management positions. Lodge is distributed in Canada by Counseltron.

• **Stan Everingham**, the former president and son of the founder of Everingham Brothers, died on April 4th of cardiac arrest at age 72. Stan was a long time advertiser in *Home Style* and during the 1980 and '90s he ran one of Canada's leading cookware manufacturing plants in Brampton, Ontario. He retired several years ago and relocated to Thailand.

I just read your editorial in the March issue. Thank you for your kind words praising our mentor and the "down to earth man" that was Walter Hachborn.

I'm in my third year with Home Hardware Stores and had the pleasure of knowing Mr. Hachborn. I remember how he would stride along the streets of downtown St-Jacobs, bowtie and all, making sure to visit the shops he passed by on his way to the corporate head office on Henri Street.

This big-hearted Christian man has inspired me and will remain a role model for many.

Christian Girard, Dealer Relations, Home Hardware Stores

Being retired from the mainstream housewares Industry means not always staying current on the latest trends and events therein. Thankfully *Home Style* always brings me right up to date.

I was saddened, but nonetheless ap-

preciative, to read your editorial on the passing of Walter Hachborn in March. Your portrayal of him was accurate and excellent. He indeed was a business trailblazer and a superb role model. Walter was a true icon of Canadian business who set the standard high for fairness and respect. Sadly, those fundamentals are lacking in today's hyper competitive business mindset.

Walter demonstrated how competition, cooperation and consideration could co-exist successfully. Hopefully his value system will be his legacy.

Hugh McDonald, (retired from Thermos)

The March issue of *Home Style* was terrific. It takes a special person to write such a memorable and thoughtful editorial on a true gentleman and industry icon. We all loved representing Walter Hachborn and his dedicated Home Hardware dealers.

Attending the bi-annual St. Jacob Show was always a highlight in my yearly itinerary.

Wally McTaggart, (retired from Kaz)

I just wanted to tell you what a great job you did on the article about Walter Hachborn in the March issue. I have worked at Home Hardware for a long time and was blessed to work for Walter Hachborn. He taught us about dedication, loyalty and a strong work ethic. We would do anything for that man.

He would come in at night and walk through the warehouse, talking to everyone. If the warehouse was behind, Walter would help out by packing orders or loading trucks himself. And he made a point of knowing your name and remembering it.

There are many long term employees here who have wonderful memories of Walter. He was a man who walked the walk and talked the talk. He truly did invest in people. I am grateful to have had him as a role model in my life and try to follow his example with my staff.

I have saved your article and will treasure it for years to come.

Barb King

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E-Commerce Update

Home Style to sponsor eRetailer conference

The disruptive nature of eCommerce is being felt right across the retail landscape. Fueled by a need for the housewares and home improvement sector to develop winning e-commerce and omnichannel strategies, the Second Annual Home Improvement eRetailer Summit will be presented September 13th to 15th at the Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel in Orlando, Florida. *Home Style* is proud to be a media sponsor of this worthwhile event and is urging all housewares retailers who sell online, or are thinking about selling online, to consider the many benefits of attending this educational conference.

With a new date and new location, the Summit will provide a dynamic forum for suppliers to get face to face with North America's leading eRetail buyers and executives. The purpose is simple: to help retailers develop winning e-commerce strategies through mutual cooperation and strategizing.

In 2016, the event provided a groundbreaking forum for cutting-edge eRetailers to meet, share ideas, and connect with forward-thinking suppliers eager to increase their online business in a series of exclusive one-on-one meetings.

The education portion of the Summit has expanded even further this year. The presenters already confirmed for this year's Summit include: Al Meyers, of retail consultancy Kalypso; Elizabeth Ragone, Director of Digital Commerce, for HSN.com; and Steve Greenspon, CEO of Honey-Can-Do International.

According to recent research, even though Canada's biggest online retailers are growing faster than their U.S. counterparts, competition is at an all-time high given that close to half of Canadian consumers' online purchases are made at foreign retail sites.

The report from E-Tail Canada found that 62% of Canadian retailers saw the value of their online orders rise between 2015 and 2016, and 71% saw their conversion rate grow — the number of initial customer clicks that result in an actual purchase, as opposed to browsing.

That's positive news for retailers



given that Canadians are expected to spend \$39 billion a year online by 2019, accounting for about 9.5% of all retail purchases, according to estimates from Forrester Research.

Thirty-seven per cent of Canadian retailers surveyed currently offer customers so-called "cross-channel" returns or exchanges, allowing customers to return items in stores that they bought online, while eight per cent were in the process of implementing the capability and 13 per cent planned to do so in the next two years.

Similarly, 31 per cent of retailers show web customers real-time store inventory online, while 15 per cent were in the process of implementing the technology and 22 were planning to introduce it within the next two years.

Statistics Canada reported that Canadian e-commerce sales were \$19.2 billion in 2016, with about 60 per cent of the purchases made from domestic retailers and 40 per cent from foreign retailers.

For information contact Sonya Ruff Jarvis at sonya@retailersummit.com.

In late March Amazon sealed a deal to buy Souq.com for an undisclosed amount, besting developer Emaar Malls' \$800 million bid for the Dubai-based online retailer. The Middle East is catching up with the rest of the world when it comes to e-commerce, with Souq.com claiming 23 million monthly visitors.



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Combekk breathes new life into old tracks

It's not often that a truly innovative piece of cookware comes along but the Combekk Dutch Oven is just such a product. Distributed in North America by Browne, this cast iron Dutch Oven is made from 100% recycled cast iron materials, including iron leftover from railroad tracks. It's an interesting eco-friendly approach and those railroad tracks play a key role in the company's cutting edge advertising campaign.

It's the performance of the oven, however, that has won over chefs and retailers who saw the oven at Ambiente in Frankfurt and at the Chicago housewares show. The Combekk comes with

an integrated thermometer to monitor and maintain the perfect temperature during cooking. It allows the cook to control the heat without having to lift the lid, which can impact the cooking process.

The thermometer is made in Italy and is fully sealed so the oven can be submerged in water when cleaning. (It can also be replaced at the Browne service centre by contacting customer service.)

Safe for all stove types, the enameled cookware is produced in Holland and is made with a special forge for a high-quality finish that retains heat and offers uniform heat distribution. (The term 'Dutch Oven' refers to a manufacturing technique where iron is poured into a sand mold. The Dutch invented the technique and Combekk president Mark Suurbier is proud to be the only brand today casting their full range in the Netherlands.)

Trevor Kidd of Browne says "people want to know where their food comes from but rarely do they ask when it comes to their cookware". He believes consumers will be impressed with this opening series ovens because they are using recycled Dutch Rails from the vast rail network in the Netherlands.

He adds that other series that have been hinted at in the future could use materials from old prison bars or bicycles from the Canals in Amsterdam.

"We are very proud and excited that Combekk has chosen Browne to be their partner to bring this product into Canada and the U.S.," says Trevor. "The story behind the product is amazing and that story comes through in the product itself. I have spent time with the team in the Netherlands and visited the factory. This company is definitely committed to bringing something different and of the highest quality to the market.

Combekk began selling in the Netherlands in early 2016 and today it's available in 10 countries across Europe plus North America, where it was introduced last April at Williams Sonoma in the U.S. and Hudson's Bay in Canada.



Le Creuset celebrates Canada's birthday

Le Creuset Canada has unveiled a limited edition Maple Leaf Round French Oven in recognition of Canada's 150th birthday. In honour of the country's year of Confederation, a limited number of the pans have been produced.

The 5.3-litre oven is hand-enamelled in Le Creuset's iconic hue, cherry red. The Maple Leaf mould was used to produce 1,867 units before being destroyed, forever preserving this moment in Canada's history.

This collector's item will be available across Canada beginning in May 2017. Each stainless steel knob is individually numbered in sequential order leading up to 1867. It's packaged in a limited edition gift box with a display medalion engraved with the maple leaf, anniversary years of 1867 and 2017 and the Le Creuset logo is included.

Tramontina expands U.S. cookware facility

Tramontina U.S. Cookware recently acquired a 256,000-square-foot building adjacent to its existing Manitowoc, Wisconsin-based cookware manufacturing facility. At a groundbreaking ceremony on March 21st it was announced that the company plans to build an additional 8,600-square-foot head office and employee cafeteria.

"We are very excited about these projects, as they will expand our production capabilities and better serve our 200 employees while providing additional local jobs," says Antonio Galafassi, president and CEO of Tramontina USA.

The construction is expected to be completed in late August 2017.



Above: Combekk president Mark Suurbier, left, with Trevor Kidd of Browne, the North American distributor of the line.

Below: The Combekk Dutch Oven is crafted from recycled railroad tracks and features a thermometer on the front.



OXO products (distributed by Danesco) were big winners this spring. The GG Hand Held Spiralizer was named Best in Category at the 2017 Housewares Design Awards. The GG Egg Poacher Set, the chrome Fogless Mirror and the Slide-out Scrubber all received Solutions awards at Ambiente in Frankfurt.

