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Canada's Housewares Magazine

January 2018

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Contents



Home Style visits the Cooney Family Farms Apple Store on page 30.



14



20



30



41

Features

26 Learn to listen to your instinct

Retailer Candace Sutcliffe explains why instinct and fear of failure are the two driving characteristics behind most successful retail entrepreneurs.

28 Make room for the bloggers

Housewares bloggers have become a very influential factor in the consumer's purchasing decision. We asked three top Public Relations executives to explain how retailers can use bloggers to their advantage.

30 A farm family – and so much more!

Laurie O'Halloran visits the Cooney Family Farms Apple Store in Stirling, Ontario to see how four generations have made a significant contribution to the community.

41 Seeking simple pleasures

Jennifer Cox profiles Brigitte Schilds and Andrew Ho, the married owners of Simple Pleasures in Dawson Creek, B.C.

60 Toronto Gift Fair Preview

66 Las Vegas Market Preview

New Product Reviews

46 Knives, Sharpeners & Cutting Boards

44 Kitchen Tools, Utensils & Gadgets

46 Bake Pans & Baking Accessories



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Departments

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2018
Volume 29 • Number 1

8

Calendar of Events

10

Opening Lines

52

12

People In The News

14

Retail News in Review

18

Trend Tracking

22

Show Business

73

Advertisers Index

74

Executive Interview

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62

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Opening Lines

Where has the time gone?

Although I have worked in the housewares industry for over 30 years now, I've always been on the outside looking in. I have never actually been a buyer, or a vendor, or a retailer. I simply write about those who are, and that has always made me feel like I am the 'new kid on the block'. That all changed last October when we held the first meeting of the newly formed Canadian Housewares Committee. About 10 minutes into the meeting, I looked around at the 13 people at the table and realized – to my shock and amazement – I was the oldest person in the room!

That realization was very unsettling. When did this happen? Why didn't I ever notice before? But it also got me thinking about all the incredibly talented young people (like our columnist Candace Sutcliffe) who are now rising through the ranks of our industry. On the supply side, a second generation is gradually taking over, and I'm inspired by changes being made by the business leaders of the future (like Evan Feldman of Meyer Canada, who is interviewed on our back page).

It also got me to thinking about the people who helped shaped my career, both in publishing and in housewares. We hear a lot about the 'influencers' in today's market, but in my lifetime, the biggest influencers were the mentors who lifted me up and guided me in the right direction. I wouldn't be here without them.

While in college I was lucky enough to get an internship at Southam Business Publications. For over a year, my first editor, Heather Howi, took a red pen and slashed through my copy until I finally understood the difference between journalism and creative writing. She terrified me, but she knew exactly what I needed.

While Heather's red pen made me a better writer, it was our publisher, Erla Kay, who had the greatest impact on my early career. She was the first rep to take me along on sales calls, and I was fascinated by the ease with which she interacted with our advertisers. Tall, imposing and confident, she taught me the importance of relationship selling, to genuinely become friends with your customers. Her annual Christmas parties (held in her home) were legendary. We're still friends today.

After Erla, Don Flynn, owner of Centre Publications, hired me to launch *Housewares Canada* magazine. He had just sold his company to Southam, and was a very familiar figure in the Canadian hardware industry. He was tough as nails, and demanded a lot from you, but he also loved to throw a good party. They were always the highlight of the Canadian Hardware Show, and hundreds of retailers would look forward to it each year. Don helped me find the courage to take a publishing risk in 1989 and venture out on my own. Still the best decision I've ever made.

In housewares, I have had the good fortune to work with so many exceptional, inspirational people it boggles my mind. But if I had to pick the one person I have always tried to emulate, someone I have great admiration for, it would have to be Al Johnstone. The former president of Salton Canada took a while to warm up to me, but once we became close friends, he went out of his way to encourage me, support me and teach me through example the difference that kindness and generosity can make in business. He and his wife Kay were incredibly gracious hosts in the early years of my career. Like Don and Erla, they knew how to throw a party.

The past 18 months have been rife with change and upheaval in my life, but this industry, and the wonderful people in it, have kept me grounded and motivated. There is no better job in the world, and as I begin my 29th year with *Home Style*, I am grateful to each of you – my readers and advertisers – for making it so.



– Laurie O'Halloran
laurie@homestylemag.ca

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People On The Move

• **Mandy Ulcar** has joined Breville Canada as national accounts manager.

• **Trevor Kidd**, formerly of Browne, has joined Product Specialties (Final Touch) as director of sales.

• Anne Drinkwater, the former retailer and greatly respected Danica rep, has announced she will retire in April 2018.

• **Don Schacter + Associates** is now representing the following vendors: Thermoserv, Sparq Home, O2Cool, Samuel Lamont/Dublin Gift and USA Pan. All will all be featured at booth #7035 at the Toronto Gift Show.

In addition Don Schacter has added the following reps to DS+A Group; **Tom Sherwood** in B.C., **The Gordon-David Group** in B.C., Shaken Agencies in the Okanagan, **Heidi Krake** in Alberta, **Jim Kemp** in the GTA and **Isabelle Rousseau** in Quebec.

• Robert Trudeau, Chairman, has announced the appointment of **Anne-Marie Trudeau** as President and CEO of Trudeau Corporation. Anne-Marie has



been with the company for over 20 years and has occupied many roles within the business from product development to licensing and sales. In 2014, she was promoted to National Vice-President of Sales for the Canadian market.

• **Leandro P. Rizzuto**, co-founder and chairman of the board of Conair Corporation, died of cancer on December 3rd.

Vaughn Crofford retires from CHHMA

Vaughn Crofford officially retired on December 31st after 23 years as President of the Canadian Hardware & Housewares Manufacturers Association. The Board of Directors has spent the last two years working with the Canadian Office Products Association (COPA) to relocate their offices into the CHHMA, as well as align the management of events and other services between the two.

The CHHMA will celebrate its 50th Anniversary in 2018 and the Board and management have set objectives for the team to revitalize the association and the value it brings to members.

For Vaughn, the toughest thing about retiring is giving up the interaction and relationships he has built over the years. "My time at CHHMA has been a wonderful experience," he said.

Sam Moncada, President of COPA, will take over the dual role of President of CHHMA and COPA effective January 1st. The staff of both associations will remain in their current roles throughout the transition.

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London Drugs: A company that stays different by design

As one of the few retail chains that goes to great lengths to show appreciation for its vendor partners, the London Drugs annual partnership presentation never disappoints, and this year was no exception with hero pilot Captain Chesley Sullenberger (Sully) as the keynote speaker. The early morning event opened in Mississauga, Ontario, on November 6th with some entertaining Beatbox music, followed by a hilarious stand-up routine by comic Jessica Holmes (known as *J-Ho*), of Royal Canadian Air Farce fame.

With Darwin's famous quote *"It is not the strongest of the species, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is most adaptable to change."* displayed across a giant screen, the executives of London Drugs then took to the stage to demonstrate how the company stays 'different by design'.

Brandt Louie, current CEO, grandson of the founder and a true business visionary in his own right, told the audience "customers are shopping global today so we need a global perspective." He said the reason LD has been so successful is because of the people. People, he claims are not just London Drug's added value, but their biggest differentiator.

Louie added that retailers need to drive change, not just react to it. That's one reason they launched the LD Extras loy-



Captain Chesley (Sully) Sullenberger was the keynote speaker at the 2017 London Drugs Partnership presentation.

alty program 18 months ago. It rewards customers for the frequency of their visits, and already has 650,000 members.

Executive vice president Clint Mahlman followed, explaining that retail is really the ultimate business of human psychology. And in order to motivate customers and staff you have to offer value beyond price. That precisely why London Drugs has introduced walk-in medical clinics in many of their stores, located right next to the pharmacy of course. Now customers can see a doctor, and pick up their prescription all in one location.

Another area where London Drugs, which operates 80 stores in the four western provinces, enjoys great success is with their pick-up centres for online sales. Rob Felix, Senior VP of Merchandising says they continually design different approaches to their business.

"We combine our online and physical stores because the lines are blurring," he explained. "We don't focus on e-commerce or bricks and mortar stores, we focus on the customer. By staying nimble and creative, we are able to stay closer to that customer."

After announcing the vendor partners of the year, including Whirlpool (KitchenAid) for small appliances and Duracell in household products, Captain Sullenberger came out to a standing ovation. He mesmerized the crowd with his story of how his entire life was judged on the 208 seconds it took to land a jumbo jet on the Hudson River in New York City. But when it came down to it, his character stood up to the scrutiny. His message was one of service above self, and the need to constantly grow as a human being. Sully's sense of duty helped save over 150 lives the day of the crash, but his skill was known to everyone who had ever worked with him over his 42 years of flying.

"It's the responsibility of all leaders to create a culture where people do their best. You have to check your ego in order to build a team. If you fly solo, ultimately you will fail," he said.

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More people trust the Superstore brand

Canadian Superstore is the most trusted brick-and-mortar grocery brand in Canada, while Walmart is the most trusted for online grocery shopping, according to new research from BrandSpark International.

No Frills, also a Loblaw brand, was the second most trusted brick-and-mortar grocer nationally followed by Metro. However the research did find distinct regional preferences. For example, Sobeys is the most trusted brand for Atlantic Canadians while IGA and Maxi retail brands tied with Quebeckers. Superstore was tops in the west, while No Frills was number one in Ontario.

Real Canadian Superstore was also the second most trusted brand for grocery and fresh food shopping online, behind Walmart. Amazon was third.

Unsurprisingly, Amazon dominated the e-commerce list, being named the most trusted in 15 of the 23 categories including the Food & Beverage category. Walmart and Well.ca were second and third in this category.

Consumers concerned about online data

A growing majority of Canadians regularly shop online, despite concerns about what companies do with the pile of data being collected on them with every visit, according to a recent survey by CBC's *Marketplace* on Canadians' online shopping habits.

The results show that almost half of Canadians shop online at least once a month, a ratio that jumps to almost seven in 10 among those under 35.

Three-quarters of respondents said they spend up to \$200 a month online, and almost 10% said they spend up to \$500.

But even as Canadians buy more online, they're less comfortable with the amount of private data they are being asked to hand over, even if they're only window shopping.

A slim majority of respondents said they were comfortable with giving out

basic information such as a name and email address to set up an account with an online retailer. But anything more – including collecting data about shopping habits in order to offer discounts – made them uncomfortable.

Dollarama moves into e-commerce

Dollarama will make a foray into e-commerce this year by offering a collection of popular items in bulk in response to customer demand for bigger volumes of goods than it carries in stores.

The Montreal-based dollar store chain said it will begin selling goods by the case online some time over the next 12 months. The aim is to cater to clients looking to buy a big batch of things, such as party planners looking for inexpensive wine glasses or schools that need cheap notebooks.

"We're trying to satisfy a new need with this [online] platform," says Dollarama CEO Neil Rossy.

Rossy is leading Dollarama on one of the most remarkable runs in the history of Canadian retailing as the company's sales and earnings growth continue to defy the trouble hitting much of the rest of the industry. It now has 1,135 locations across the country selling merchandise at prices up to \$4.

