

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.

"...Millennials and others are turning off their phones..."

You've recently return from several major trade shows including Maison Objet in Paris for home interiors. What's on the horizon?

NATURE continues to be a leader in all aspects of home décor in color direction, texture, sustainability and as a trend theme. For color, look towards NEUTRAL and colors taken from NATURE with finishes in MATTEE and OILLY IRIDESCENT. Colors will include white wash, oak milk cream, vintage yellow and shades of grey in the neutral family. Nature colors such as terracotta earthy and vivid green.



Sustainability, a major trend at Maison Objet by reusing leather, plastics, cloth in all forms of interior décor such as plastic woven baskets made of plastic bags as an example. An item is used for multiple usages such as a vase with a neck that can be removed to become a bowl and around the neck a metal collar used as a candle holder but together it becomes a decorative vase.



What other trends are incoming?

The past few articles I've written about a trend concept which I refer to as **BACK TO THE FUTURE** and this trend is continuing going forward and is one that is growing more popular. Bon Marche a

major Department store in Paris known for their fashion trends just presented their big fashion look for the fall and winter titled **PUNK**. PUNK from the 70's but also encapsulated other themes such as SPACE, ASTRONOMY & ZODIAC Signs, PSYCHEDELIC ART from the 80's and a updated look of VINTAGE décor from the 70's-80's and more lifestyle looks from the late 60's thru the 80's. It's all returning with a twist of newness for the Millennials who are experiencing this lifestyle for the first time.

The PUNK exhibit had lots of fun merchandise using HOT PINK as the signature color for the shop, leopard prints, glam and sequins, biker leather and spike hair thru out the store. Loads of fun pins and novelty buttons to be worn on lapels and backpacks for those who like to collect, messaging on clothes, greeting cards using images of old Rockers like Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones. Guitars and Amplifiers, PEZ candy, Rock & Roll music from that period on records and VCR tapes and other items that were icons from that period looking back from the late 60's thru the 80's.

A major trend in RTW and Home is second hand items being sold and brought again this is part of the sustainability and newness to a new generation who have not seen these pieces before. The second hand market is projected to grow from 21 Billion to 51 Billion dollars in five years. Resale merchandise is now being sold in many high end Department stores in the U.S. and in Paris and other parts of the European Union. Most of it is in RTW but now home goods are also gaining ground such as knick knacks and tabletop.



As we are coming into gift giving season what should the buyers being looking for at market?

Several articles have been written suggesting that Millennials and others are turning off their phones and are taking up calming tasks

such as knitting and other crafts. This trend is **MEDKNITATION**. Companies such as Google and other tech groups are bringing in leaders for team building and help stitch away stress. Over 38 million people crochet or knit in the U.S. and of those 94% say it's for self-care. So other hobbies which help with daily stress and are "no screen" hobbies are growing.

Knitting and crocheting kits are becoming a regular item in gift stores. These all-inclusive kits come with instructions and the needed supplies to complete the item in a short amount of time. Some of the instructors in the article also give stress relaxation courses that include yoga then knitting called "Yoga for Mind Lovers". One of the kits lines for knitters are made by STITCH & STORY knitting kits www.stitchandstory.com and CALM CLUB for knitting your own blanket kits and smaller items. www.calm-club.com

Another type of hobby kit uses bead dots to create a picture that can be framed and used as a decorative accent. Made by Diamond DOTZ www.DiamondDotz.com.

You might want to give some of these kits a try before the fourth quarter to see if they work for your customers. More kits can be found at the Gift Mart, just source them out. Keep following the Minneapolis Gift Mart website for more trend news.