Newell buys and sells

Newell Brands has completed the sale of Rubbermaid's storage division to United Solutions. The terms of the acquisition include a five-year license for the use of the Rubbermaid name in the category. The consumer storage business represents less than 5% of total Rubbermaid sales. Newell Brands will retain all other Rubbermaid-branded products.

In addition, Newell has completed the acquisition of Sistema Plastics, the New Zealand-based manufacturer and marketer of food storage containers.

Bosch partners with chef Curtis Stone

Home appliance supplier Bosch and chef Curtis Stone have entered into a partnership that will inspire consumers to prepare easy, healthy meals at home.

Stone will create exclusive recipes for Bosch that are focused on seasonally driven meals to inspire healthy living. The partnership debuted on April 3rd with a Live broadcast on Bosch's Facebook page.

Throughout the partnership, Stone will also contribute to the Bosch blog, A Modern Haven, lending his expertise and creativity to consumers who seek quality, simplicity and perfect results.

"We are excited to partner with chef Curtis Stone, who believes that cooking, and post-meal cleanup, should be easy and enjoyable." says Anja Prescher, of Bosch home appliances. "Together, we will inspire consumers to step into the kitchen to prepare simple meals."



Hamilton Beach introduced its newest product line in Chicago with the launch of the CHI range of premium irons and professional garment care appliances. Above, Laurie Klein demonstrates the new CHI clothes steamer at the March show.

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There's no stopping growth at Dollarama

Dollarama's quarterly profit beat analysts' estimates as the average amount customers spent at its stores increased. The Montreal-based company said the rise in sales was aided by a 7.8% increase in the average checkout bill.

Dollarama, which increased its price ceiling to \$4 last year, said total sales also benefited from newer products offered in the fourth quarter.

The retailer also revised its long-term target to 1,700 stores from 1,400 stores, over the next 10 years across Canada.

As well, the retailer announced it would accept credit cards as a method of payment in all of its stores from the second quarter of fiscal 2018.

Same-store sales rose 5.8% in the quarter ending Jan. 29, compared with a 7.9% rise a year earlier. Sales jumped 11.5% to \$854.5-million, trumping analysts' average estimate of \$846.9-million.

Men starting to shop just like women

Men are outpacing women in several behavioral categories when it comes shopping, and that includes the grocery aisle. And where they are not outpacing women, they are narrowing the gap.

From list preparation to bargain hunting, more men are displaying the qualities retailers equate with the traditional female shopper. The average male spends nearly \$300 a month on groceries, and \$85 on clothing. Both figures exceed these metrics for women.

Here are some male shopping habits that retailers should pick up on:

- More than half of surveyed men (52%)

Williams-Sonoma's e-commerce business contributed more than half its revenue, with 51.1% of total sales coming from online shoppers in 2016. As a result, the company's primary investment options this year include 3D product visualization and increased digital marketing.

say they write up a list before hitting the grocery store, according to the Food Marketing Institute. Yet just 42% of men actually take inventory of their needs before making that list. A similar discrepancy exists among women, who are more likely to do both.

- They may not like asking for directions, but more than a quarter of men younger than 35 (27%) are influenced by the sales staff when making clothing purchases. That compares with just 18% of men older than 35.
- When preparing to shop, 41% of men said they collect and bring coupons and 49% peruse circulars beforehand.

West Elm takes a hotel approach

West Elm, the furniture and accessories retailer, plans to open hotels in five cities beginning next year. Already, a Brooklyn warehouse has been converted to office and design space for a new type of collaboration between the hospitality and retailing industries. It's there that West Elm, a division of Williams-Sonoma, is creating model hotel rooms filled with their own products. Room furnishings will be similar to those in stores, but are expected to be more durable to withstand repeated cleaning.

The hotel business is diversifying. More travelers are seeking homey surroundings at Airbnb and HomeAway and turning to boutique hotels for their non-conformity. At the same time, traffic has declined at retailers with brick and mortar stores, forcing them to look for new ways to sell their wares.

The retail paradox that is Costco

Costco breaks all of the Retail rules but those contrarian ways are the key reason the company enjoys staggering success in Canada, where Costco has 94 warehouses, more than 10 million members and sales that hit about \$22 billion last year. Apparently, by flouting all the basic retail commandments Costco taps into consumers' deepest psychological

impulses about security, scarcity, clarity and fear. And that includes the membership fee. Costco Canada's members renew at a rate of 90% and membership worldwide grew 7% last year.

Another way Costco taps into consumer psychology is by offering a limited selection. Two decades ago they used to sell 5,500 SKUs. That number has been whittled down to 3,500. (Walmart and Canadian Tire stores carry about 150,000 SKUs each.) Studies show that offering consumers too much choice can be a deterrent to buying.

Another Costco tactic is an ever-shifting product assortment. About 55% of Costco's assortment changes every few weeks. Moving merchandise around or offering it for a limited time taps into the scarcity principle: people are more motivated to buy something if the assortment appears to be temporary for fear they might miss out entirely.

Canada is Costco's largest international division, representing 43% of the warehouse count outside the U.S. Costco Canada only has 20% of the stores as the U.S. has but same-store sales climbed 6% last year versus 2% in the U.S. One easy explanation for Costco's Canadian success is that it does not have a direct competitor like Sam's Club.

Costco Canada consistently scores very well on consumer trust scores. In 2016 consumers named Costco the top retailer in terms of customer satisfaction, with an overall score of 91 out of 100. In addition, Costco has one of the most liberal return policies in the industry, a consistent employee base and a reputation for carrying high-quality products.

Amazon sold around \$7 billion in housewares to US shoppers in 2016, up 33% from the previous year, according to *One Click Retail*. The analytics firm estimates that items including bakeware and small electric appliances accounted for 15% of the retailer's sales growth last year.

TruServ's Winnipeg facility to close

One of the largest and oldest continuously operating distribution centres in Winnipeg is about to shut down, ending a 50-year legacy in servicing small-town Western Canadian retailers. The 500,000-square-foot TruServ Canada head office and distribution centre, which was built in 1967, is set to close by the end of the year, putting about 200 people out of work.

Although the TruServ Canada signage has remained in place, for the past two years it has been the headquarters of Ace Canada.

Lowe's Canada is the current owner of the business. The company said in a release that it is "investing resources to support and grow the entire independent retailer network and to further leverage the Ace dealer support program."

Lowe's became the owner after it acquired Rona last year. Rona bought TruServ in 2010, and in 2011 changed the name of the independently owned retail stores that the centre serviced from True Value to TRU Hardware. Subsequently, Rona acquired the master licence for Ace Hardware in Canada in 2014 and, starting in 2015, TRU Hardware stores changed their names to Ace Hardware.

Lowe's Canada will consolidate its distribution operations in Calgary, Mississauga, Ontario, and Boucherville, Quebec.

The roots of the Winnipeg operation go back to the Macleod-Stedman chain that went bankrupt in 1992. The U.S. chain Cotter & Company acquired it then and in 1999 changed its name to TruServ, which also created a brand of small town convenience stores called V & S.

In the past, it has hosted semi-annual trade show markets that brought about 1,000 people in to Winnipeg.

Today, the Winnipeg distribution centre fills orders for 71 Ace Hardware stores and 92 independent retailers with a hardware focus. Those 163 stores will continue to be serviced by the company from its other distribution centres. But there are about 365 other independent retailers who will be forced to find an alternative source of product, though most didn't buy much volume from the distribution centre any more.



Las Vegas Market will showcase housewares this summer

Gourmet expansion continues at a record pace at Las Vegas Market, with 400+ gourmet resources presented across its 40 showroom floors and in The Pavilions, which showcase gift and home décor temporary exhibitors. Set for July 30th to August 3rd, Las Vegas Market identified the gourmet category as one of its strategic building blocks. The show launched a gourmet housewares presentation on C11 – the industry's most dynamic new destination for gift-oriented housewares, tabletop and specialty food – in the summer of 2015. Since that time, the

floor has grown exponentially to nearly 300 gourmet lines, with sold-out status expected by the end of 2017.

In addition, Las Vegas Market is expanding its partnership with two key housewares buying groups, the Gourmet Catalog Buying Group and the Housewares Training & Information Group (HTI) and will host the Housewares Design Awards.

Las Vegas Market is the fastest growing gift and home décor market in the U.S. With a record 4,000+ lines, the Market will feature an incredibly diverse number of resources, including major launches for the bedding industry. Market-exclusive programming includes FIRST LOOK trend forecast displays and *Ahead of the Curve* seminar and tours as well as the Gift for Life "Up on the Roof" Annual Fundraiser.

For more information, visit www.lasvegasmarket.com.



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Chefs forecast up and coming trends

Restaurants Canada's annual Canadian Chef Survey reveals that Canadian craft beer is here to stay. More than 560 chefs across the country participated in the poll, which identified popular menu items (charcuterie, sustainable seafood) and cooking methods (pickling, sous vide), and made predictions for 2017. For the third year running, craft beer was at the top of the list of hot trends.