2017 ends on a bang

Although final 2017 numbers weren't yet in when we went to press, the year was shaping up to be one of the strongest, in terms of retail sales, since 1997. Sales growth in the \$452 billion sector was led in the third quarter by

Tiffany & Co. has launched a new high-end home accessory line featuring 1,292 pieces, including a pair of bone china "paper cups," salt and pepper shakers, an ice cream scooper and mouth-blown crystal glassware. The collection also includes a set of Art of the Wild candlesticks made of sterling silver for \$70,000.

building material and garden equipment, up 14.2%, and electronics and appliance stores, which were up 9.2%.

Retail sales in the general merchandise sector were up 7.4% year-over-year in Q3 2017. This was the highest Q3 gain in 11 years. Despite the Sears saga, general merchandise stores increased their retail sales by 6.3% in Q3.

Canadian Tire bullish after rise in sales

Last November, Canadian Tire released a bullish outlook for the next three years as the company pushes further into e-commerce.

Same-store sales climbed 4.7% in the period ended September 30th at Canadian Tire's retail stores.

The company, which drew criticism for axing its retail website in 2009 due to low productivity, is now moving in on retailers such as Walmart Canada and Costco, who offer home delivery of e-commerce orders.

Canadian Tire relaunched digital sales site in 2011 beginning with tires and has been expanding its digital operations ever since in order to better fight Amazon. The retailer began offering in-store pickup of customers' online orders through a "click and collect" model in 2014. Its proximity to customers' homes made the pickup model attractive.

Last year, Canadian Tire rolled out home delivery nationally to its customers, and launched the program at ten stores in Ottawa in the third quarter.

Greg Hicks, president of Canadian Tire's retail division, said the e-commerce delivery program in Ottawa currently covers 80% of their assortment.

Target is still on top

Target is the most popular retailer in almost half of the 50 U.S. states, according to a Foursquare study that looked at the average visitor count per store. Walmart topped the charts in 16 states, and others including Macy's, Bloomingdale's, Fred Meyer and Uniqlo took the title in at least one state each.

Vendors In The News



All-Clad is moving outside of the kitchen to launch a new collection of outdoor cookware this April. These new grilling essentials include an outdoor griddle, round grill basket and outdoor roaster (available individually or as a set of three), plus a square grill basket and chicken roaster. Each is made of durable brushed stainless steel for durability. Large perforations add a smoky flavour to foods and oversize handles ensure safe handling.

Vacu Vin launches enhanced website

International Innovation Company has updated the Vacu Vin website, which now features a new responsive design, clean graphics and original content designed to engage consumers.

In addition to featuring the collection of wine accessories, the new website also includes enhanced lifestyle photography, videos, blogs, recipes and news. The goal is to keep consumers informed on everything related to wine, beer and cocktails.

The new website also features the Vacu Vin Academy, a section that provides consumers with articles about wine such as exploring the different variety of grapes, pairing wine with the right glassware and other topics.

VacuVin products are distributed in Canada by Intercontinental Mercantile.

As the leading event of its kind in Asia, the **HKTDC Hong Kong Houseware Fair** attracts the industry's top manufacturers and most prominent buyers. In 2017, the Fair featured **over 2,200** exhibitors and **29,121** buyers from the globe in a comprehensive one-stop houseware showcase.

Homing In on the Latest Houseware Products

A Way of L.I.F.E.

The 2018 Fair returns with four major themes that celebrate the beauty of L.I.F.E.

Lifestyle features the Hall of Elegance, World of Fine Dining, World of Fine Décor, Creative Arts & Cultural Crafts and Green Living.

Interiors brings style into your home with zones such as Interior Décor, Festive Décor and Best of ASEAN.

Feasts collects the best in Tableware, Wine Tools & Accessories, Kitchenware & Gadgets, Home Appliances, the Coffee Alley and the HORECA Zone.

Enrich showcases the World of Building & Hardware, World of Pet Supplies, Baby Products, Bath Beauty & Healthcare, Furniture, Homepedia, Home Cleaning & Laundry, Outdoor & Gardening, Storage Solutions and the Startup zone.

Hall of Elegance

A top-tier industry exhibit, the Hall of Elegance features designer collections, acclaimed brands, high-end exhibitors and the most sought-after products. Prominently located in a beautifully decorated space, the Hall attracts buyers by emphasizing quality, craftsmanship and a proven track record in the market.

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Purple reign in 2018

Pantone has selected Ultra Violet (Pantone 18-3838) as its Colour of the Year for 2018, saying the “dramatically provocative purple shade communicates originality, ingenuity and visionary thinking that points us toward the future.

“We are living in a time that requires inventiveness and imagination,” says Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Colour Institute. “It is this kind of creative inspiration that is indigenous to Ultra Violet, a blue-based purple that takes our awareness and potential to a higher level.”

In announcing Ultra Violet as the color of the year, Pantone noted the past use of the color by musicians such as Prince, David Bowie and Jimi Hendrix as personal expressions of individuality. Enigmatic purples have long been symbolic of counterculture, unconventionality and artistic brilliance, noted Pantone.

Homeowners buying more tableware

NPD sees potential growth for tabletop sales that can translate into more lifestyle and cross-selling opportunities for retailers beyond wedding registry purchases, particularly with kitchen gadgets and beverageware.

According to recent data from NPD, tabletop sales related to home purchases or renovations are larger than wedding-related sales, and growing. The number of tabletop items purchased for a new home/housewarming, or a home remodel were more than 50% higher than purchases made for wedding-related occasions (engagement, bridal shower, wedding) in the past year.

NPD reported that dollar sales of

tabletop categories purchased for wedding-related occasions saw double-digit declines in the 12 months ending August 2017, while sales related to a new home/housewarming, or a remodel, saw double-digit growth.

According to NPD’s checkout tracking, when beverageware or flatware is in a shopping basket, kitchen gadgets are more likely to be part of the purchase than any tabletop categories. The relationship between dinnerware and beverageware appears to be the strongest in the tabletop. Gadgets and beverageware have a higher likelihood of being attached to a dinnerware purchase than a flatware purchase.

U.S. workers need to get more sleep

Sleep. All business leaders need it, most crave it, but throngs don’t get the kind of restorative and rehabilitative sleep required to optimize mental clarity, focus, ideation, awareness, productivity and overall job performance. The result is the inability to realize one’s full leadership potential.

The Center for Disease Control has declared “insufficient sleep” an “important public health concern”. A RAND Corporation study sheds more ominous light on the issue, finding that business losses in the U.S. resulting from deficient sleep reaches a staggering \$411 billion (2.28% of its GDP) – the highest of any of the countries studied.

The RAND study also established that even “small changes to sleep duration could have a big impact on the economy.” If individuals who normally sleep under six hours slept even just one or two hours more, over \$226.4 billion could be added to the U.S. economy.

It also linked sleep deprivation to lower workplace productivity, resulting in “a significant amount of working days being lost each year” with the U.S. annually losing around 1.2 million working days due to insufficient sleep—not to mention untold millions more being lost due to sleep deprivation-driven “presenteeism”.

Top Food and Beverage Trends for 2018

GOURMET INSIDER has compiled six food and beverage trends that your customers will be talking about this year. Whether it’s a meal of Sunday sauce and meatballs, a traditional Chinese meal or a potluck dinner with several friends, more people will be gathering around the table in 2018.

Cocktails will be elevated this year. The classics from yesteryear will be reinvented with a twist all their own. From smoked Manhattans to bitters bringing a new flavor profile to an Old Fashioned, these adult beverages will be all about the craft.

Savory flavors are showing up in food that was previously reserved for sweet. For example, savory ice cream that features flavors like blood pudding and blue cheese with pear are becoming mainstream. Yogurt has also become a platform for savory tastes such as mixing chipotle with pineapple and Sriracha with mango.

Fermented foods and beverages that support good gut health, such as sauerkraut and Kombucha, are thriving in the current healthy eating climate currently. Pickling will also continue to make gains in the market as the home chef has become less afraid of the process and tools have made it easier to achieve optimal results.

Street food has come a long way from the hot dog truck on the corner. Food trucks are elevating their specialties – from tacos to crepes – with unique flavor combinations and fusion flavors that previously didn’t exist. But they are still keeping the experience authentic and prices low.

Diners are becoming more in tune to what spices and salts are in their dishes at restaurants and are looking to replicate these flavor profiles at home. Mediterranean and Middle Eastern spices are growing in usage and will continue to do so through 2018. Salts, including flavored and smoked salts, will also be on trend.



GOOD GRIPS

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New face of BBY

Face Value and Beyond is a new division of Bed Bath and Beyond (BBY). In March of 2002, BBY bought Harmon stores, a chain of less than 27 freestanding stores in three states that were largely selling beauty and healthcare products. That acquisition gave the parent company a presence in a new market segment. Since then, the division has seen its name change, sometimes called Harmon, Harmon Face Values or Face Values.

End of NAFTA could cost retailers billions

Ending the North American Free Trade Agreement could cost Canadian retailers as much as \$21 billion per year and siphons as much as \$17 billion annually from the retail economy, according to a new analysis.

While the fate of NAFTA remains uncertain, Canadians currently have tariff-

free access to 94% of goods imported from the U.S., worth an estimated \$108 billion in 2015.

The A.T. Kearney analysis calculates the direct impact of rising tariffs will cost Canadian retailers between \$4 billion and \$21 billion for goods, assuming there will be a 20% tariff on all categories that are now tariff-free.

Indirectly, tariff increases could reduce retail sales by an estimated \$2.6 billion to \$17 billion with an accompanying slowdown in GDP.

Miniso will give dollar stores competition

Bright lights, clean minimalist design and flat-screens playing sleek promotional videos. This is what greets customers at the first Ontario location of Miniso, a Japanese-style value retailer that's planning a 500-store expansion into Canada over the next few years.

There will be a total of at least eight

locations in B.C. and two in Ontario by the end of this year, with plans to extend that to up to 50 Canadian stores in 2018 – a pace of growth that would make it a dollar-store disruptor and put it in direct competition with industry leader Dollarama.

Excited customers are apparently lining up to fill their baskets with Miniso-branded three-dollar water bottles, perfume, underwear, stuffed toys and Bluetooth speakers.

Amazon will team with digital food publisher Fexy Media on recipes consumers can shop through the e-commerce giant's two-hour Prime Now delivery service. Fexy, which owns Simply Recipes, Roadfood, Serious Eats, The Food Lab and Daily Parent, will offer recipes that feature a "Buy on Prime Now" button that puts the ingredients in shoppers' Prime Now carts.



When one door closes...

After Marianne Svarke, owner of To Set A Table, decided to close up shop and retire last fall, the residents of Oakville, Ontario, were worried their downtown core would no longer have a kitchen store. They didn't have to worry. On October 13th, former TSAT employee Carol Lacher, below left, together with her husband and partner, Dirk Hermanns, took possession of a brand new store, just down the street!

The official grand opening was on Saturday, November 18th, and featured a wine tasting hosted by Reidel.

Well merchandised with a nice flow, the store features tableware and unique



kitchen items such as handmade German knives. Carol has plenty of experience as a retailer and as a buyer. She was with Marianne for 15 years but before that, she spent 10 years at Embros with Allan Meinecke. (In fact, Dirk is the son of long-time Embros employee Gerti Hermanns!) Carol@nicety's.com * (905) 338-0275



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As the leading event of its kind in Asia, the HKTDC Hong Kong Houseware Fair attracts the industry's top suppliers and most prominent buyers. In 2017, the Fair featured 2,200 exhibitors and 29,000 buyers who took advantage of a comprehensive one-stop houseware showcase and educational seminars. Scheduled for April 20 to 23, 2018, the show is held concurrently with the Hong Kong International Home Textiles and Furnishings Fair.

