

TREND *watch*

By Beth Anderson



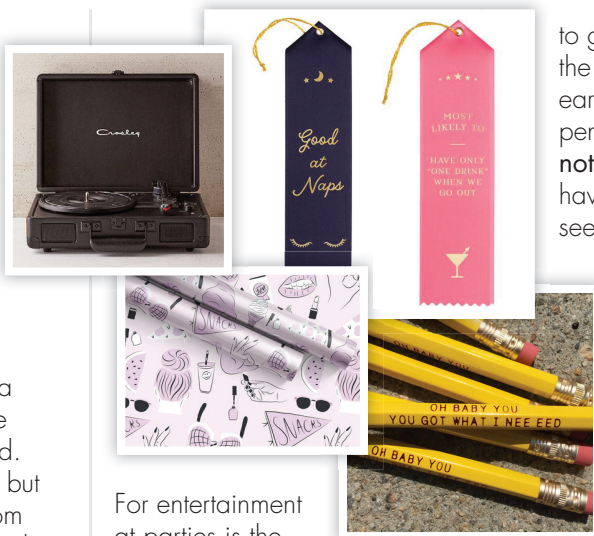
Sharon Adler's knowledge of merchandising spans over 30 years, including 8 years with Associated Merchandising Corporation (AMC), the preeminent overseas sourcing and product development arm servicing the leading department stores in the U.S. and Europe.

Adler spent seven years sourcing and developing product for 2 leading seasonal wholesalers, the Director of Product Development for Santa's World (Kurt Adler) and Department 56 Inc. After leaving Department 56 in 2002, Sharon joined Li Fung, the world's largest global sourcing company, as Director of Trend and Color overseeing the art department and all products of home merchandise. She attended seminars and trade shows globally and produced color and trend reports for major wholesalers and retailers in all categories of home furnishings. Sharon is currently consulting in trend, color, product development and global sourcing in the home furnishings industry.

"...THE RETURN OF VINYL RECORDS AND THEIR PLAYERS"

The summer season is coming to a close. As Buyers go to market how can they refresh their assortments and what trends should they be looking for?

There will be a lot of entertaining going forward and the start of back to school. There is a lot of interest in the theme **NEWSTALGIA** as a trend. It's not pure vintage finds but updates and newness from mixing different time periods and many cultures together. It refers back to familiar periods in the 60's, 70's and 80's. We see it by the return of **vinyl records** and their players; **Selfie's** taken with **instant cameras** with updated by the new novelty borders on the pictures developing in 90 seconds. Also the return to **pencils** but now the newness is the sayings on them and the other desk accessories.



For entertainment at parties is the update of **ribbon badges** and **Trophies** with humorous dedication plates given as prizes. This return of the old but updated product is new and novel for the Gen X and Z generation. Gold stamped pencils with quirky saying or printed graphics gives focus to other desk top items such as **pencil sharpeners**, **erasers**, **letter openers**, **pencil cases** and **pencil holders** that went

to garage sales with the desk blotters in the early 90's. If there are pencils and pens then **notepads** and journals have also returned. I've seen pencils wrapped in printed paper taken from storybooks like Alice in Wonderland and the pencils are packaged in a box that looks like a book for collectors of children's stories.

What else is Newstalgia bringing back? It seems like personalization is still growing as a direction.

Personalization continues to grow; sending greeting cards in lieu of emailing a birthday greeting for example. There is a vendor who has collected, not posted or used, old stamps and sells them as a group by theme or color story for

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SCANDINAVIAN DESIGN

Swedish Dishcloths
- our exclusive designs
Bengt & Lotta socks from Sweden
Swedish stearin candles
Feel Felt of Finland
Swedish wood laminated trays
Klippan Textiles from Sweden



Finnish Paper Napkins



Hinza Totes from Sweden



Christmas accents
from Sweden, Finland
& Germany



Unique Baking Tins & Cutters



cose nuove © new things

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the consumer to frame and hang as artwork.

Personalization of clothing by adding patches, badges and pins continues to be popular, but this might be at the peak of this trend.

There is also **store branding** as personalization. The retailer can have their own mailer boxes with their own distinct packaging for internet sales or mailing gifts from the store. The minimum for printing up a box can be as small as 10 pieces with your own artwork and messaging on it. So your store can send out a gift that will rival the AMAZON box that arrives at a home and be as distinctive.

Any last thoughts on entertaining or newness in the market?

Having returned from the Stationery Show I noted several trends. As we go into the party season one

theme for a party gathering is to celebrate **Women of Notoriety**. There is so much product out in the market dedicated to Women including many card vendors, wrapping

paper, books and totes featuring caricatures of famous Feminists such as Senator Hilary Clinton, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg,

Joan River's, Anna Wintour, Martha Stewart, Cher and Iris Apfel acknowledging their contribution to society and as leaders in the Feminist movement. Most of these startup companies are started by young woman who are civic minded and some donate a portion of the purchase to charities. In keeping with Ladies Night but a more fun direction there is a nail polish made in the U.S.A. that come in cute gift boxes for many occasions

like a greeting card. Staying with entertaining there are

new **toppers for cakes** with new verbiage. **Birch Wood flatware** stamped into baroque shapes lasts if it were sterling silver or a more casual birch wood flatware imprinted with wording on the handles and package in mini milk bottles for the buffet presentation.

Another trend seen in stationery are the **scratch off** application used on greeting cards, place cards, labels to attach to gift bottles and when you scratch off the segment a REVEAL happens of a message or a prize.

A variety of card enclosures and greeting cards have come down in price and are starting as low as \$1.00 wholesale for quality card for giftware retailers to carry. There are so many alternative fun cards in the market that stationery outlets would not be carrying. Some

of the language might appeal to a Gen Z and is less Hallmark but it's a younger customer base we hope to attract.

Look forward to sharing what I find at the Fancy Food Show and then we move into the real party season. Have a good market.