In honour of Canada's 150th birthday, the chefs were also asked to name "the quintessential Canadian food." The top three responses were maple syrup, poutine and Alberta beef.

The chefs forecasted the "Top 10 Up-and-Comers," which includes ancient grains, non-wheat noodles or pasta, fermenting, culinary cocktails featuring savory ingredients, and putting the focus on vegetables in an increasingly veggie-centric cuisine.

"Trends come and go, but these innovative products are here to stay," says chef Charlotte Langley, culinary curator for RC Show 2017. "Watch for fermented and fresh-to-go options. Seaweed is in, so we can give our oceans a break."

The full list includes:

TOP 10 HOT TRENDS

1. Craft beer/microbrews
2. Food smoking
3. Charcuterie/house-cured meats
4. Sous vide
5. Locally sourced foods (Locavore)
6. Gluten-free/food allergy conscious choices
7. Sustainable seafood
8. International condiments (Sriracha, raita, chimichurri, soy sauce, sambal)
9. Pickling
10. Asian twists on condiments (Sriracha ketchup, kimchi mayo)

Stores are spending a lot of time and money trying out new technologies like touch-screen mirrors and robo-assistants on the floor to get consumers to buy more. But it seems shoppers couldn't care less. Lowe's provides a "Holeroom" that lets customers design spaces with virtual reality goggles. Nordstrom has a chatbot, an automated substitute for a human store assistant, meant to provide shoppers (both online and in-store) with gift ideas during the holidays.

Yet according to a study by GPSopper, just 18% of the more than 1,000 consumers polled think smart mirrors will improve their shopping experience.

With virtual assistants such as Amazon's Echo and Google's Home, only 21% said their technology makes the buying process better from the house.

Maya Mikhailov, a co-founder of GPSopper, works on commerce tools for Crate & Barrel. She explained that, while retailers will fawn over the latest glitzy gadget, shoppers just want to buy stuff as quickly and easily as possible.

Home Hardware targets a younger market

Home Hardware has launched a new brand positioning in an effort to reflect more of its personality and attract younger shoppers.

Working with the creative agency John St., the new positioning is called "Here's How" – aimed at being a reflection of the knowledge and service of the retailer's dealer base, its key competitive advantage, says Rick McNabb, Home Hardware's VP of marketing.

The brand has been using its "Homeowners helping homeowners with expert advice" tagline for about eight years. Along with being a mouthful, it also ran the risk of excluding consumers who aren't homeowners, McNabb says.

"Here's How," on the other hand, is more reflective of its brand personality and speaks better to the millennial audience and a younger demographic.

The retailer is also getting more specific with its Quebec strategy, using the new positioning "Savoir Faire." Previously, its campaigns had been mainly translations of the English advertising, but now it's going with more dedicated creative in a market where its business is underdeveloped.

The new brand positioning is being phased in over the next few months.

Apple stores deliver an 'experience'

Shoppers today are looking for more than just a place to shop. They want experiences more than just "stuff." These changing consumer preferences reward some firms while punishing others, such as Apple.

The wild success of the nearly 500 Apple stores provides lessons for other retailers. At \$5,546 in sales per square foot, Apple sells more goods at retail than any other store in the world. The company has hit upon a formula that sends more than one million visitors per day into their retail locations around the world.

Surveys have shown that putting an Apple store in a mall increases sales 10 percent for all the other retailers.

Loblaws is in expansion mode

Loblaws said Thursday that it plans to open 30 new stores and renovate more than 500 existing stores as it continues to adapt to changes in the industry. The investment includes the continued roll out of its Click & Collect e-commerce, improved health services, and the inclusion of fresh food at select Shoppers Drug Marts.

Loblaws said the moves will invest about \$1.3-billion into the economy and create an estimated 10,000 retail, trade and construction jobs.

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Food firms respond to healthy trends

Packaged food companies changed the recipes of more than twice the amount of products in 2016 compared with the year before in order to meet a growing consumer demand for healthier food.

Companies including Dole, Smuckers and PepsiCo altered 179,600 products to reduce the level of ingredients such as salt, sugar and saturated fat in 2016, up from 84,000 reformulations in 2015, according to a report from the Consumer Goods Forum.

The ingredient removed most often was sodium, cited by 67%, followed by sugar at 61%, and saturated fat at 50%. Conversely, whole grains and vitamins were new ingredients added most often to boost the nutritional profile of food, at 25% and 20%, respectively.

Salt and sugar are the new tobacco in terms of consumer perception. Sales of packaged foods has been tepid in Canada for years, growing at a combined annual rate of 2.4% per annum between 2011 and 2016.

More debt with fewer credit cards

A recent survey shows Canadians used fewer credit cards in 2016 but they racked up more debt on the ones they continued to carry.

The number of open and active credit cards in use by Canadians dropped by

800,000 out of the approximate 43 million on the market. Despite the drop in cards, the average credit card debt per borrower climbed 2.3% from a year ago to \$4,094. The delinquency rate for non-payment of more than 90 days rose 3.2% during the same period to 4.21% overall.

Alberta and Saskatchewan had the largest jump in delinquencies. In Alberta, 4.6% of cards were delinquent in 2016, up 23% from a year earlier, while Saskatchewan rose 22.7% to 3.96% delinquencies during the same period.

The main reason for the drop in credit cards has been origination which was off by 10% in 2016 from 2015. People are loyal to their cards and loyal to their loyalty program

The lenders are mostly competing by creating attractive incentives for cards around loyalty point programs as opposed to reducing actual interest rates which can easily top 20%. Lenders boosted credit card limits by 3% in 2016.

Store flyers still sell

While newspapers are grappling with an ongoing migration of readers from print to digital formats, when it comes to retail store flyers, consumers still maintain a solid grip on paper, claims a group of retailers and flyer distributors. But that could all change in five years as digital flyers become increasingly interactive and localized, attendees heard at the Retail Council of Canada's annual

RAC marketing conference in March.

Aiming to reduce marketing budgets, some of Canada's traditional retailers have invested heavily in digital flyers, most notably Canadian Tire. The company's online sales doubled last year after they mailed out a paper catalogue that interacted with the retailer's mobile app to unlock additional information for shoppers.

Lisa Orpen, vice-president of national and multimedia market sales at publishing and distribution company Metroland Media, says her company distributes more than 4-billion flyers per year in Ontario alone.

And while that number has not dipped in recent years, the dynamics of the flyer mailout cycle have changed: retailers have developed a more targeted distribution list to fewer households, and they are delivering flyers more often now than they did in the past.

That's because flyers work. Orpen says 91% of Canadians still read a grocery flyer each month. Research also suggests consumers are more likely to go shopping after getting a paper flyer.

Retailers agree that paper flyers will have to work in increasing harmony with digital properties in the future, and will need to facilitate the kind of searching consumers typically do on social media: looking up product information and reviews, making price comparisons, and accessing ancillary content that might not come in a traditional flyer.

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Industry Honours

Jacques Gatien is inducted into Hall of Fame



Jacques Gatien, the housewares ‘showman’ and founder of Atlantic Promotions, was inducted into the Industry Hall of Fame at a luncheon presented by the Canadian Hardware & Housewares Association on April 11th in Toronto. Shown above with Vaughn Crofford of the CHHMA, left, and Atlantic CEO Gilles Gosselin, right, Mr. Gatien was honoured along with Stew Valcour of Kent Building Supplies.



Showing their support at the luncheon were, back row, Chris Pavlefski of Atlantic Promotions, Jonathan Cooperman of Canadian Tire and Beatrice Menartowicz of Atlantic Promotions. In the front from Atlantic Promotions, left to right, are Luisa Digenova, Tina Kougias and Melissa Ahsen.

Mergers & Acquisitions

- West Bend Electrics has been acquired by The Legacy Companies. The company will keep its Wisconsin locations and staffing, according to Legacy. West Bend Electrics was established in 1911 while Legacy currently has six manufacturing plants in Florida, Pennsylvania, Georgia, California and China. Financial terms of the acquisition were not disclosed.

- Cornell Capital, a private investment firm, has signed a definitive merger agreement to acquire World Kitchen. According to World Kitchen, a partnership with Cornell will enable the company to build on its heritage in kitchen products, accelerate the next phase of its organic growth, and explore consolidation opportunities.

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Lemon Pie Sundae

PREPARATION 25 minutes
COOKING 10 minutes
COOLING 2 minutes
SERVINGS 8

Lemon topping

1 cup (250 ml) sugar
1 tsp (5 ml) cornstarch
2 eggs
½ cup (125 ml) lemon juice
2 tbsp (30 ml) unsalted butter, melted

Vanilla ice cream

Crumble

Whipped cream

Lemon topping

1 In a saucepan off the heat, combine the sugar and cornstarch. Add the eggs, lemon juice and butter, whisking until smooth. Slowly bring to a boil, stirring constantly with a whisk. Pour into a bowl and let cool. Cover and refrigerate until lukewarm or chilled.