Ambiente showcases young talent

The purpose of this promotional program at Ambiente, set for February 9 to 13 in Frankfurt, is to support young designers in networking with industry and a professional audience. Selected participants can choose between three areas where 30 young designers, studios and university graduates from 17 countries will present their exciting and refreshing designs:

The talent area Dining in Hall 4.0 will also be a forum on the subjects of cooking, good food and tableware. The Loft area in Hall 11.0 will focus on contemporary room concepts, furniture and home accessories. The talent area Fashion Accessories in Hall 9.2 will be a new one in 2017, featuring individual forms of expression through jewellery and accessories.

Many of the works focus on interesting material studies and craftsmanship as alternatives to conventional product worlds. "Globalization, digitization, individualization – our industry is going through a period of radical change. Young designers are responding with creative solutions that reflect the spirit of the time. These inspiring approaches will have a suitable platform in the Talents area," says Nicolette Naumann, Vice President of Ambiente.

Berlin product designer Anna Diekmann's products will be a highlight of the Dining talent area. Her elegant porcelain vases, bowls and vessels are based on extensive research and experimentation in authentic shapes and uncommon textures.

For details on Ambiente contact Neeta Correa at Messe Frankfurt Canada, phone (905) 824-5017.

NY Now has adjusted the summer market dates back to the preferred earlier schedule. The show will now be held August 12 to 15 at the Jacob Javits Center in New York City. In addition, NY Now will open and close all sections of its Home, Lifestyle and Handmade collections on the same dates. This change eliminates the staggered opening and closing pattern of past shows.

E-tailing conference a success

The second annual Home Improvement eRetailer Summit was held last week, bringing together manufacturers, distributors, and pre-qualified online and bricks-and-mortar retailers interested in increasing online sales of home improvement products through collaboration and partnerships.

The event, which was held at the Rosen Shingle Creek hotel in Orlando, Florida, offered an intimate environment for vendors and retailers alike to learn from each other and network to develop online strategies for mutual growth.

"The attendees represented a cross section of retailers, suppliers and technology companies with one common goal – to grow home improvement online sales," says Sonya Ruff Jarvis, Summit founder. "The delegates arrived with an open mind, willing to gain e-commerce intelligence and share insights to help each other improve their online sales strategies."

The summit included a day of presentations by leading e-commerce companies, with a keynote by Alyssa Steele, divisional merchandise manager for home and garden at eBay.

Retailers were looking for ways to meet the next challenge of online retailing, including the move by manufacturers to sell direct on Amazon or other e-commerce market places.

Information sessions revealed some harsh competitive realities. The online marketplace is dominated by Amazon, while Home Depot and Lowe's combined could account for \$40 billion in online sales within just a few years.

Elizabeth Ragone of Lenox, an online seller of dinnerware and kitchenwares, talked about the importance of telling stories to help sell products. She made the point that content is key for communicating not just the benefits and features of a company, but for reflecting the cultural values of the company itself. "Create an experience," she urged delegates.

While many companies are looking for ways to enter the online world, those companies living entirely in that space are dealing with new and different challenges from traditional retailers. Those challenges can include search engine optimization, product curation, and fluid pricing policies.

The Home Improvement eRetailer Summit connects manufacturers, distributors, and retailers who are interested in increasing online sales of home improvement products through collaboration and partnerships. It will be held November 7–9, 2018, in Chicago, IL. For information, please contact Sonya Ruff Jarvis: sonya@eretailersummit.com or 347-886-0275.





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- 1 onion, chopped
- 6 cups (900 g) butternut squash, peeled and cubed
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
- 5 cups (1.25 litres) chicken broth
- 1 small potato, peeled and cubed

Cajun Shrimp

- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1/4 tsp ground coriander seeds
- 1/4 tsp red pepper flakes
- 1/4 tsp herbes de Provence
- 1 lb (450 g) small raw shrimp, peeled and patted dry
- 1 shallot, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) lemon juice
- 1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tbsp chopped roasted pecans

Soup

1 In a pot over low heat, soften the onion, squash, and garlic in the oil for about 5 minutes. Add the broth and potato. Bring to a boil, then cover and simmer for 20 minutes or until the vegetables are tender.

2 Using a hand blender, purée the mixture until smooth. Add broth, if needed. Season with salt and pepper.

Cajun Shrimp

3 In a small bowl, combine the spices. Set aside.

4 In a large non-stick skillet over high heat, brown the shrimp and shallot in the oil. Add the spices, lemon juice and Worcestershire sauce. Season with salt and pepper.

5 Ladle the soup into bowls and top with the Cajun shrimp. Sprinkle with the pecans.

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Hello from the inside

Learning to listen to your instinct

By Candace Sutcliffe, President,
CA Paradis/The Chef's Paradise, Ottawa



"Let yourself be silently drawn by the stronger pull of what you really love"
– Rumi

I recently had the honour of being a guest speaker at a local business talk to a group of enterprising millennials. Subject line: the good, the bad and the ugly of entrepreneurship. Fortuitously, I have had a ton of experience that fits under each heading.

During the week leading up to the event, I made a short list of some of the more humorous events in my professional life that I thought would serve to both amuse and relate to the group; like the time I had to send a cleaning crew to a customer's home after his chocolate fountain exploded only to discover that he had filled it with chocolate containing nuts. Or the time I sent a \$3 cash refund by registered mail (which cost me \$10) because the client was so off put that one of my staff accidentally charged her for a "free gift". And then there was the time that I followed an abusive customer into the parking lot to let her know that I wasn't going to allow her to take advantage of our customer centric service anymore. (As a result, she now says hello and asks how I am before wandering the store).

Rehearsed and ready to take the stage, I suddenly looked around the room and asked myself what piece of wisdom I wish I had paid more attention to during the early days of my retail

(and life) journey. Instinctively, I decided on a last minute switch and instead shared stories on the importance of learning how to trust your intuition while finding ways to push through fear in order to achieve real success and happiness. A simple message but it's one that is often forgotten the more we become tech dependent.

Listening to your intuition is an age old business lesson; however, all too often, we try to rely purely on logic when making impactful decisions largely due to the fear of failure. Our instincts are actually based on a collective of subconscious feelings that can provide insight into experiences that your conscious mind might not have readily available. It allows you to make better decisions on the fly and reduces the stress of over-analyzing potential outcomes.

Like most muscles in your body, your instinct needs to be exercised over time. According to Lou Leon, founder of executive coaching firm Leadinary, the more you can identify times that your instinct led to positive results, the more clearly you will be able to learn to listen to your intuition during stressful or risky situations. He says "your instincts get sharper and more reactive the more you identify with them. Then, when you experience positive outcomes, it creates a positive feedback loop that you can relate to in other situations."

Business in general is clout with risk

but the current mood in the retail industry seems to be mild anxiety based on the large scale closures and mass reorganizing within the past five years. Because intuition is an instinctive trait, learning to trust your gut reaction as an entrepreneur can be invaluable in pushing your business outside the normal paradigms of which it currently exists.

Fear of failure and/or the unknown can be just as stifling to a business as making the wrong move. The more we try to rely purely on data, logic and technology to make decisions, the less likely we are to innovate new ideas. Listening to your intuition can serve to protect you against making a bad deal or investment, just as much as making the right hiring or buying decision but the facts should also help to support it. One of the more important lessons in exercising this tool is to remember that intuition is not an emotion. If a situation is making you feel anxious, nervous or stressed, it's important to be able to identify whether the reaction is an emotional one (namely fear).

2017 was a transformative year for me in many respects. I was finally able to align my personal and professional goals. Being mindful of your goals and learning to listen to the little voice inside your head will help you push through fear in order to find success. ☺

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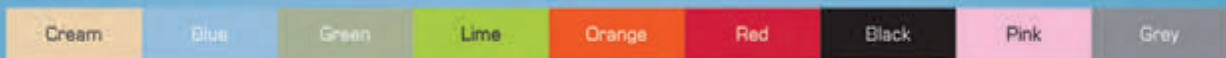
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Under the influence

Three of the top Public Relations experts in our industry discuss the influence that bloggers have today, and how retailers can use it their advantage

• Online influencers are now an integral first step in the customer journey. Brands have felt the unquestionable impact that online bloggers and social media influencers have made on the market. As such, one endorsement via an Instagram post or blog review can drive increased positive impressions for a product or service, influencing purchasing decisions and sales.

The landscape is evolving from traditional advertising to online influencers, with engaged communities that are highly popular due to their relational nature, founded on trust. This blogger-reader or influencer-reader relationship is really an extension (or digital equivalent) of word-of-mouth among friends and family whose opinions we trust. For bloggers with considerable followings, there is a mutual understanding between the blogger and their reader, that opinions expressed in the reviews are authentic, even when sponsored.

With the majority of blogs in North America centred around home and lifestyle, this means that houseware products and appliances are staged in a familiar, relatable home setting that allows for the content to translate more authentically for the consumer. Consumers have become desensitized to the advertising that they are bombarded with daily, which is the main reason bloggers are being utilized by brands as a new standard PR/marketing practice.

Online influencer programs are now integral to any successful brand's marketing and media efforts. Bloggers are a

new form of brand ambassador. Some have influence that transcends their primary online platforms, with television appearances, book deals, and other opportunities coming their way daily.

Between 70% and 80% of consumers research online reviews prior to making a purchase; as such, opinions found online can make or break a sale. While navigating online for reviews, a consumer may be steered towards a different brand of, say, 'coffee maker' than the original brand they were searching for. This is why working with high impression influencers is so important for search engine optimization (SEO).

Houseware retailers can utilize bloggers and other online influencers in endless creative ways. Engaging them to amplify events is a great way to reach retailers who can't attend. This tactic also gives in-store events a strong social presence. Bloggers can attend in-store events that may involve chef demonstrations or a 'meet & greet' with a media personalities. Such quality activations provide excellent content for both the blogger and retailer audiences.

Another option is partnering with an influencer to create engaging social media content and reviews. On a larger scale, the bloggers may feel a relationship or loyalty with said retailer. It may be an opportunity for the retailer to participate in giveaways or contesting that drives positive impressions and increases reach. As such, retailer gift cards can be used as an incentive to bloggers or to simply advertise a given retailer or a

specific promotion via the blogger's online and social properties. Influencers can be brought in to hype a new program, a service, unveil the results of renovation or launch a new line of products. It's all about creating a buzz, sharing stories, building trust and positive engagement, while supporting key PR, marketing and brand objectives.

The types of collaborations between brands and bloggers are evolving daily. Gift guides, blog lifestyle features, product reviews, social media content creation, contests and giveaways, television segments, and YouTube videos are just some of the ways that vendors and bloggers are working together.

Jim Birchall, Jim Birchall & Associates

• Social media has changed everything, including how consumers decide to buy products. Bloggers have become quite a force in influencing consumers, as more and more people follow them and listen to their recommendations. There are more consumers reading magazines and newspapers digitally than ever before and many of the articles and recipes are coming from bloggers.

Bloggers are becoming more visible, you see them on TV demonstrating their recipes rather than a chef, choosing their favourite products and blogging about their experiences with different products. You will see digital articles or posts from bloggers. I've seen so many new cookbooks come to market from blog-

Continued on page 30 . . .

Marketing Methods

gers in recent years. They have a voice and people are listening.

Listen to what the top bloggers are talking about and make sure you carry those products (there are top blogger lists available online). If you see an outstanding blog about a product you carry, share it on your Facebook page or newsletter and even print it and show it in the store. Start a conversation with a blogger, share your experience with a great product, maybe they will try it and share their own experience.

Vendors should be listening as well and starting a conversation with bloggers. Introduce your product to them, ask them to do a review. Work with them, offer product for a giveaway. Read what the blogger followers have to say about your product and share all the great reviews. Concentrate on bloggers who have a lot of followers, you may have to pay for them to do a review, but it could be money well spent. If you

haven't changed your Marketing plan to include social media you could be missing out on some great opportunities.

**Nancy Whitmore, President,
Gourmet Buzz**

- Bloggers are sources of inspiration for both consumers and retailers. This happens on Instagram with "food porn," quick one-minute or less demonstrations on how to use products or make specialty food. Through the demonstrations, which can be either product or cooking focused, followers can see the functionality of the appliances and can salivate over the food. YouTube bloggers also are validating products, which impacts consumer purchases.

The DIY movement in housewares is inspiring new cooking techniques, flavours and styles. Bloggers are also helping to make international and cultural foods accessible to customers. As a result, our world feels a little smaller.

Pinterest boards inspire customers to create new foods and provide step-by-step directions. Customers are able to cook, share their boards and comment on the ease of cooking. They are also sharing entertaining ideas – big for Millennials – introducing new barware, housewares or farm to table concepts.

Housewares retailers now have direct access to the influencers in this category. They can follow influencers. They can like and share, which keeps the conversation going with their customers. They can take online inspiration to develop in-store merchandising concepts.

There is no longer a need to second guess what customers like – just take a look at the engagement. How many likes? How many shares? Does it have celebrity endorsements? These new metrics indicate whether something is a hot item for retailers to stock and sell.

**Esther Ossei-Anto,
Las Vegas Market Brand Manager**

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Much more than an apple store

For four generations, the Cooney family has played an integral role in Hastings County with an apple orchard, a dairy farm and a general store that draws people from miles around

By Laurie O'Halloran

Operating an independent retail store is a difficult job. The hours are long, the customers are demanding, and the competition is fierce. Farming can be even more difficult with 14-hour days, endless chores and unpredictable weather that can ruin you in a single season. Combine both of those occupations and you have a recipe for exhaustion. Yet that is precisely what the Cooney family has done – and done very well – for decades.

Walking into Cooney's Apple Store is like taking a step back in time. Situated outside the picturesque town of Stirling, Ontario, it winds around Hastings County. The Cooney family has been a fixture in this tightknit farming community for almost a century. And the store

has become a surprising destination stop for locals and tourists enticed by the merchandising talents of Lisa Cooney, who has become the creative force in the family.

It all started back in 1920 when Theodore Cooney purchased a home and barn with 13 cows on 100 acres. He and his wife, Lyla, worked the farm while raising their nine children, including sons, Marvin and his brother. In 1964, the brothers purchased the farm from their father and brought in 100 cows for milking. A year later, the industrious brothers bought the local Stirling Dairy, which served the entire village. The Cooneys began processing and bottling their own milk and delivering it to customers door to door.

In 1971, they formed a partnership with a local processor who took over the milk distribution. It allowed them to expand their operation – which now included 260 head of dairy cattle – by purchasing the surrounding farms until



Top: Lisa Cooney's grandson Liam holds one of the apples donated by Cooney Farms annually to the Stirling Scouts Apple Day. Above right, three generations of Cooneys in front of the annual 'holiday apple trees', l-r, Jeanette, Lisa and Lynda. The store features a wraparound porch outside and antique hoosiers inside.





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Retail Profile: Cooney Farms

they owned 1,100 acres altogether. In 1973, they sold Stirling Dairy, but continued to work the fields.

By 1976, the Cooney brothers both had growing families so they decided to purchase the Hadley farm across the road. It was a 46-acre apple orchard and included a delivery route right through the Ottawa valley.

Suddenly, the Cooney brothers were in the apple business, with all the family members working the farm and living within a stone's throw from each other. The workload was heavy, and the days often began at 3 a.m., but the business thrived as they continued to innovate and modify their operation. Within a few years, their wives decided to join in on the fun.

Lisa married Rodney (Marvin and Lynda's son) in 1983. She had grown up a few miles away in Springbrook, and they met while playing baseball as teens. She was hands-on from the day she joined the family business. She became even more involved when they decided to open a retail store the year they were married. Until then, all apple packing was done in a small shop that had cold storage and the apples were sold at the farm gate. Now they had a brand new building, with a bin dump packing line and a larger, modern cold storage.

Before long, all the grocery customers on the apple route started asking if they

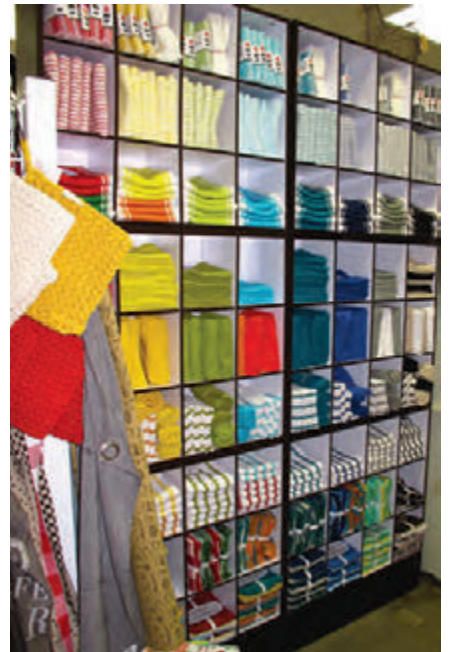
could supply farm fresh tomatoes. As Lisa says, "farm-to-table freshness is not new in this part of the country". Happy to comply, the Cooney brothers purchased a 52-acre farm to grow tomatoes and adding that crop to their delivery route.

The women manned the store, which now sold sweet corn and tomatoes as well as apples, while the men worked the farm, managing crews of up to 40 people at a time in the orchard.

In 1989, Rodney and Lisa, together with Marvin and Lynda, purchased his brother's 50% stake in the farm. Cooney Brothers was renamed Cooney Farms, but with the departure of his brother's family, they lost five knowledgeable people and decided to relinquish the apple route in order to focus on farming and farm gate sales.

Right from the beginning, Lisa had the most interest in the retail store. She could always see the potential for expansion beyond produce and before long Lisa, her mom, and Lynda started selling their own knitwear and arts and crafts in the store. In the 1990s they started bringing in local honey and syrup as well. By then, Rodney and Lisa had three daughters, Deanna, Candice and Jeanette, all of whom helped out.

Initially, the store was only open during apple season, from September to October. But by the time all three girls were in



school, Lisa was able to devote herself full-time to managing the retail operation. She read everything she could about retail merchandising and soon discovered Pacific Circle, a wholesaler near Toronto.

Lisa started adding country-themed giftware and kitchenware to the mix, and customers responded. It motivated her to think even more outside of the apple box, and by the time she attended her first Toronto Gift Fair in 1995, she knew she had found her true calling.

"I have always loved to shop," says Lisa. "And though the show was overwhelming, I loved doing the buying for the store."

Her artistic talents came in handy when selecting and displaying her



A customer supplied the antique stove that sits at the entrance, left. The store sells apples, beef and cheese in addition to hard goods and linens.

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Retail Profile: Cooney Farms

Photo Courtesy Bird's View Photos



Top: An aerial view of the Cooney Farm with Marvin in the combine and Rodney heading to the grain elevator. The Apple Store can be seen in the top right corner. Above: The old-fashioned penny candy counter is a big draw for children.

newly expanded range of products. Antique hoosiers, old bookcases, and an old cookstove are used to showcase themed vignettes throughout the store. Each one tells a story, and is designed to complement the 15 varieties of apples – which are sold by the bushel or bag – and the locally-made gourmet foods.

Lisa spent her time researching new suppliers and by 2000 was ready to expand the store's 1,200-square-foot area. They no longer need the bin dump packing line so it was removed. This allowed the wall to be removed and the store to grow to 2,400 square feet. The

outside was fairly industrial looking so they added a wraparound porch to give it a more welcoming, homey feel.

After expansion, Lisa was able to start importing products from across Canada and was always trying to better herself. She learned through trial and error, and found that by keeping the assortment fresh and changing the displays regularly, her customer base grew steadily – mostly by word of mouth.

By 2006, although they had always been innovative and forward-thinking, the Cooneys weren't ready to make the necessary investment in robotics or a bigger barn so they stopped the dairy farming operation. With a greater ability to focus on retail, the store stayed opened daily from May through to December. Lisa started going to the gift show twice a year, staying for all five days and attending as many seminars as

possible. She often took her daughters with her, but only Jeanette still works in the store today (as does Lynda).

Constantly seeking ways to better serve her customers, Lisa is always analyzing her retail strategies.

"I think retail is like a stage," she explains. "We are always preparing the show for the customer. Every day, when I open that door, the production begins and I am the director."

Even though it's located far off the beaten track, customers arrive steadily from miles around to visit the Apple Store because it offers so much more. They come for the aroma of hot apple cider and the cozy atmosphere, which includes an old-fashioned penny candy counter. The Cooneys even sell their own homegrown beef in the store.

Her growth as a retailer and merchandiser is evident to suppliers such as Jennifer Frankland, eastern Ontario sales rep for Danica. She has dealt with Lisa for seven years and says her confidence in her vision for her business grows each year.

"Lisa loves to continuously upgrade her knowledge as a retailer. When we work on an order, we work together as a team, which is how it should be in any sales rep/retailer relationship. She listens to all of the information about new products, trends and styles, and then makes decisions about products that she feels confident will suit her business. However, this does not mean that she is overly cautious about embracing new trends, quite the opposite is true. She loves bringing new products to her customers and is constantly evolving so that nothing gets stale."

For Lisa Cooney, life has been one big family affair and she brings that sense of unity and fun to the store through a variety of activities. At least once a month, the store hosts an event that attracts people young and old. There is a corn maze in the fall with a pumpkin patch, costumes at halloween and open houses with bluegrass entertainment. At Thanksgiving they offer complimentary Cooney beef on a bun and at Christmas they feature cookies and milk with

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Retail Profile: Cooney Farms



Lisa Cooney loves to shop, and will often search flea markets and antique stores for unique cabinets to display products.

Santa. During the holidays, Jeanette creates a pop-up shop in the back offering cute pajamas, socks and other gift items.

Her merchandising savvy appeals to a wide audience, but Lisa says the store typically attracts two kinds of customers. “The first is the loyal ‘in and out’ customer. They know exactly what they want, and as soon as they find it, they are on their way.”

She adds “the second is the escaper, someone looking to escape from their everyday ‘to do’ list. They come to enjoy the music, the hot cider (made on site), the smells, the tastes, the atmosphere. The store is a getaway for them, it’s entertainment, and they stay a long time.”