Assembly

2 Place 1 or 2 scoops of ice cream in a sundae bowl. Drizzle with lemon topping. Using a pastry bag fitted with a star tip, garnish with a rosette of whipped cream. Sprinkle with crumble.

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Brew masters



An espresso-loving couple in Milton, Ontario saw a void in the market and decided to fill it by launching a website supported by a physical store that caters specifically to “the coffee enthusiast”

By Laurie O'Halloran

Slawek Janicki is a lifelong lover of good coffee. But 10 years ago, when his children were young, and he and his wife Anna needed a good, strong cup of espresso more than ever, he had trouble finding a retailer who specialized in premium espresso-making equipment. So when he got the chance to launch a brand new business, he knew exactly what he wanted to do, and in 2009 idrinkcoffee.com officially made its debut.

Born in Poland, Slawek moved to Canada with his family when he was just three years old. He grew up in Mississauga, Ontario where he met his future wife, Anna, in elementary school. After studying English Literature and Economics at York University, he and

Anna were married in 2004.

He worked at various sales and marketing positions, and was a partner in a business distributing satellite and cable across North America, when his first child was born in 2005. By the time his second arrived in 2007, Slawek was ready for a career change. When a third party offered to buy his half of the company, he happily accepted and used the buyout money to finance his new coffee equipment business.

“As a coffee enthusiast, I had noticed an absence of good suppliers in Canada,” he says. “I wanted to offer consumers the high-end espresso makers that I had trouble finding.”

With plenty of internet sales experience, he knew he wanted to be an om-

nichannel retailer and started to build the company’s website in 2008. He had leased two buildings for his previous company, one in Mississauga and one in Milton, a growing suburban community about an hour east of Toronto. He kept the Milton location for his new physical store and rented out the other one. In early 2009, both the website and the 2,200-square-foot retail store launched, with coffee as the one and only focus.

“Our goal was simply to bring great tasting coffee to people who truly appreciate it – without any pretension or snobbery,” he explains.

The name ‘idrinkcoffee.com’ perfectly reflected the spirit and nature of his business, but it was already taken so Slawek had to buy the URL from its pre-



Owners Slawek and Anna Janicki have been married for 12 years and have worked together for four years.



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Retail Profile: idrinkcoffee.com

vious owner. And knowing the importance of advertising from his past job, he started promoting idrinkcoffee.com on Google AdWorks from day one.

Located in an industrial complex off one of Milton's main streets, the store got off to a frustratingly slow start. Slawek now admits that buying products was a real learning curve and he made a lot of mistakes at the beginning.

"Initially our stock was all wrong," he says. "We overbought on machines that didn't sell and underbought on the ones that did. I thought we would sell a lot of super automatic machines because they are convenient, fast and clean. But today they represent a small portion of our business because for our customers, the coffee quality is not as good as with a traditional espresso machine."

Over the years, Slawek learned to trust the numbers instead of his gut feelings. He learned what his customers would buy, and what they wouldn't. "The difference between what I thought then and what I know now is huge," he says with a laugh.

With inventory under control, sales started to grow steadily. They added a 4,500-square-foot warehouse and in 2013 Anna joined as office manager.

By July of 2015, idrinkcoffee.com was ready to move down the street to a larger, 13,300-square foot office and warehouse location. The company now employs eight people plus outside contractors and carries over 1,000 skus, from a \$29 Bodum French Press to a \$6000 Electra automatic espresso machine. They also offer grinders, beans and coffee accessories plus a commercial category which now accounts for 20% of the company's total sales.

"We continue to add to our line-up and carry a much larger selection than most of our competitors but it's a paradox," says Slawek. "Too much choice is generally not good because it can paralyze the customer's decision making."

Slawek sources his products from around the world and works mainly with European suppliers, though Breville is one of his top selling brands. He attends the HOST show in Italy every



Initially the store focused primarily on automatic machines but Slawek found that coffee-drinking purists preferred traditional espresso making techniques. Today, commercial machines account for 20% of total sales.





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year as well as the Canadian Coffee and Tea Show and Restaurants Canada.

In addition to dealing with about 50 suppliers, Slawek devotes much of his time to working on the company's website, which is impressive. In addition to the huge product assortment, it features coffee brewing techniques and grinding tips as well as an overview of how coffee beans are grown and harvested.

After eight years in business, Slawek says what they have accomplished is "just a drop in the bucket" compared to the potential in the Canadian coffee-drinking market. Although there have been a few new competitors on the scene in recent years, he says he has "an abundance" mentality and believes there is room for more growth.

"We're in a position where we can expand because we are very strong in fulfilling orders and providing exceptional after-sale service," he says. "We are exploring some new online initiatives to increase sales and we're also considering opening satellite stores in Toronto and possibly western Canada."

Having a physical store to complement the online sales is very important to Slawek. Though he says his generation (he and Anna are both 35) is more comfortable shopping online, some customers still like to have the tactile experience of seeing the product first hand.

"Canadians are not yet very savvy about online buying compared to other countries," says Slawek. "In Britain,

about one quarter of all shopping is done online. In Canada, we're still in the single digits so there is plenty of room for e-commerce expansion.

The main difficulty of selling online in Canada, according to Slawek, is the sheer size of our country. They use FedEx, Canada Post and UPS but it takes longer to ship something to Winnipeg than it does to ship to anywhere in the continental U.S., where it only takes two days. "The distances are too great and we simply can't ship any faster than we do," he says. But the couriers are continually upgrading their services and Slawek is confident the delivery times will be reduced.


Of course, another problem with selling online is that it's a 24/7 job. It never stops, and the Janickis have worked to find balance in their lives. They are both early risers and like to get home early enough to spend evenings with their kids, especially if it involves watching soccer, their favourite sport.

Slawek still loves the entire coffee-making process just as much today. He often spends Saturdays in the store sharing his passion with customers. But he also knows it's time to slowly step back from the business he has built from the ground up. "A company has to be able to run without its owner for it to be worth anything", he says.

With a winning concept and an enterprising attitude, growth is definitely in the future for idrinkcoffee.com. ☕



The 13,300-square-foot head office, store and warehouse in Milton, Ontario carries about 1,000 skus, with most brands sourced directly from Europe.



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Making Coffee

What's new in coffeemakers, espresso machines & accessories

A return to stability in single serve market

By Dave Adamchick, The NPD Group

The Canadian coffeemaker market is quite dynamic. This time last year, the single serve coffee market was rapidly declining, leading the entire coffee segment to decline nearly -7%. As the largest segment in the small kitchen appliance space, it had an outsized impact on the overall market.

This year, in a welcome reversal, we are seeing a return to stability as single serve coffee (market leaders are Keurig, Nespresso's Virtuoline, and Tassimo) with the February 2017 year ending flat in terms dollar growth.

Additionally, the Espresso and Auto Drip segments are showing strong growth. Espresso has grown nearly +24%, and Auto Drip +6%. The NPD Group doesn't track non-electric brewers, but electric coffee grinders are also



up +6% in dollars and +3% in units.

There are a few factors that are impacting sales. In Single Serve, aggressive holiday promotions and low price points drove quite a bit of volume across multiple brands. As a result, average selling price in the category declined \$2.

Espresso's strong growth was driven largely by \$300-\$700 price points and shifting volume to higher end in mass retail. There's a shift to semi-automatic models selling from solo pump units.

In Auto Drip, the \$100+ segment grew +30%, while below this price point grew only +1%. With the upgrade cycle timing and higher price points of single serve, consumer expectations of what price points they are willing to pay for a drip machine are also rising, and manufacturers are shifting their assortment up the feature and finish ladder. The overall return to growth in coffee is a big factor in the +5% overall growth in kitchen electrics as of February 2017.

The sleek new **Nespresso Breville Creatista Plus** offers instantaneous heat up from espresso to froth. This 1600-watt energy-saving machine features a 19 bar pump and three-second heat up time. It also provides automatic microfoam milk texturing and adjustable coffee volume and can hold 10 capsules.

Milk temperature is adjustable to 55-76°C or 133-169°F. It also has an intuitive TFT interface (thin film transistor display). The Pop-out cup shelf allows for a smaller cup size. With a stylish stainless steel body, the new Creatista Plus is perfect for a variety of beverages.



The **Final Touch** double wall frothing pitcher from PSI provides superior insulation and a brushed stainless steel exterior that stays temperature neutral so it's easy to handle. Holding the pitcher (rather than a handle) provides more control.

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*Saeco Avanti App is compatible with iOS devices running iOS 7 or higher; iPad 3rd generation or newer; iPad mini with Retina Display or newer; iPhone 4S or newer. It is compatible with Android devices with a minimum screen size of 7 inches with Bluetooth 4.0 running Android OS 4.3 or higher. Tested devices include Samsung Galaxy S3, S4 mini, Tab 3 & 4, Nexus 5 & 7, and Sony Experian Z.