On any given weekend, you might see four generations of Cooneys working in the store. Lisa and Rodney now have five grandchildren, who love to help out in the back while munching on apples. Most of the kids still live close by, and Marvin and Lynda have built an

‘off-grid’ house down the road that uses only solar and wind power. (They engineered and designed it themselves, continuing the Cooney tradition of innovation and progressive thinking.)

Now 53, Lisa still works seven days a week in the store, often with the help of daughter Jeanette as well as Lynda. She is gradually shifting to more kitchenware and is even considering offering cooking or baking classes in the future.

She now deals with 125 different vendors and is thinking about opening year-round. But it’s hard to see how they’d manage, what with the farm, the store, beef cattle and the fact that the Cooneys also play an integral role in local politics. Yes, in addition to everything else they do, Lisa’s husband Rodney is not only the Mayor of the town of Stirling-Rawdon, he’s also the Warden of Hastings County. 🐾

www.cooneyfarms.com (The Apple Store)



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The International Home + Housewares Show is quite unique in itself as the focus is purely on new ideas, emerging trends and innovative products. For retailers across the globe, I am sure this platform offers a lot of trend-setting propositions across product categories that could be path breaking for their respective businesses.

Jubi Samuel, Associate Director – Home
Myntra.com, India



BE FOCUSED – five distinctive show-within-a-show expos set up for effective sourcing

- **Dine + Décor** – Features more than 800 exhibitors offering the latest innovations for the home & kitchen including products for food preparation, dining and entertaining!
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- **Wired + Well** – Features the latest kitchen, household and personal care electrics from over 300 exhibitors!
- **International Sourcing Expo & Global Design Points** – Features international products and global brand opportunities through country-specific pavilions! High design in Global Design Points and value-driven pavilions for your private label sourcing needs.

www.housewares.org/show/expos



The International Home + Housewares Show was a great experience that allowed me to explore U.S. brands and products. It is THE show where you can learn about the housewares market and the industry as a whole. Along with the high-quality exhibits, I am particularly impressed with the many services provided by the organizer, such as the free shuttle buses, free buyer lunches, and easily accessible coffee and beverage services, all of which make attending convenient and comfortable.

Gino Chen
AVP of Brand Agency
Test Rite Group, Taiwan



BE PRODUCTIVE – *unique value-added services and opportunities*

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www.housewares.org/show/expos-experiences

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www.housewares.org/housewaresconnect365

- **Free Services** – Free buyer services including Show entrance passes, daily buyers' lunch and efficient shuttle service to the nearby fairgrounds from downtown Chicago hotels

www.housewares.org/show/register-plan

- **Retail Benchmarking** – Easy access to benchmarking with leading U.S. retailers – *Williams Sonoma, Crate & Barrel, Sur La Table, The Container Store* and more, in downtown Chicago, or a U.S. retail overview and tour to suburban Chicago the day after the Show

www.housewares.org/show/guides

The Chicago Show is the key show in my calendar. It has a combination of amazing innovation and quality suppliers. We always find new and differentiated product and innovative ways to display and showcase it. The organisation is excellent, and the ability to visit quality retailers in Chicago is an added benefit. We are selective on the number of shows we go to - but this is a must!

Anna Berry
Head of Buying – Cooking & Dining
John Lewis Plc, United Kingdom



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Side by side

An enterprising young couple in Dawson Creek, B.C., find their retail niche after buying two stores together

By Jennifer Cox

When Brigitte Schilds and her partner, Andrew Ho, purchased Simple Pleasures together with The Northern Toybox in June of 2015, they had no idea where their new business venture would lead them. The two stores were a “package deal” and they shared a common warehouse in the back.

“We actually bought the toy store and it came with Simple Pleasures,” explains Brigitte, a lifelong resident of Dawson Creek in northern B.C. (Andrew moved to the area when he was five.) “I had known the owners, who bought the stores in 1995, since I was very small and had gone to school with their kids. They approached us to see if we’d be interested in buying it and at that point in our lives, it made sense.”

At the time, Brigitte worked as an office administrator, and Andrew was a piano teacher. She had attended school in Toronto and earned her undergrad while Andrew had “flitted around” southern B.C. and Halifax before they both found themselves back in Dawson Creek.

“We wondered ‘are we really qualified to do this?’ but once we started to consider the possibilities, we realized retail was something we wanted to try,” she says.

Fortunately Andrew had some

retail experience. His father ran a local pharmacy, and he had worked for him since he was old enough to reach the upper shelves.

Brigitte’s father was an accountant and he taught her the business side of things. With complementary skills that they hoped would serve them well, they decided to take the plunge and buy both stores.

One of the first things they had to do was decide what their “niche” would be

at Simple Pleasures, especially Dawson Creek had its fair share of retail stores. Because Brigitte and Andrew are self-proclaimed foodies, they chose to specialize in kitchenware as well as specialty cooking items.

“We’re really big chefs and love gourmet food, as much as you can be in a small town,” says Brigitte, “It was fascinating to see all the products that are available for gourmet cooking!”

They started to seek out one-of-a-kind items that were practical but interesting – products that would encourage people to experiment their kitchens. “We were so excited to share our hobby with our community.”

However, they weren’t the only giftware or kitchenware store in Dawson Creek. In fact, it was quite the opposite.

“Dawson Creek is a really interesting town because there are a lot of home décor stores, so we have a fair amount of competition,” Brigitte says. “But we are fortunate because we’ve been successful at filling a unique niche in the market. Our kitchenware selection is



Brigitte Schilds and Andrew Ho were married last year, one year after purchasing Simple Pleasures and The Northern ToyBox.

Retailer Profile: Simple Pleasures



extensive and very specialized – we try to bring in things that are a bit less conventional.”

She adds “we have a very long winter up here and people like to try out new recipes and new food preparation techniques. We try to carry practical, interesting gadgets rather than items that simply clutter up kitchens.”

Some of Simple Pleasures’ more popular speciality kitchen items include Madeleine tins and macaron pans, Danish doughnut pans as well as specialty fry pans that can be used for unusual dishes like Takoyaki (Japanese octopus doughnuts). Andrew has made them himself at home and so enjoyed the process, he decided it would be a great item to carry in their store.

They also offer a range of dinnerware and glassware, along with items for tea and coffee (including organic and fair-trade options), cooking utensils, gourmet food products and hot sauces, and aprons. (Brigitte’s favourite gadget right now is the Garlic Zoom.)

In addition to the kitchen items, the 1,100-square-foot store also houses giftware and seasonal home décor products. They have an extensive jewellery line as well and beautiful candles.

Brigitte and Andrew invest in local advertising to promote their unique product lines, particularly in kitchenwares. They were married last year, and are very active in the community, participating in musical events, and charity

events like Relay For Life.

“We advertise on local radio and TV, and we do a lot on social media. We also advertise on the local maps at the tourism centre because a lot of tourists pass through Dawson Creek every summer,” she explains. “We find that Facebook advertising gives us the most bang for our buck – you can get a lot of people to see it at a fairly low cost. But it’s not for everybody, and you have to spread out your advertising dollars.”

Brigitte admits that they rely heavily

on their store manager, Tammy Tryon, who does the majority of the product sourcing and buying. They currently work with more than 200 vendors, most of whom are Canadian.

“We all go to the Toronto Gift Fair twice a year and that’s where most of our purchasing is done. We get to see the items up close and touch the products, which is always beneficial,” she adds. “We source from some companies that are local to us as well, such as southern B.C. or Alberta, can be reached



Brigitte and her team try to source kitchen items that fulfill a specialized need, such as pans to prepare Takoyaki (Japanese octopus donuts).

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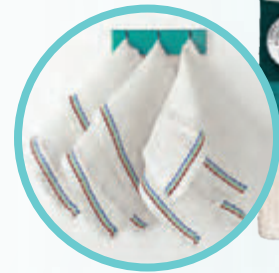
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Retailer Profile: Simple Pleasures

by car so we consider them 'local.' We try to have a Canadian-made focus to our assortment whenever possible."

In addition to the store manager, there are three other Simple Pleasures' employees: Justine Bouchard, Maureen Simard and Sara Spitz. But rather than providing their employees with "formal" training, they prefer a more hands-on approach to getting staff acquainted with their products.

"Most of our training involves simply spending time in the store, seeing how the products work and familiarizing themselves with our lines," says Brigitte. "If we get samples, we send them home so our employees can try them out. Our employees love the products in our store because they are either home chefs or fashionistas. We encourage our staff to meet with the sales reps, who are helpful about explaining why a product is useful and why we should

carry it at Simple Pleasures. Our reps are all really wonderful people – we're really fortunate."

So what's it like working side by side with your spouse on a daily basis? "Even though we come to work together every day, we're not necessarily side by side," says Brigitte. They make a point of doing things apart, including extracurricular activities, but for the most part, she says it's been an amazing experience to own a business together.

"It's a great life. I get to go to work with my best friend every day, and we have different strengths so we complement each other," says Brigitte. I deal with the bookkeeping and he does most of the retailing and purchasing. We have a good rhythm and we hope we can maintain it for many years." 🐦

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Cutting Edge

What's new in fine edge knives, boards & sharpeners



Trudeau is unveiling a new collection of fine edge knives, as well as a paring and utility knife (below) made with German steel blades. Available in various sizes, including a Santoku knife, the line features quality, tapered steel blades for precision slicing and a comfortable handle for control. The full tang, triple riveted construction adds strength.



Abbott has introduced three knives with the new 'squeak' design, featuring a mouse on the handle. The set includes a stainless steel cheese knife (below), pate spreader and cheese cleaver.



Joseph Joseph has created a new collection of bamboo chopping boards. The Index line, shown below, includes a set of three luxurious boards with a metal storage stand. Each board has a brushed metal Index-style tab indicating its specific purpose – raw meat, vegetables and cooked food.



The tough bamboo surface resists marking and is more hygienic than wood.

The Chop2Pot, right, is a folding, non-slip bamboo board that makes it simple to chop, fold and pour contents directly into the pot. It has a durable folding hinge and is available from **DanESCO**.



Epicure is the latest innovative cutlery line from **Wüsthof**, combining versatility and function in the kitchen. Epicure's wide, subtly curved blades are designed to increase efficiency and control, merging German quality and Japanese style. The broader blade design and half bolster are seamlessly married to an ergonomic handle made from wood composite material, offering the right weight and balance for effortless, comfortable cutting. Every Epicure knife undergoes a PEtec sharpening process developed by Wüsthof to achieve an edge that is 20% sharper with double the edge retention for a blade that will last a lifetime. For the consumer who loves to cook, this new line of knives will inspire creativity while enhancing performance. Available March 1st, 2018. (Also shown on our cover this month.)



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Cutting Edge



Farberware Edgekeeper knives feature innovative, built-in technology. The sheath is designed to automatically sharpen the blade every time it is used, maintaining its razor-sharp edge. The knives are made from high carbon stainless steel blades for strength and durability. The handles are ergonomically designed to provide a comfortable grip during use. Available from Accent Fairchild Group.

The **Zyliss** four-piece Starter Knife Set from Swissmar features brightly coloured handle accents and durable stainless steel blades. Great for the kitchen, RVs, boats, picnics and camping, the knives come with a protective sleeve to keep the blades sharp.



The top-rated Chef's Choice Trizor XV knife sharpener from **Edgecraft**, right, features diamond abrasives and a spring-loaded chamber that precisely and gently guides the knife blade. The sharpener consistently produces edges that are sharper from edge to tip. It can also remove nicks in a blade to extend the life span. The unit can easily convert from a 20-degree edge to a much sharper 15-degrees.



Entertainers will be ready to greet guests at a moment's notice with this stylish cheese set from **WildEye Designs**. The acacia wood board includes a set of four cheese knives contained in a built-in drawer.



This 14-piece knife block set from **Cuisinart** has nitrogen-infused stainless steel blades that are precisely tapered to create an extremely fine edge. Ergonomically designed stainless steel handles offer comfort while cutting and provide a sleek, contemporary look. Also new from Cuisinart is a 12-piece knife block, right. The nitrogen-infused stainless steel blades are precisely tapered to create an extremely fine edge that maintains its sharpness. Comfortable pakkawood handles are hygienic, moisture resistant, and durable.





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Cool Kitchen Tools

The latest in gadgets and utensils for the home chef



Your customers will stay cool with this handy Pinch Grip from **Trudeau**, left. It's textured for a secure, non-slip grip and the silicone material is stain and odor resistant. It's heat resistant to 428°F and safe to put in the dishwasher. Also new from Trudeau, the Pot Clip, right, easily slips onto the rim of most pots or bowls. It's designed to keep counters and stove-tops clean and can fit most handle shapes. It features an integrated slot for thin handle tools and is made of heat-resistant silicone that's dishwasher-safe.



The OXO Good Grips mandoline slicer from **Danescos** has angled Japanese stainless steel blades that are designed to slice foods with ease, left. Also new from Danescos is the Joseph Joseph TriPeeler, right. It incorporates three different blades, including a soft fruit blade. Simply push the button and pull out the blade head to switch the blades. It also has an integrated potato eye-remover and ergonomic easy-grip handle.



Inspired by the demands of fine French cuisine, Sabatier tools and gadgets are manufactured to arduous standards. The featured line of products from **Accent Fairchild Group** is made of high quality stainless steel with ergonomically designed handles for optimal balance, comfort and feel. Designed to accomplish a variety of everyday kitchen tasks.



Counseltron will launch the EZ Seal lid by Silicone Zone this spring. The odor-free EZ Seal can be used for storage or food preparation. It comes in a set of three for use on various size bowls and containers. It is BPA free and is freezer and microwave safe.

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Cool Kitchen Tools

This bamboo utensil set from **Now Designs** includes five handy tools with dipped handles. Each 12-inch utensil is adorned with a fresh white accent, or an array of rich colours.



This multifunctional Food Spiralizer is equipped with **Cuisinart's** exclusive food processor blade technology, which offers three cutting options: thin or thick julienne, and ribbon slice. The unit's vertical design makes for easy spiralizing, and is ideal for making zoodles, onion straws, potato chips or fruit chips. The BladeLock design eliminates the need to touch the sharp blades. The entire unit is dishwasher-safe.



The Norpro Multi Zest/Grater quickly zests citrus fruit and will also grate garlic, ginger, nutmeg or chocolate. The lid doubles as a small cutting surface for slicing and extra slices can be stored in the clear base in the refrigerator. The base is imprinted with imperial and standard measure marks. Hand washing recommended. From Ventures International.

The Norpro double barrel drum grater from **Ventures International**, above, includes an attachment for cutting corn off the cob. It comes with three stainless steel blade drums; one for fine and coarse grating, one for coarse grating and slicing and a double barrel that does both. The vacuum base holds it securely onto any smooth surface. Instructions included.



The Zyliss Easy Squeeze citrus press from **Swissmar**, above, has a heavy duty stainless steel press plate for maximum juice extraction. The removable top allows for easy cleaning. Swissmar is also launching two new CDU's for the Y-Peelers. They are the perfect, compact merchandising vehicle for these unique Swiss-made Curve Peelers.



The **Microplane** butter blade, left, will effortlessly slice, spread and form butter into perfectly shaped curls using a unique blade design. The bottom side features three rows of tiny holes to create soft strands. Also new from Microplane is this new dark blue classic zester. The premium grater joins a growing palette of colours.



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Home Baking

New pans and products that make baking a breeze



The **Nordic Ware** Naturals Bakeware line, left, is commercial quality, made of pure aluminum. These rust-free pans produce evenly browned baked goods every time. Rims are reinforced with galvanized steel to prevent warping. Four additional sizes in round cake pans are now available. Nordic Ware also introduces a new Premier Gold cast line of Little Bundt pans, such as the Lotus pan, shown right. This gold colour has been adopted as the company's exclusive new Signature line.



Cuisinart presents bakeware that is elegant enough to take to the table. The professional series of ceramic bakeware is heavy, commercial quality stoneware that gracefully moves from oven to broiler to table to freezer. It's even microwave safe. The non-porous glaze will not absorb moisture or odors, so foods cooled and served in this ceramic bakeware maintain their natural flavor and juices. Available in two colours.



Douceurs bakeware line by Emile Henry is now offered in pale grey. Made in France and distributed by **Browne**, it's safe for the oven, freezer, microwave and dishwasher.



Counseltron's set of five Pie Crust Shields make baking pies easy. The shields are heat resistant insulator strips that protect pie crusts from excessive heat by retaining adequate moisture. Simply place them

around the pie in a circular fashion and adjust to appropriate size. They are BPA free and dishwasher and freezer safe. Also new is this Hello Kitty Baking Mat by Silicone Zone. The BPA-free mat dissipates heat rapidly to prevent burning. The patterns can be used to distribute dough evenly.



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Home Baking



OXO Good Grips bakeware range includes this cooling rack, left, made of durable carbon steel with a PFOA-free non-stick finish for easy release. The silicone dough rolling bag with measurements, right, is designed to help bakers easily roll out pizza, pie and cookie dough in perfect rounds. The silicone transfers the dough effortlessly. Available from **DanESCO**.



This heart shaped casserole with lid from **Le Creuset** is protected by a hard-wearing layer of enamel that resists damage from heat and utensils. The light yet durable Stoneware is ideal for baking pies, quiche, or casseroles. The smooth interior glaze and even-heating design helps food cook more uniformly.



The Heart Springform Cake Tin is the perfect gift for a homebaker looking to extend their repertoire. Le Creuset Metal Bakeware bakes evenly and a non-stick coating ensures excellent food release. A clever clip-sided tin with removable base makes it easy to serve any dessert. Simply release the silicone-covered clip to allow the sides to expand, freeing the base so the tin can be easily lifted away.



The retro-inspired Modglass line from **Now Designs** is oven safe up to 400°, top left. The vintage glass dishes protect food in the fridge or freezer and can also go in the microwave. Available in square or round shapes. Also new is a line of 'dough risers', left. Reusable and machine washable, the elasticized edging on the cotton risers fit large mixing bowls without slipping.



Swissmar's new range of Jamie Oliver bakeware is designed to withstand temperatures of up to 475°F. The cake and tart pans won't warp and the heavy-duty carbon steel construction and non-stick Quantum II coating means it's made to last. The 9-inch palette knife, above right, has a distinctive wood handle, with dipped end.





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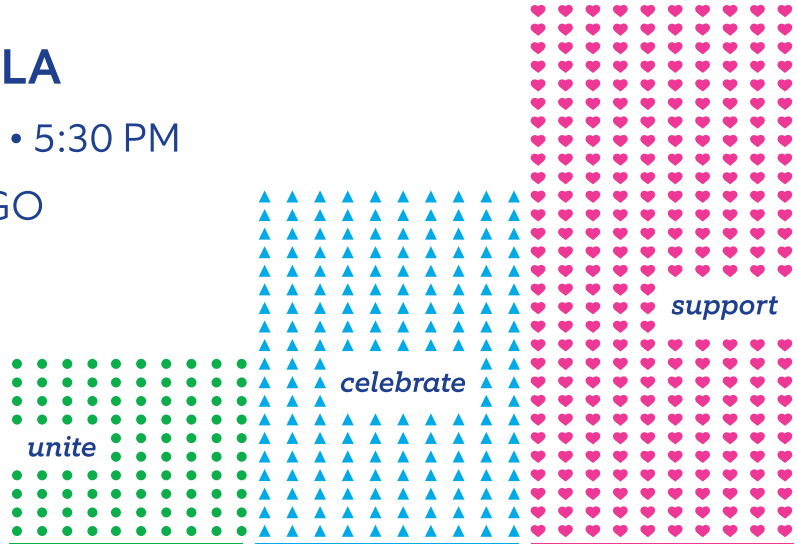
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Toronto Gift Fair

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Housewares retailers have come up with some creative ways to entice retailers on the floor of the Toronto Gift Fair this January. From contents and prize draws to international product premieres, the January show will offer plenty of exciting opportunities for visitors, right. (Watch for details on a special housewares social event now being planned for the August fair.)

The year ahead will be the last full year with the Gift Fair split between the two locations on Airport Road. By August of 2019, all exhibitors at both the Toronto Congress Centre (most housewares exhibitors are housed in Hall 7) and the International Centre will be relocated at the Congress Centre.

Although initially there was talk of TTC expanding the North Building by 55,000, that has since fallen through so the Canadian Gift Association is faced with the task of merging all current exhibitors into one facility.

This consolidated gift show will be much easier for retailers to shop. The new floor plan will keep the same six categories (Bed, Bath & Linen, Fashion Accessories, Gourmet Foods, General Gifts, Housewares, and the seasonal Tourist, Resort and Imprinted Products Section) but will add Home Décor in 2019 and brand the area Home Accents and Furnishings.

In concert with the show's consolidation, the CanGift board felt the show should appropriately represent the wide range of products available at the country's premier giftware event. They felt the show name should reflect the expanded retailer education and opportunities being offered at the show. As a result, it was decided the new consolidated show will be renamed the *Toronto Gift and Home Market*.



• A draw will be held at the **DanESCO** exhibit and the winner will receive the Joseph Joseph Intelligent Waste system with a value of \$400. Visit **Booth 7103**

• **Ventures International** will be having a draw in the booth for a \$250.00 prize (to be redeemed at wholesale in the form of a credit note). Visit **booth 7327**.

• Visit **Counseltron** at **Booth 7225** and enter into a draw to win a beautiful Lodge Limited Production skillet.

• **Don Schacter + Associates** will be hosting a draw for \$250 worth of products. Visit **Booth 7035**.

• Place your order at the **WWRD** exhibit

• **Wüsthof** will give visitors a chance to win a beautiful Epicure Santoku knife, shown below, valued at \$269. The draw will be held at the end of the show in **Booth 7814**.



and you could win a prize valued at \$250. Visit **Booth 7307**

• **Jascor** will collect business cards from all Retailers that visit **Booth 7213** (whether or not an order is placed). Three cards will be drawn and the winners will receive the following gifts: an ISI Classic Soda Syphon w/ replacement Chargers - Value \$200; Ta da collection - Value \$150; An Architec Acacia concave Carving Board with Grip-Per technology - Value \$100.

• **Danica** will be offering one lucky person \$400 in travel vouchers with WestJet. They will also receive the new Danica Studio travel accessories appropriately from the "Adventure Awaits" collection. The line includes a keepsake tin, matching zippered pouch and matching travel bag all in a coordinating tote. Visit **booth 7403**





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Show Product Preview: Toronto Gift Fair



Intercontinental Mercantile will be showing all the latest from Lékué, including these Spiral Savarin

silicone molds for making Bundt Cakes, right. Lighter and easier to handle than metal molds, silicone molds are non-stick and cool more quickly.