Making Coffee



Following up on the success of the Pur-purescent Pour Over Coffee Brewer, left, **Cuisinart** is introducing a new way to make authentic cold brew coffee in as little as 25 minutes. The new Automatic Cold Brew Coffeemaker, right, saturates coffee grounds in cool water, never exposing them to the high temperatures that release oils which can create an acidic taste. Unique spin technology circulates coffee through water for total flavour extraction in a fraction of the time manual brewers require. Results are naturally smoother and sweeter. It has three flavour strength options for a customized coffee experience. Coffee can be refrigerated in the 7-cup glass carafe for up to two weeks.



The Mr. Brew manual coffeemaker from AdHoc, below, preserves the aroma of freshly ground coffee during brewing. With a magnetic fixture, it has an adjustable height of up to 18 cm. It features a double-layered, stainless steel permanent fine filter that leaves no taste of metal. Fine micro-pores ensure a full flavour experience while the handle allows for easy removal of the filter. From **Browne**.



With front access to the water reservoir and brew basket, the **Hamilton Beach** programmable Easy Access coffeemaker (offered in two models, left) puts an end to the back and forth maneuvering of a counter-cup coffee maker. The Plus model includes premium features for high-end performance such as a cone filter for maximum coffee extraction, three brewing options and a freshness indicator. A drip-free carafe makes for clean pouring, and the filter basket has a handle for mess-free grounds disposal. With an automatic, optional cleaning cycle reminder, users can be confident the machine is brewing the best tasting coffee. With its compact design, this coffee maker takes up less space but still makes up to 12 cups. Cone coffee filters and a water filter are included. Other features include easy-view water window, auto pause & serve and 2-hour automatic shutoff.





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JURA automatic coffee machines produce the finest high-pressure-brewed coffee, espresso, cappuccino, latte and latte macchiato at a touch of a button. Fast and easy to operate, they grind, tamp, froth, brew and self-clean in less than 60 seconds. JURA offers a full range of Swiss designed and Swiss engineered automatic coffee machines from from \$1,195 to \$7,695

Making Coffee



PicoBarista by **Saeco** is a premium compact machine that can brew 11 coffee varieties. The sophisticated stainless steel unit features a one touch milk carafe and 10-step adjustable ceramic grinder. It can deliver up to 5000 cups without descaling the AquaClean filter.

The OXO On range of intelligent appliances from **Danescos** includes the Barista Brain Grinder, below. It features an intelligent built-in scale that precisely measures coffee. The



high torque/low speed motor provides the perfect grind for optimal flavour extraction.

The Barista Brain 9-cup coffeemaker, below, has an intuitive LED interface with a backlit screen that displays the coffee status and has a freshness indicator. A single dial lets users program the number of cups or the 24-hour start timer. The Rainmaker Shower Head evenly disperses water over coffee grounds for uniform saturation and full flavor extraction. An internal mixing tube ensures coffee is blended thoroughly.



The **Capresso** ST300 stainless steel coffeemaker, left, has an updated design with a 10-cup thermal carafe. It comes with gold tone filter, charcoal water filtration and programmable 24-hour clock/timer. Capresso has also expanded its Froth Control line with a new model that can accommodate chocolate chips to create frothy hot chocolate, below left. The new design has simple one-button operation with illuminated controls. Both units are part of the spring line-up from Faema, which also includes the new **Jura** E6 espresso/cappuccino machine, below right. It sets a new standard for easy operation.



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Making Coffee

Rich, flavourful coffee can be brewed with the new Pour Over coffeemaker from **Norpro**. It features a 22-ounce borosilicate glass carafe, a bamboo handle, a stainless steel mesh filter and a 2-Tbsp. coffee scoop. The total brew time is three minutes and it makes up to five servings of coffee. It also comes boxed.



The **Salton** Jumbo Java brews a whopping 14 cups of coffee, above. It has a 24-hour programmable timer and a keep-warm function. It automatically shuts off after 2 hours while the pause and serve function allows users to pour a quick cup while the coffeemaker is at work. With an attractive design and stainless steel accents, this coffeemaker is perfect for big families. Also new from Salton is the Intelligent coffee grinder, below. It can grind beans to the perfect coarseness in four easy steps. Simply fill the bowl, select the number of cups, choose the grind and press start. It has a big 12-cup capacity and five settings.

Who could resist this adorable set of puppy mugs. Also available in a kitty version, they are gift boxed and ready to present to any pet lover. Made of bone china, each 385ml mug has a luxurious white finish. Available from **Danesco**.



The Mrs. Bean manual coffee grinder by AdHoc will provide effortless grinding of coffee beans. It has a high efficiency Cer-aCutXL grinder and precise exterior grinding adjustment with four setting from fine-grained to coarsely ground. It comes with a collecting container that is easy to remove thanks to the clamp mechanism. A removable gear head has a crank knob for easy filling. It can grind 50g of beans to produce 25g of ground coffee. Available from **Browne**.



Abbott offers unique mugs for the coffee lover, including a Wrench Handle mug, left, or the open and close face handled cups, below.



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Versatile new designs go from oven to table

Cuisinart presents bakeware elegant enough to use as serveware. The Professional ceramic bakeware series is durable, heavy quality stoneware that gracefully moves

from oven to broiler to table to freezer. It's also dishwasher and microwave safe. The non-porous glaze will not absorb moisture or odors, so foods cooked and served in the ceramic bakeware will maintain their natural flavours.



Trudeau Maison's new baking pans come integrated with an exclusive reinforced steel rim for secure handling and silicone technology. The silicone surfaces have non-stick properties and offer flexibility for easy release while the integrated steel structure provides secure handling. The pans ensure even baking and better browning. They are safe for the freezer, microwave and dishwasher. Heat Resistant up to 428°F/220°C.



These new Commercial and Artistry bakeware lines from **Paderno** are designed to meet the demands of the best bakers in the toughest kitchens. A durable non-stick coating allows for quick release and easy cleanup. The pans are dishwasher-safe and oven-safe to 450°F. Completely PFOA and PTFE-free, they are also backed by Paderno's 25 year warranty.



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Bake Pans

Nordic Ware introduced a new metallic colour palette in Chicago as well as a line of little bundts and new sizes in its Naturals line. The company is adding copper and a Premier Gold look on its cast bakeware (as seen on our cover). Nordic Ware has had success with its platinum, bronze and gold exterior coatings in previous launches. The six-cup capacity Little Bundts are designed for consumers who want smaller portions.

They can accommodate half of a cake recipe or a single Quick Bread mix. They are available in six different designs and also fit into countertop or compact ovens.



Cuisipro mixing bowl set from **Browne** includes three sizes that can be utilized for a range of baking needs. High sides prevent splatter when mixing while the rounded base allows for easier tilting and thorough mixing. A curved edge ensures easy pouring. There are capacity markings on the exterior and a Satin finish to reduce visibility of scratches. Dishwasher-safe

Douceurs is a new range by Emile Henry, from Browne. Inspired by the gastronomic history of French pastries, this line of ceramic molds lets users make delicious homemade baked goods. The soft shapes and innovative designs of the Douceurs line can go from oven to table beautifully. The ceramic uniformly conducts the temperature throughout the baking dish allowing for even baking to occur. It's available in six shapes (the loaf pan is shown below).



Le Creuset is introducing a rectangular pan that is perfect for flan or quiche. Savory dishes or sweet tarts will bake to perfection in this 35cm metal pan. The non-stick finish easily releases delicate pastry and the removable base allows users to slip off the outer ring for a beautiful presentation at the table.

Bake Pans



Counseltron's Cast Iron Loaf Pan by Lodge is perfect for the home baker. It gives an even heating resulting in a golden brown bread crust. It's also ideal for a meatloaf. The handles on each end make it easier to lift the pan in and out of the oven.



With the new Léku´ bagel mold from **InterContinental Mercantile** consumers will get crispy bagels every time. The conical shape has been devised so that users can handle the mould by its tip without getting burnt. It will help you shape the bagel quickly and simply and users can maintain the round shape and hole while boiling the bagels. The micro-perforations lets users strain the water for crispier bagels



Stoneware by Lodge brings colour and elegance to the kitchen. Each piece is molded out of natural clay, and fired at high temperatures before being glazed with vibrant colour. The dishes are offered in three sizes and three colours; red, white and blue. The pans are dishwasher safe, and microwave safe.

Perfect Slice bakeware by **BergHOFF** has a patented portion control cutting system designed right on the pans. The 'inch' marked rim and edge plus the edge slicing tool (right) make cutting endless sizes of uniform slices quick and easy. The line includes round and square cake pans (with cover), a pie pan, baking pan and pie plate, each with a slicer tool.



This cheesecake pan from **Ventures/Norpro** features red removable silicone sides with a tempered glass base that makes it easy to bake and serve on the same platter. The silicone and tempered glass are heat resistant to 400°F. It also ideal for baking tarts and pies.