ICM will also launch a new bamboo tabletop program, available in four trendy colours with eco-friendly packaging. Shown below, the line includes bowls, plates, round trays and salad servers. Made from biodegradable bamboo fibre, each piece has a fresh, natural look and is dishwasher-safe. **Visit Booth 8229**



Cuisivin will introduce its new in-house customization program for all drinkware and accessories. With fast turnarounds and low minimums, retailers can easily customize products for promotions.

Visit Booth 7338



Now Designs will feature these house-shaped hometown canisters, designed to store dry goods like flour or pasta. Made of ceramic with a silicone seal lid. Also on display will be a new line of chef's aprons, below, with an adjustable neck strap and extra long waist ties. **Visit Booth 7403**



PSI will introduce Up & Away, a collapsible silicone bottle bag. Just pull to expand. It's both reusable and eco-friendly. Compact and easy to use, the BPA-free food grade silicone bottle bag comes in four colours.

Visit Booth 7621



Le Creuset has unveiled a new Toughened Non-stick cookware line. Each piece is constructed through a hot forging process that prevents warping and ensures even heat distribution. It's composed entirely of 100% PFOA-free reinforced coating. **Visit Booth 7135**

Show Product Preview: Toronto Gift Fair

Stop by **DanESCO** to see the new Stasher Sous Vide bag. The half gallon bag is designed to be placed in boiling water to cook food evenly while retaining moisture. The food-safe, 100% pure platinum silicone bag has no harmful chemicals that can leech into food. It's also safe for the microwave and the dishwasher.

Visit Booth 7103



In addition to the latest glassware from Waterford, **WWRD** will highlight the beautiful Wedgwood Burlington Pot line. Crafted in the traditional Jasper blue and white layered by colour inside a mold by hand. **Visit Booth 7037**

Jogi's Imports returns to the fair this January with the launch of Dual Sponges, the latest addition to the Universal Stone family. These two-sided sponges are perfect for cleaning ultra-delicate surfaces. Made in Germany, they're extra durable and won't tear apart or hold any moisture smells. The sponges are sold in packs of four with bilingual packaging. **Visit Booth 7455**



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Show Product Preview: Toronto Gift Fair

Don Schacter + Associates (DS+A) will showcase several brands, including Samuel Lamont and Sons. The UK company offers a line of Poli Dri dish towels that provide exceptional saturation and absorption rates, below. They're available in 12 standard colours and six prints.



DS+A will feature this Cheese Trio chef's plate from SPARQ Home. Made from ash wood and soapstone, it makes a perfect serving platter to keep cheese cool with three indentations to place condiments.

The Big Peeler by Damian Evans Design can handle a variety of fruits and vegetables. Available from **DS+A**, it has a cone shaped handle that makes it easy to grip, even when hands are wet. A potato eye remover is blended into the right support arm. **Visit Booth 7035**



Swissmar has added new colours to the Lugano and Sierra fondue sets. The sets are now offered in Metallic Black, shown below, and Matte White in addition to cherry, blue, orange and matte black.



Swissmar will also show this classic Scanpan sauté pan. It has tall edges and is made of hand-cast aluminum for quick heating. Made in Denmark, it's ideal for gas or ceramic stovetops. **Visit Booth 7322**

Ventures International will be showing a range of exciting new items from Norpro in addition to a new range of Weck storage jars, shown below. The premium jars can be used for a variety of applications around the home in addition to canning. **Visit Booth 7327**



The Hot Stuff trivet will be on display at the **Wild Eye Designs** exhibit. This whimsical conversation piece is perfect for entertaining, it can hold hot dishes straight from the oven. **Visit Booth 11047 (New Location!)**



Orly Cuisine has announced that the company will now offer the professional collection of Strauss Pro cookware to kitchen boutiques in Canada. The 18/10 stainless steel cookware comes in a variety of sizes. Orly will also show the new 3 ply Josef Strauss Integral 3 cookware, offered in sets or as open stock. **Visit Booth 7287**



Show Product Preview: Toronto Gift Fair



Browne has returned to the Toronto gift fair after a brief absence and will be showing the Spadle by Dreamfarm, above. The Spadle is a versatile spoon that twists into a ladle. As a large cooking spoon, it has all the features of the best selling Supoon and a handle that acts as a built-in spoon rest. A simple twist of the handle turns it into a soup ladle.

Visit **Booth 7427**



Peugeot Mills and Wine Accessories were recently featured in a unique culinary exhibition at the Idea Exchange/Design at Riverside Art Gallery in Cambridge, Ontario. The At My Table exhibit, above, will be on display until January 21st and highlights quirky and essential items for the modern cook. Design at Riverside is the only municipal gallery in Canada dedicated exclusively to architecture and design exhibition. Visit **SBO Distributors** at the Toronto Gift Fair in **Booth 11239**

VISIT US at the Toronto Gift Fair
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Las Vegas Market

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The proprietary *FIRST LOOK* trend forecast will be a highlight of the January edition of the Las Vegas Market, set to open January 28th. It will showcase four central themes – Romantics & Realists, Easy Now: Housewares & Dining, Year of the Dog and Storytellers – at the January market.

Romantics & Realists

Paint brands have released their top color picks for 2018, and the hues alternate between fiery red and watery blues to stately grays and atmospheric neutrals. Merchandise will feature warm, natural wood finishes; modern silhouettes in white; warm metal finishes; fresh takes on traditional forms; landscapes and floral patterns; and cognac-colored leather.

Storytellers

Storytellers will be this season's nod to handmade, fair-trade and certified home and gift products. Any products – and the stories behind them — that showcase creativity, craftsmanship and good cause will be featured in this trend category.

Easy Now: Housewares & Dining

Time-saving housewares make fast work of kitchen prep. This season, *FIRST LOOK* is featuring brunch-friendly house-

wares and more, including: casual dining sets, buffets, bistro tables/chairs, bar carts, dinnerware, glassware, serveware, flatware, table linens, housewares, small appliances, gourmet products and on-the-go beverage containers.

Year of the Dog

It's the Year of the Dog, and *FIRST LOOK* will celebrate our loyal, dependable four-legged companions in a playful vignette that crosses all Las Vegas Market product categories. Merchandise will include furnishings, gifts and tableware.

FIRST LOOK curator Julie Smith Vincenti will assemble a selection of product vignettes in a showcase display located in the Grand Plaza. These directional trends and related products also will be featured in a companion guide, to be distributed at all registration areas. Smith Vincenti will host a free, CEU-accredited *FIRST LOOK* seminar, on Monday, January 29, from 10 am to 11 am., reviewing the latest forecasts and providing additional insights from industry thought leaders.

Las Vegas Market is the fastest growing gift and home décor market in the western U.S., presenting 4,000+ gift, home décor exhibitors. For details, visit www.lasvegasmarket.com.

HomeWorld Business to host 13th Design Awards Celebration

Las Vegas Market will host the 13th Housewares Design Awards Celebration on Tuesday, January 30th. The 2018 event will encompass an industry networking opportunity, celebration of finalists, announcement of winners and presentation of the Design Influencer of the Year Award to Joanne Domeniconi, co-founder of The Grommet. It's presented by *HomeWorld Business*, hosted by Las Vegas Market and sponsored by Whitford. During the event, 55 finalists will be recognized, and 11 "Best in Category" winners will be announced. Finalists include:

Cookware & Bakeware: Cooking Miracle - Smartbowl System; Emile Henry - Soup Pot; Lifetime - Sabatier Pre-Seasoned Cast Iron Cookware; Newell - Calphalon Space Saving Cookware; and SCANPAN USA - PRO S5 9.5-inch Fry Pan.

Countertop Cooking & Beverage Appli-



ances: Chefman - Perfect Pour Volcano Belgian Waffle Maker; Fagor America, LUX LCD - Multi-Cooker; JURA - Capresso Froth Control; and JURA J6; and Midea America - Midea Glass Kettle.

Countertop Food Prep Appliances: Bianco Asia - Multi-function Vacuum Pump; Braun - MultiQuick 9 Hand Blender; Lidl - Silvercrest Juicer and Smoothie Maker;

and TRIBEST- DynaproVacuum Blender.

Countertop Kitchenware: Architec Brands - Gripperwood Acacia Grilling & Concave Board; Botto Design - 1/2 Smart Storage System; DKB Household - Cole & Mason Duo Oil & Vinegar Pourer; OXO International - Silicone Oven Mitt; and Typhoon Homewares - Mason Cash In The Forest Flour/Coffee Canister.

Cutlery & Cutting Tools: Cangshan Cutlery - TC Series; Chef Randall - Bolo Original Rolling Knife; DKB Household - Zyliss Control Cutlery; Ginsu Brands - 14-Piece Knife Block Set in Purple; and Wüsthof - Classic 4.5-inch Asian Utility Knife.

Gadgets & Kitchen Tools: Bradshaw - GoodCook TOUCH Ice Cube Tray; Lifetime Brands - KitchenAid Citrus Press; Mastrad - Express Spoon; OXO International Good Grips Gravy Fat Separator (left); and RSVP International - Balloon Quick Whisk.

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Show Product Preview: Las Vegas



This attractive three-tier ladder-style folding shelf from **Hanna's Handiworks**, below, provides interesting storage options for the kitchen or bar. With a built-in chalkboard to display a menu or daily greeting, the wooden shelf folds away quickly for easy storage when not in use. The company will also be showing a range of home decor items for consumers on a budget.

Visit Booth C-00991



Burgundy Oak Group will be exhibiting a range of tableware with wood accents. The authentic Lazy Susan, above, makes a great showpiece and serving tray. It's 100% food safe. The fruit bowl, below, creates a perfect cradle for fruit, bread or appetizers. It's also 100% food safe.

Visit Booth B279-43

Design Imports will showcase the Fresh Catch collection, including a Captain's Wheel chip and dip set, above, made of hand painted ceramic. The Sail Away embellished dish towel, below, is ideal for the cottage or beach house. Available in packs of 12.

Visit Booth C1101



The contemporary Amici flatware set from **Alessi**, below, is made of 18/10 stainless steel. It's designed by Big Game, a Swiss interior design studio. This is the second collaboration with Alessi.

Visit Booth C189



Mod Mist opaque glass plates and bowls from **Annieglass** were inspired by Monterey Bay. The unique shape blends seamlessly with the company's other collection. Available in three sizes for entertaining and gift giving.

Visit Booth C507





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Show Product Preview: Las Vegas



Licensed artist Valentina Harper has created a highly detailed collection for **Ganz** that every dog owner will love. Art canvases, mugs, desk plaques and magnets feature intricate images of 12 different breeds on bold backgrounds. Also new are Ganzspoons, below. These classic 12-inch long wooden spoons come with 12 different sayings on the handle. Each has a polka-dot ribbon loop for display.

Visit Booth C-912



The Abingdon plaid tabletop collection from **C&F Home** adds something new to the holiday table. The rich hues of burgundy and hunter green combine in a classic plaid design with a rustic twist. The company will also show a range of kitchen towels and aprons

Visit Booth



This large 20-inch Fish Camp serving tray from **Golden Rabbit** is made of Porcelain Enamel on Steel. The pattern is available in a full line of dinnerware and serveware that is stove top, oven and dishwasher safe. The fish design was created in the traditional Japanese Gyotaku style.