Cleaning Up

The latest in floor care products

The **Electrolux** Ergorapido PetCare vacuum has a removable handheld 2-in-1 stick and handheld vacuum to clean bare floors and hard-to-reach areas. Simply press the button to remove the hand vacuum. It has a high performance lithium battery with extended runtime up to 30 minutes and 4x faster recharge. Other features include a powered PetCare upholstery nozzle and a premium cleaning nozzle with powered brushroll effortlessly picks up pet hair and dirt from upholstery. The Brushroll Clean patented self-cleaning brushroll technology removes tangles with the touch of a button. It provides 180° Easy Steer swivel for easy navigation on bare floors and area rugs. The cyclonic action system separates and deposits dirt directly in the dust cup resulting in better airflow and overall suction.



The **Hoover** Spotless portable cleaner, above, easily lifts and removes stains by combining powerful suction with hygienic deep cleaning tools. It has a 14-foot cord, 5-foot hose and removable water tank. The self-clean technology flushes the hose clean after each use to help prevent bacteria growth.

Hoover introduces the Quest1000 Robotic Vacuum, below, with Laser Mapping Technology that intelligently senses and adapts to the room for a systematic and thorough clean. The Tri-Clean system picks up dirt, dust, or pet hair on floors, along walls and in corners. Advanced Lithium-Ion technology can run continuously for 120 minutes. With local WiFi Connections, users can easily adjust cleaning or check battery and charge status from their smartphone.



The new **Dirt Devil** Reach Max, above, offers 3-in-1 versatility and lightweight, cordless power. It steers under, above and around obstacles with minimal effort. A premium brushroll can power through messes on floors and quickly converts to a cordless hand vacuum for stairs, upholstery and car cleaning. Also new from Dirt Devil is the Razor Vac, a lightweight upright with three-stage filtration featuring the SPIN4PRO brushroll with automatic height adjustment. Simply detach the 10-foot wand to clean hard to reach places like ceiling and stairs.



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Frankfurt Fair reveals first signs of spring

Soft pastel colours, natural textures and British style were on display at Ambiente

During five energy-charged days last February, the world's leading trade fair welcomed 142,000 buyers from 154 countries, an increase of almost 4% over the previous year. At Ambiente 2017, a total of 4,454 exhibitors from 96 countries presented the latest trends and innovations in home goods in 27 exhibition halls.

"Ambiente is the international summit meeting of the consumer-goods industry", explains Detlef Braun of Messe Frankfurt. More than half of all visitors – 55% – came to Frankfurt from outside Germany. Moreover, the percentage of international exhibitors reached a record level of 80% (including a jump in Canadian visitors).

Top international decision makers were also better represented than in 2016, ensuring a brisk export business and a positive atmosphere in the halls. The top ten visitor nations after Germany were Italy, China, France, the USA, Spain, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Switzerland, South Korea and Turkey.

Over 3,000 visitors came to Frankfurt from the United Kingdom, this year's Partner Country, an increase of around 200 over last year. There was also above-average growth in the number of visitors from China, Taiwan and Vietnam, as well as the USA, Canada, Australia, Russia, the United Arab Emirates and South America.

This year many exhibitors opted for natural materials such as wicker, bare wood, cork and ceramics. Untreated surfaces were combined with glazed, relief-like textures and strong contrasts in the materials mix make for surprising tactile effects. When it comes to motifs, geomet-

ric patterns were spotted along with floral motifs, birds, butterflies and beetles. Fish, sea urchins and crabs created a Mediterranean feel for summer. Alongside these, pineapples, parakeets and cacti were all part of the latest tabletop trends.

When it comes to colour, fair visitors were treated to a palette of discreet nude, beige and sand shades, leaving plenty of freedom for individual accents. In the 'Living' section, exhibitors set the stage for the 'greenery' trend (a fresh apple green), for 'niagara' (denim blue) and 'pale dogwood' (a version of dusky pink). Many pieces were accented by deep black, copper and gold.

Ambiente 2018 will be held February 9th to 13th with The Netherlands as the official partner country.





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Frankfurt Fair Highlights

The opening night cocktail reception hosted by the International Housewares Association and Whitford attracted dozens of buyers and sellers from right across North America.



Perry Reynolds of the IHA, left, with James Glenn of Household Essentials.



Steve Curtis of Oggi (formerly with Trudeau in Canada) with Ingerid Mohn of Sogaform and Paul Williamson of Oggi.



John Collins of NeatFreak, left, joined Kim Cole of Gleener and Camillo Caperchione of Better Living Products.

LSA celebrates British roots with 'Gin Gala'

LSA, the British supplier of glassware and entertaining products often holds a cocktail party during Ambiente. But this year's 'gin gala' had an extra splash of excitement as the company celebrated the U.K.'s partnership with the Frankfurt Spring Fair.

With four products featured in the main British exhibit at Ambiente, LSA also emphasized British design in their own booth with products such as an enamel bread bin, whiskey set and a vodka set (that is currently being merchandised in Canada with Wayne Gretzky products).

LSA is one of the founding exhibitors at Ambiente, where the company celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2016. The company usually launches about 400 new products each year (most of which are designed by LSA's owner Monika Lubkowska-Jonas) with two seasonal lines for spring and fall. LSA products are distributed by in Canada by David Shaw.



Sales director Steve McGuire and president/head designer Monika Lubkowska-Jonas welcome guests to the LSA party.



British actress Elizabeth Hurley went "Power Shopping" with Detlef Braun of Messe Frankfurt at Ambiente 2017. With the Union Jack dominating the show floors, the star of 'The Royals' was quite impressed with a gold dinner service. Innovations and classic products by Waterford Wedgwood, Portmeirion, Khala and Rösle were also a point of interest, as was the amazing UK Partner Country presentation by Scottish designer Janice Kirkpatrick.



The annual Frankfurt dinner for the International Press is always spectacular and this year was no exception. It was held February 12 at the German Classic Car Museum.

Frankfurt Fair Product Highlights



The original Babette from Norway's GripGroup (left) adjusts to fit the side of any size pan. It is made to fit when the lid is on but can also go directly to the table so a serving spoon is available. The new steel Babette protects fingers with a silicone collar available in red or black. Suitable for gas, electric or induction cooktops, it can withstand high temperatures but must not be put directly on the heat source.



Natural textures and earth tones were popular in Frankfurt. Shown above, the Aura porcelain collection from Bonna.

Simplehuman introduced two new sensor mirrors offering 5X or 10X magnification, right. The tru-lux light system on the wide view mirror simulates natural sunlight for the brightest, most colour-correct view. The mirror is rechargeable and can be used without a cord for up to three weeks. It's also WiFi enabled with smart features.



An intriguing approach to personal care, the Warm Stool from Bouillon is made of ceramic. It functions as a hot water bottle and helps to maintain body temperature. Users can feel the softness and warmth of the clay. The stool combines primitive functions and new applications for traditional ceramics in the home.



Tranquil blue hues and water motifs were featured in the IntoConcrete collection. Shown right is the SeeSaw bowl set. Made of concrete and designed by Mikaela Dörfel, the concrete bowls are available in mineral or blue grey.

Retro chic and vintage patterns were seen in various dinnerware and bakeware displays including this traditional blue and white pattern from Creative Tops of Britain.



The focus was on the future at Chicago show

Visitors from 125 countries attended the International Home + Housewares Show to see the latest trends and the hottest new products for the Smart home

The 2017 International Home + Housewares Show, held March 18th to 21st, garnered rave reviews from buyers and sellers. The sold-out show featured 2,204 exhibitors from 47 countries.

This year saw a concerted focus on smart and connected products with the inaugural IHA Smart Home Pavilion, featuring 18 new and current exhibitors displaying emerging technologies and the latest in smart and connected products, as well as 70 other exhibitors throughout the Show. The Discover Design Expo, in its second year in the North Building, was the design destination at the Show, Brandl added.

The show also included a series of thought-provoking educational sessions, including a panel of thought leaders discussing the impact of the smart home on housewares; an overview of consumers' values and expectations by Tom Mirabile of Lifetime Brands; and a focus group of millennials discussing housewares by Warren Shoulberg and Maureen Azzato of HFN. Audio and video recordings of the educational sessions are available at <http://www.housewares.org/education/presentations-webinars>.

The 2018 International Home + Housewares Show will be held March 10-13 at McCormick Place, Chicago USA. 2018 attendee registration and additional Show information are available at www.housewares.org

Latest colour trends cover the spectrum

Leatrice (Lee) Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute, returned as a keynote speaker in Chicago last March to share her insights on what colours are hot and which ones are not.

"What's hot and what's not in colour used to be a very easy topic to engage," Eiseman said. "Years ago, I'd come to the Housewares Show to talk about one or maybe two colours that were the direction to go in. Now what we're seeing is that there's representation of every colour family."

Many colour rules are falling by the wayside thanks partly to the Millennial generation, which has a "sense of independence," "a need to explore" and "a pervasive feeling of 'I can'." This may have contributed to the power-clashing trend, which is the deliberate mix of different prints, patterns and colors.

With that in mind, Eiseman highlighted some of the latest trends.

Pinks – The popular hues today are rosier or healthier pinks – bold pinks that lean toward magenta or fuchsia are very dramatic and trending right now.

Reds – Poppy red has been very popular on the latest fashion runways.

Oranges – Orange is widely associated with happiness and is especially popular right now in pet products. As for peach tones, "peach is rarely a color that is disliked".

Yellows – A happy colour that is often associated with sunshine, yellow also has much more acceptance these days. Eiseman pointed out that the widely-circulated assertion that the colour yellow increases anxiety in the home is "utter nonsense."

Greens – With Greenery being Pantone's 2017 Colour of the Year, there's been much attention to the green family lately. Eiseman reiterated its health-giving properties and said, "green affords us the room to breathe."

Blues – Blues remain popular with strong usage of monochromatic themes here.

Purples – Purples are "a little chancier," she noted. Those with red undertones will gain more attention, while those with blue undertones will be more acceptable.

Mauves – Mauves kind of come and go, but they still have a presence especially in Euro-influenced palettes.

Neutrals – People ask Eiseman all the time if they should do cool or warm grays, and she maintained that either is fine. "Just don't use them both together," she said.

Black and white – Used independently or together, blacks and whites are "classic" and "don't disappear."

Metallics and iridescents – "Metallics are the newest neutrals," and dress up a whole look. Iridescent are always attractive to the consumer eye.

Eiseman closed her keynote by highlighting some of the most trending color combinations: yellow and black; blue and orange; and peach with anything.

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Chicago Housewares Show Highlights



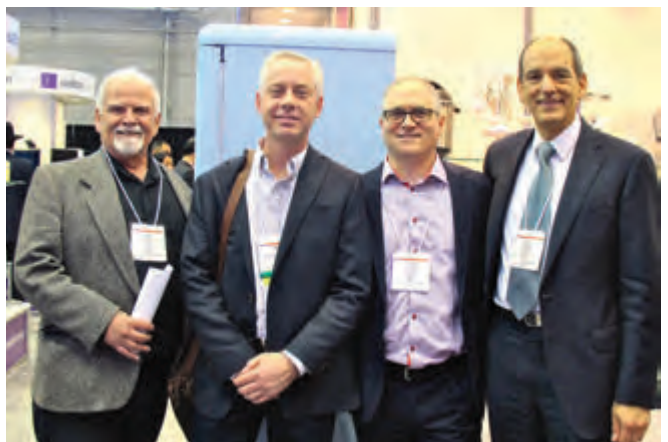
Joel Arivett (alongside Lisa Egger) reviews the latest new products (including the 'Ultimate Bar Tool') from Microplane at a special press luncheon held during the show.



Shannon Dameron of *Today's Bride* admires a jumbo-sized KitchenAid mixer.



Left to right, Steve Hendry of Hamilton Beach, Mat Pintar of Best Buy, John Pickersgill of Hamilton Beach, Alana Austin and Jennifer Barr of Best Buy.



Spotted at the Salton booth, left to right, Rick Fielden, Mike Zuk of Home Hardware, Jason Hutton and Jerry Solomon.

Retailers need to prepare for a world of smart home products

What's working in the world of smart home products, where is the industry going and what is needed to get there? These questions were addressed at the panel discussion entitled "How the Smart Home is Disrupting Housewares (and What to Do About It)" held during the Home + Housewares Show.

The panel was moderated by Mike Wolf, founder of NextMarket Insights. He was joined by Chris Young, CEO of ChefSteps, a food and technology company; Carley Knobloch, host of HGTV's Smart Home; and Nathan Smith, founder of Wink, maker of a smart home technology platform that allows you to use multiple apps in one place.

The smart home trend is moving from the early market to a state of greater maturation, said Wolf, and "connected products so far have experienced varying degrees of success."

The focus now is on creating sustainable business models, eliminating fragmentation around technology and platforms and creating compelling user experiences that provide real solutions and answer specific pain points.

The panel agreed one of the most important issues going

forward is creating products that solve problems, not just using technology because it might seem like what people want. Paying attention to consumers' pain points is important, as is helping alleviate any concerns about usability and security, said Knobloch.

Panelists agreed that story-telling is key when communicating the value of a connected product over a traditional product, or when the product represents a brand-new concept. There are significant opportunities for retail stores to tell the story of how a connected product can help solve consumers' problems, but not many are doing so yet.

According to Wolf, the number one issue in the smart home category is fragmentation, when different products have different apps or platforms that don't interact and make it difficult for the user to manage.

On the plus side, technology costs for connected products have decreased significantly just in the last few years, according to Smith. The ability to build a community and improve the product in real time also adds to the investment.

Chicago Housewares Show Highlights

Thirteen products take top *gia* award

Thirteen housewares suppliers ranging from well-established brands to first-time exhibitors were honored as Global Honorees of the IHA Global Innovation Awards (*gia*) for product design. The Global Honorees were announced during the gala *gia* dinner on March 18th.

The 2017 Global Honorees are:

Bath + Personal Care: Polder Products, 2-in-1 Hot Sleeve

Cleaning: Sanimaïd, PARIS Toilet Brush & Wall Holder

Cook + Bakeware: Kuhn Rikon, Duro-matic Microwave Pressure Cooker

Home Décor + Gifts: Mark Feldstein & Assoc., No Drip Inverted Umbrella

Home Storage: Progressive International, Prepworks Produce ProKeeper

Household Electrics + Home Environment: Equator Appliances, Super Combo Washer-Dryer EZ 4400 CV

Kitchen Electrics: Chefman, Perfect Pour Volcano Waffle Maker

Kitchen Hand Tools + Cutlery: Joseph Joseph, Helix Citrus Juicer

Kitchenware: Gourmet Kitchen Works, GEFU Sprouting Jar Bivita

Personal Care: KOHLER, Touchless Foaming Soap Dispenser

Pet Products: Dexas International, MudBuster

Smart Home: Anova Culinary, Precision Cooker Nano

Tabletop: Magisso North America, Pino Wine Glass

More than 500 products were entered in the IHA Global Innovation Awards competition. The 65 finalists were featured in the New Product Showcases in the Buyers Club in each show building at McCormick Place.

As the Canadian *gia* sponsor, *Home Style* is now accepting nominations for the 2018 Global Innovator Awards. If you know of an exceptional housewares retailer with outstanding merchandising skills, contact Laurie O'Halloran at 905-338-0799 or laurie@homestylemag.ca



Global innovators are honoured in Chicago

A record 28 national retail winners from around the world gathered in Chicago on March 18 for the annual *gia* awards gala celebrating the world's most innovative housewares merchandisers. *Home Style*, a sponsor since the program was launched by the International Housewares Association in 2000, was proud to honour Caren McSherry of Vancouver's Gourmet Warehouse as our winner.

At the gala, five top Global Honorees were announced. They are:

- Potten & Pannen – Czech Republic
- The Loft Company – Japan
- Green with Envy – New Zealand
- Rustan's Depart. Store – Philippines
- Borough Kitchen – United Kingdom

The global *gia* jury, consisting of four retail/visual merchandising experts and seven editors of co-sponsoring housewares trade publications from around the world, selected the *gia* Global Honorees from the national winners previously chosen in their respective countries. The Martin M. Pegler Award for Excellence in Visual Merchandising was awarded to LUC. Design of Australia and the *gia* Digital Commerce Award for Excellence in Online Retailing was awarded to Amazon.com of the USA.

Left to right: GW housewares buyer Rosane Young, web master Bruno Houberdon, Caren McSherry, Caren's son Jason Valagao and daughter Christina Valagao, who is also GW's marketing/advertising manager. Below, Caren is shown with Bruno and Christina in front of Canada's *gia* display board in the lobby of the Lakeside Centre at McCormick Place. The store was also featured in a *gia* banner in the McCormick Place concourse walkway.



NEW & NOTEWORTHY IN CHICAGO



Salton was showing the Retro line of colour-coordinated housewares and appliances from Swan of England. The jug kettle shown has a cordless design with auto shut off and water-gauge. The bread box has a decorative chrome plated lid and knob. The iron-coated products are available in eight beautiful colours.

The Tip Tough finger protector was invented by the 13-year-old son of a chef who kept cutting his fingers. The restaurant quality stainless steel protector has prongs to hold food in place. It's perfect for children, the elderly and the handicapped.



Aura Glass has created a new spill-resistant glass that also spins to aerate wine and spirits with the touch of a finger. The glass pivots on a stainless steel ball at its stem. It makes it nearly impossible to spill the contents while allowing it to spin easily.



Frustrated by butter dishes with messy lids, Joelle Mertzler created the Butterie. Butter can be kept on the counter for 21 days, and with a 'flip' lid to eliminate mess. It comes with a cute spreader.