Visit Booth C854



This beautiful serving tray from **Kiyasa** is available in two colours of white and grey, decorated with a white chain of embroidery all around. Made of 100% phthalate-free, stain resistant vegan textile. **Visit Booth C153**



Gorky Pottery will feature these flower-shaped plates from Mexico. Each piece is made by hand in the Gorky Potter workshop and is hand-painted. Gorky Gonzalex is considered the rescuer of the Majolica technique of crafting pottery in Guanajuato, Mexico. Each plate is food-safe and available in a range of bright, lively colours.

Visit Booth DD1112 (Bldg C)

Show Product Preview: Las Vegas



UK designer **Sophie Allport** has created a range of whimsical kitchen textiles. The Flamingo Collection, left, features an apron made of 100% cotton (also available in kids oilcloth), a bone China Mug, a double oven glove (made of 100% cotton with heat resistant padding) and a 100% cotton tea towel. **Visit Booth C1039**



The Laser Cut Luminous collection of placemats from **Sparkles Home** are sparkly, yet modern. Thousands of tiny rhinestones are glued to a protective rubber sheet and then laser cut into an intricate design. Available in silver, gold, and black. **Visit Booth P1-209**

The Farmhouse ceramic cutlery jar, below, is available in three sizes from **UMA Home Decor**. The cylindrical shape of the body features letterings about animals with a rustic farmhouse look. The durable set is made of 100% porcelain material. **Visit Booth C707**



Santorini is the new design from **Le Cadeaux**. It mixes blue tones for a fresh, vibrant look and is available in the full range of tabletop items as well as our gift sets paired with Laguiole utensils. **Visit Booth C854**



The Bleecker Street set of four On The Rocks glasses by **Rolf** is an inspired mix of brilliantly polished diagonal and vertical lines. The 11-ounce glasses are dishwasher-safe and diamond-wheel engraved. **Visit Booth C109**

Stylecraft will be showcasing a range of stylish natural wood home accessories. The clear lacquer Badance natural teak coffee table below, has iron 'paper clip' legs. Also new is the Mango Wood carved 'Tree of Life', right. **Visit Booth A352**



Show Product Preview: Las Vegas



The Signature Collection of monogrammed anti-fatigue mats from **Wellness-Mats** combines ergonomics, high design and the customization that consumers demand. They're available in eight rich colours and two elegant patterns (Gatsby or Heirloom) for every room in the home.

Visit Booth C1155

Hand crafted kitchen towels from **Miss Mavis Fun House** are washable works of art. Made individually on a special sewing machine, each towel is one of a kind.

Visit Booth C1156



Handmade of reclaimed granite, **Sea Stones** Mighty Coasters have a sturdy build that ensures these coasters will never stick to a glass table. They make a beautiful pedestal for any beverage. The solid hardwood caddy makes it easy to carry the set of four with one hand. Both coasters and caddy are finished with felt feet to protect surfaces.

Visit Booth C1106

Costa Nova will launch the Cristal Collection in Las Vegas. The glazed stoneware dinnerware is made in Portugal and was inspired by the rich patterns found in sublime crystal and is available in a sophisticated grey colour.

Visit Booth C139



The Table Tower from **Vinotive** is filled by allowing wine to pass through a "rain filter" which aerates the wine releasing the bouquet on it's way into the decanting vessel beneath. With a little lift of the stainless steel gravity fed valve, a glass of wine is served within seconds. An elegant way to serve all kinds of wine, it's also an eye catching table top conversation piece.

Visit Booth P1-2115



Bicycle can glasses will be featured at the **Vital Industries** exhibit. The 16-ounce glasses are durable and safe for the top rack of the dishwasher. Made in the U.S.

Visit Booth C1112QQ

Keep up with the Smart Home at the Chicago Show

By Jon Jesse, V.P. Industry Development International Housewares Association.

Consumers' increasing embrace of the smart home and the automation that is transforming the way they live offers the housewares industry opportunities to expand its implementation of smart technology to new categories and products. From Millennials to Gen Xers to Baby Boomers, consumers are looking to fill their spaces with connected products for every room in the home and housewares suppliers are happy to oblige. Carley Knobloch, a digital lifestyle expert with a passion for smart home innovations, says, "A truly smart home is as beautiful as it is intelligent – the gadgets fade into the background, and you just feel like life is easier."

The 2018 International Home + Housewares Show – set for March 10 to 13 in Chicago – will provide retailers with the latest developments in the smart home movement with an expanded IHA Smart Home pavilion, educational sessions and networking opportunities.

The IHA Smart Home pavilion expands with more than 25 exhibitors of smart home brands and connected products presenting the future of housewares. The pavilion will also offer increased education and networking opportunities. Smart Talks is a new educational stage in the pavilion and will feature presentations, panel discussions, interviews with industry leaders and more all Show days.

Retailers can network with colleagues, exhibitors and smart home experts at the Smart Bar, a new lounge in the pavilion offering charging stations,

seating areas and a beverage bar. In the morning, the lounge will feature Starbucks coffee and in the afternoon attendees can relax with a craft beer. A list of exhibitors and the Smart Talks schedule is available at www.housewares.org/show/iha-smart-home.

Be sure to pick up the 2018 *Smart Home Magazine*, which provides information and education on this trending category as well as spotlights smart home exhibitors and programs throughout the Show. In addition, exhibitors with smart and connected products in other Show expos will have booth signage indicating their smart home products.

The Show's educational program features several sessions focusing on smart home issues and developments in connected products. The keynote session at noon on Sunday, March 11, will address "Building Smart, New and Sustainable Business Models for the Kitchen of the Future."

Mike Wolf, curator and founder of the Smart Kitchen Summit, will moderate a panel of thought leaders, including digital lifestyle expert Carley Knobloch, who will detail the impact of the smart home on the housewares industry and offer strategies to help buyers and sellers succeed in this new era of the connected home.

Several programs in the Innovation Theater, located near the Hall of Global Innovation in the Lakeside Center Lobby, will focus on the smart home. The sessions include "Smart Home Mass-Market Adoption: Are We There Yet?" and "The State of the Connected Kitchen" on Saturday, March 10; and "Do I Even Need to be Here? A Human's Role in the Smart Kitchen" and "Connecting the Smart Home to the Homeowner" on Sunday, March 11.

To register for a free entrance badge or for more information, please visit www.housewares.org/show.

Accent Fairchild Group	11
Breville	67
Canada Night	69
Counseltron	15
Cuisinart Canada	47
Cuisivin	65
DanESCO	19, 31
Danica/Now Designs	14, 45
Edenborough	7
Edgecraft/Chef's Choice	44
Faema/Jura	53, IBC
Gourmet Catalog	63
Groupe SEB	51, OBC
Hamilton Beach	9
Hong Kong Houseware Fair	17
IHA Charity Gala	57
IHA-International Hswres Show	37-40
Intercontinental Mercantile	23, 61
Jogi's Imports	43
Las Vegas Market	6
Le Creuset	2, 3
Melitta	58, 59
Meyer Canada	5
NY NOW	8
Nordic Ware	10
Orly Cuisine	35
Portmeirion/Royal Selangor	33
Port-Style Enterprises	29
Product Specialties	12
PSP Distributors (Peugeot)	21
Ricardo	24, 25
Trudeau	13
Ventures International	36
Wüsthof Canada	49

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Made in Canada merger

Home Style speaks to Evan Feldman, President and CEO of Meyer Canada, about the company's recent purchase of the Padinox factory and manufacturing operations in P.E.I.

Why were you interested in Paderno?

As early as 2013 Meyer Canada was considering opportunities for new brands, with the understanding that our KitchenAid license would end in 2015 after 15 years. From that point on we were evaluating how we could continue to invest, build and grow our Canadian Cookware presence.

Meyer Canada first started selling cookware in Canada in 1981 as a partnership with Meyer International Holdings and have since been completely invested in the Canadian Cookware business. We had conversations with the Casey family, owners of Padinox, over the years but their business, which included retail stores, did not fit well with Meyer Canada's business model.

In early 2017 we became aware that Canadian Tire was interested in acquiring the Paderno brand and retail stores. This presented a unique opportunity for Meyer Canada to purchase the manufacturing and operational assets in order to establish our North American stainless steel production facility.

Meyer International Holdings has manufacturing facilities in China, Thailand, Italy and Canada. This month we'll begin producing non-stick aluminum cookware in our Vallejo, California facility.

How was the buyout structured?

The transaction was quite simple. Canadian Tire purchased the shares of Padinox which included all the IP, brands and retail stores. Meyer Canada purchased the manufacturing and wholesale distribution operations.

Key requirements of the transaction were that the Canadian manufacturing would continue as the heritage is tied to P.E.I. and 'Made in Canada'. We also had to ensure employees would contin-

ue to have roles and jobs, and the facilities would be maintained. The relationship between the Casey family, Charlottetown and Paderno continues.

Financial details are confidential, but from the start, the plan was business as usual. Not a day of production was missed. For employees, the only change was the name on the payroll receipt.

How will you integrate Paderno into your existing structure?

The new P.E.I. facilities are now Meyer P.E.I. – the P.E.I. manufacturing and distribution division of Meyer Canada. Our first priority was to ensure that all existing commitments were met and the expected quality standards that built the Paderno reputation were maintained.

The transaction closed in July 2017 and since then, we've been evaluating systems, equipment, facilities and processes with a view to increase capacity and optimize production.

Working with our manufacturing teams in Asia and Italy we will begin to invest in automation and more efficient production planning as we look to grow the 'Made in Canada' offering of product and specifications in the market. The Canadian manufacturing facility will focus on better and best in class stainless steel product. We'll use this new production to supplement our existing brands and OEM products and to develop new stainless steel business.

In 2016, Meyer Canada decided to invest more in our independent gourmet business with premiere brands such as Hestan, Ruffoni, Anolon and Circulon as well as Breville Cookware (our licensed brand). The ability to produce Meyer Commercial and Professional cookware in Canada and use Paderno's existing sales teams presented a great advantage for Meyer Canada. We are

also working on launching a new brand and assortment anchored by the 'Made in Canada' range.

All Gourmet brands will be warehoused in our P.E.I. distribution facility in order to combine shipments. As well, Meyer Canada will be growing our presence at the Toronto Gift Fair.

How have the employees responded?

As with all change, there was some concern, uncertainty and apprehension about the unknown initially. Our operational teams spent significant time with the P.E.I. team, integrating them into our Canadian and global group. There are wonderful synergies and everyone is excited about the potential.

During the initial transition period it's been business as usual as we support all trade partners and commitments.

As seen in the product design and marketing (and recent TV campaign) Canadian Tire is working to reposition and present a new and refreshed Paderno to the Canadian consumers.

As the Meyer 'Made in Canada' business and the Paderno business grows the P.E.I. team and all suppliers including the Canadian suppliers will benefit.

What are your long-term goals?

We'll make a significant investment in the facility and production capacity and we're developing two new ranges of tooling to produce in Canada. With the competitive advantage we have working in a Canadian dollar cost base, with 48 hour shipping lead time and no duty for Canadian-made products, plus the experience and innovation of the Meyer team combined with a fantastic team in P.E.I., we are looking forward to significant growth for years to come. 🍷



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