The innovative Hydaway collapsible water bottle is now available in new bold, bright colours and two sizes. It flattens after use to less than an inch.



We loved the look of this 'Bees Wrap', a natural alternative to plastic wrap. A Vermont homemaker discovered the potential after coating cotton with beeswax. The result is a washable, reusable, compostable wrap that is both durable and versatile.

The Flow porcelain soap saver, below, lets excess water flow out to eliminate mushy soap. Available from Bosign, it has soft feet to protect countertop surfaces and holds a full size bar of soap.



The Ultimate Bar Tool from **Microplane** allows bartenders and party hosts to muddle, stir, cut, score, strain, and create garnishing twists and peels. Specially designed onto the bottom end of the tool, and safely covered with a removable clear cap, is a sharp edge peeler blade. The upper portion is made of stainless steel with six built-in features.

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CANADA NIGHT 2017



Linda Heidman of Swissmar, left, with David and Mona Abrams of Ares in Montreal.



From Accent Fairchild, Solly Feldman, left, Deepti Chandrasekaran and Alain Tremblay.



Mike Kavanagh, left, and Chris Hartleib of Canadian Tire.



Dimitra McGinnity and Daniel Oehy of Swissmar, left, join James Manzella and Liz Gunness of Amazon.ca

It was a full house at the Intercontinental Hotel's Renaissance Ballroom on March 19th as 342 buyers, retailers and sellers gathered for Canada Night 2017. Now in its 68th year, this unique social event brought Canadians together during the Chicago housewares show to celebrate our country's 150th birthday. Canada Night is made possible by the generous support of 27 industry sponsors. A very special thank you to Maureen Hizaka of the CHHMA for the incredible job she does organizing this special evening on our behalf!



Home Style publisher Laurie O'Halloran, left, with John Newton of Ventures International and Marlene Koskiniemi of The Kitchen Nook.



Fernanda Inserra Mendes is shown with Emmanuel Lafleur Velasco and Wally Shaw of Philips North America.



Howard Liss of Tundra Global Sourcing, left, with Martin Vaz-Jones and Elizabeth Antonutti of Loblaw Companies.



Four former *gia* award winners: Ben Boschman and Sue Boschman of Lakehouse Home Style in Vancouver, left, with Robbin Lich and Brent Bondarenko of Kitchen Therapy in Surrey, B.C.



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CANADA NIGHT 2017



Alex Barzan, left, and Craig Hamilton from Trudeau with Lyne Vinet of Sterilite and Sherrie Lawson with Trudeau.



From Bradshaws Canada, Dave Brown, left, and Anthony Cirone.



Tim Casey of Paderno with his wife (and boss!) Liz Casey.



Jami Steele, Jerry Cayne and Carol Steele (far right) of Cayne's Super Housewares with Jerry Solomon of Salton Canada.



Ashley Braz of Accent Fairchild, left, with Daryl Katzenberg of Kitchen Stuff Plus, Jamie Coblentz and Maria Peca of Accent Fairchild.



Friendly competitors – that's what Canada Night is all about. Shown left to right, Louise Sauve-Nicholls, Emilio Chiarizia, Stephen Hendry and Andrew Milligan from Hamilton Beach with Karla Prasad and Tracey Dehoog from Jarden Consumer Solutions.



Laurie O'Halloran, *Home Style* publisher and Canada Night chair, left, with Thomas Arn of PSP (Peugeot) Distributors and Linda Heidman of Swissmar.

CANADA NIGHT 2017



The team from Danica/Now Designs included, left to right, Kerry Benson, sales agent Jennifer Frankland, Sushil Arora, Margaret Szegvary and Anne Drinkwater.



Reid Williams, head of retail for Williams Food Equipment, left, with Candace Sutcliffe of C.A. Paradis in Ottawa and Vince Menchella of iQ Living in Toronto.



From Alliance Mercantile, Jeff Browne, left, Cory Gibson, centre, and John Soong.



The Breville Canada group included Tania Henderson, Brian Miller, centre, and Steve Krauss.



Roger Smith of United Sales and Marketing (and Canada Night treasurer) is shown with Jennifer Cheddie, left and Nadia Eremita of Spectrum Brands Canada.

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Advertiser's Index

Accent Fairchild Group	9
Breville	29
Canadian Gift Association	19
Counseltron	13
Cuisinart Canada	35
Cuisivin	15
Danesco	27, 37
Faema/Jura	33, IBC
Groupe SEB	25, OBC
Hamilton Beach	7
Hoover (TTI Canada)	43
Jogie's Imports/Universal Stone	49
Las Vegas Market	6
Le Creuset	39
Nordic Ware	8
Orly Cuisine	IFC
Paderno	5
Philips	31, 55
Product Specialties	10
PSP Distributors (Peugeot)	45
Ricardo	23
Today's Bride	53
Trudeau	11

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Kim Cole

While trying to repair her beloved wool sweater, this new mom invented a product that changed her life

by Laurie O'Halloran



Kim Cole was seven months pregnant with her son when she came up with the idea for the Gleener, the popular fuzz remover now sold around the world. It was the middle of a Montreal winter when, after constant wear, Kim's favorite Merino wool sweater became covered in fuzz balls.

"Although the sweater was relatively new, it looked awful", she recalls. "I tried every product on the market and nothing worked, including a battery operated fabric shaver that put a hole in the sweater, making it unwearable!"

Fuelled by her raging hormones, she decided there had to be a better way – and she was determined to find it. So while still in the first months of motherhood, Kim started working on her idea to create a product that actually worked and yet was safe to use.

In the beginning, she kept her day job and injected extra money into the new endeavor whenever she could. From kitchen counter testing to market research, patent and trademark filings, industrial design, CADs, prototypes and initial inventory, it took eight long years for her to bring her product to market.

Once it was finally perfected, she needed a name and she got her inspiration from her grandmother, who was born on an Alberta wheat farm. Her favourite painting was "The Gleaners" by French artist Millet. It depicts three peasant women picking up the hay remnants after a harvest, and reflected precisely what Kim hoped to do with her new fuzz remover. "To Glean" means to pick up small bits. Then to give the product its own identity, Kim changed the spelling to Gleener and immediately secured the URL gleener.com.

Gleener debuted on The Shopping Channel on New Year's Eve 2010 and sold out in 45 minutes. Kim knew at that moment she was really onto something.

Though she started off in a basement office with a garage for a warehouse, she now employs a dozen people in the Canadian office with warehousing on most continents. And she will always be grateful to her very first customer, Espace Tricot, a cutting-edge shop in Montreal that asked to carry the product in 2011. Kim explained that they didn't have any retail packaging yet but they took a chance anyhow. The Gleeners sold out in a week, so they doubled their order and then those sold out too. Today, the product is sold in over 10,000 stores globally. And that number is climbing exponentially as they approach new markets.

Having established Gleener as the go-to brand for effective and affordable fabric care solutions, Kim and her team are actively working on developing line extensions that fit within the category.

Though women naturally comprise a majority of Gleener's market, Kim finds that men also comprise a significant portion of sales. And early on, Gleener became a huge hit in the knitting community, which helped enormously.

"Knitters are wonderful," says Kim. "They are a very credible (and fun) group, so when they embrace a product, people listen and they trust their messenger. Gleener has become an essential tool for millions of knitters."

The product is also listed with major chains such as Canadian Tire, Linen Chest, London Drugs, Target and QVC.

Kim stresses that "each retail customer is important to us because their

customers are our customers. They are craving solid products and we are committed to deliver them."

There have been several high points since Gleener's debut in 2010. The product won the inaugural International Housewares Association Innovation Award in 2012. The flagship product was also awarded the Chinese Utility Patent after a long six-year wait. But from a numbers standpoint, Kim is particularly proud of the fact that Gleener maintained its "Bestseller" position at QVC for four years after the launch.

The greatest challenge for Kim today is the threat of counterfeiting. She says it's a daily concern, but they wisely have a comprehensive IP (Intellectual Property Rights) portfolio on all their products. This way she can quickly shut down the cheap knock-offs that appear regularly on eComm sites. "We must protect our customers, retailers and IP," says Kim. "Otherwise, what is the point?"

Though Gleener is obviously an effective and practical product, it's clear that Kim's bubbly personality and passion for the product has been a key part of her company's success. Like most entrepreneurs, her creativity combined with her persistence has proven to be a winning combination. In addition, Gleener exhibits in both the Frankfurt and Chicago shows and Kim proudly supports the housewares industry as a sponsor of Canada Night.

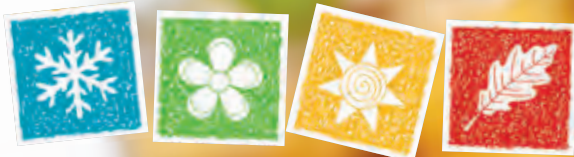
The son she was carrying when she first ruined that wool sweater is now a teenager and Kim spends many evenings at the arena watching his hockey games, happy she has found a balance between the family she adores and the career that changed her life. 🐾

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