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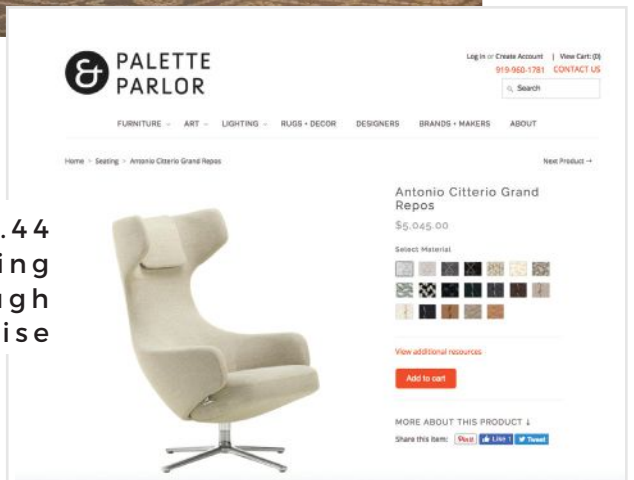
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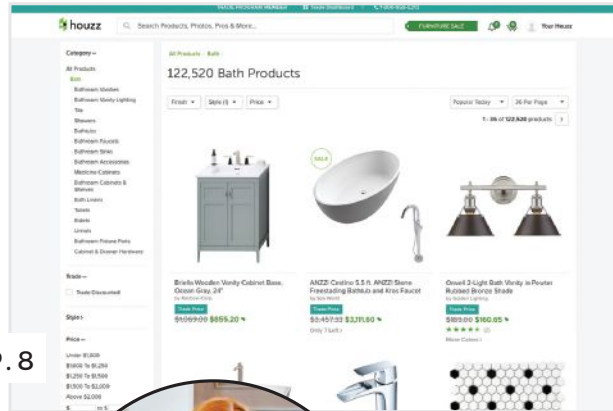
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Designer Laura Umansky brings her "Classically Current" style to a child's bedroom.



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ON THE COVER

Soft and dreamy, this bedroom from Vanguard mixes shag and leather textures together with light blues and creams. The headboard on the Jemma vertical channel king bed towers 66 inches in a Namesake Spa color. The bracket legs have an optional wood molding. www.vanguardfurniture.com

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STORYTIME

“Tell me a bit about yourself.” No matter how many times I’ve been asked that question (or a variation of it) in networking circles, I will unabashedly say that my inner monologue still hesitates from time to time. What should I lead with? What’s most important? How will I come off?

As easy as it may sound to just tell people about yourself, I, as a writer, especially understand that sometimes the hardest story to tell is your own. It’s no different in business, and it’s crucial that you not only identify and understand your company’s story, but also that you communicate it through the way you interface with customers.

Take the six winners of this year’s Showroom of the Year Awards, for instance. Starting on page 33, you’ll read about their thoughts on the future, the most exciting technology they see coming down the pipeline, and most interestingly, the biggest risk they’ve taken. The answer to that question gives you a glimpse into the heart and soul of each of these winners, and across the board regardless of their responses, it communicated that they are passionate about and believe in what they do. You understand how they got to where they are today, as successful and thriving retail showrooms and winners of these prestigious awards, by them simply sharing a bit about their experiences.

Industry veteran Kimberley Wray also wrote a great article for us this month, starting on page 44, where she explored how content marketing (aka storytelling) is shaping a new generation of furniture retailing. Utilizing social media like Palette & Parlor in Chapel Hill, NC, hosting a radio show like Cynthia Heathcoe from Contemporary Living in Palm Beach Gardens, FL, or even publishing a magazine like IBB Design Fine Furnishings in Frisco, TX, provides value and

communicates your brand ID, rather than trying to sell, sell, sell to potential customers. If they connect with you first, they’re more likely to buy from you later on — that we know for sure — and there are plenty of ways to make this happen.

It’s hard to be vulnerable and feel not quite ready, but sharing your company’s struggles, gambles and triumphs in a way that adds to the authenticity of your brand is a building block to success. Know your truth, the good and the bad —

write it down, memorize it and share it with the world.

Personally, I’ve settled on “I’m Nicole, Editor-in-Chief of *Lighting & Decor*, a trade magazine for the lighting and home furnishings industry. I’m based in Boston but travel frequently to trade shows, markets and retail showrooms reporting on product and business trends. Yes, I love it, and no, I never would’ve guessed I’d be using my journalism degree to do it.”

And, by the time this issue hits many of you, I’ll be able to add “wife” to that self-description as well. Keep an eye out for communications from Nicole Davis starting in September — I’m looking forward to continuing to write my story with you all. **LD**



Nicole
Nicole Bowling
Editor-in-Chief

Know your truth, the good and the bad — write it down, memorize it and share it with the world.

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EDITORIAL

VICE PRESIDENT, GROUP PUBLISHER

Diane Vojcanin | 847.391.1046
dvojcanin@sgcmail.com

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Nicole Bowling | 847.391.1013
nbowling@sgcmail.com

MANAGING EDITOR

Alison Martin | 847.954.7966
amartin@sgcmail.com

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Katie Caron

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Randall Whitehead

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS:

Dwayne Clark, Jeff Dross, Nathan Frampton, Shay Geyer, Kerrie Kelly, Michelle Lamb, Freddie Naimer, Jodie Orange, Jason Phillips, Ron Radin, Laura Van Zeyl

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Kelsey Craig

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www.ScrantonGillette.com/PR/index.cfm

ADVERTISING SALES

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Emily Rogier | 847.954.7958
erogier@sgcmail.com

INTEGRATED MEDIA CONSULTANT

Becky Jacks | 214.289.9266
beckyjacksmedia@gmail.com

ADVERTISING COORDINATOR

Karen Teeter | 847.391.1005
kteeter@sgcmail.com

DIGITAL MEDIA COORDINATOR

Beth Maczko | 847.391.1018
bmaczko@sgcmail.com

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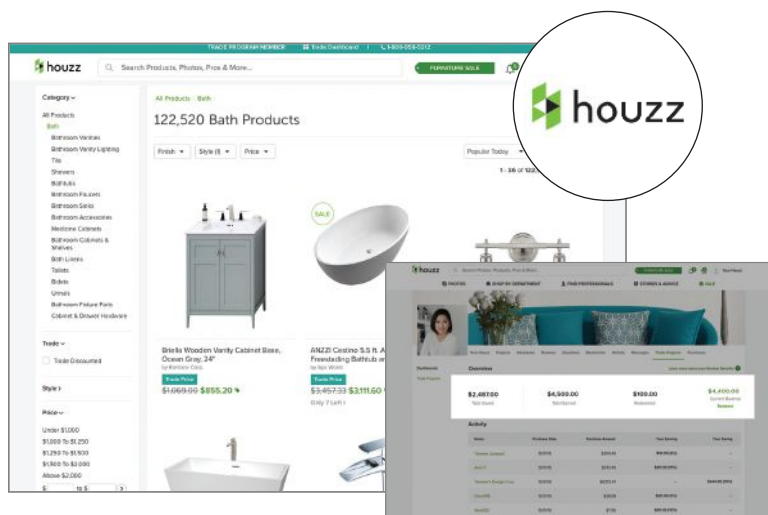
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BY ALISON MARTIN

A TALE OF TWO TRADE PROGRAMS

Scoring great products is essential to any interior designer, and with trade programs through Houzz and Steelyard, finding them has never been easier. If you aren't familiar with these two resources, here's what you need to know.



HOZZ

THE PROGRAM: Launched in June, Houzz's trade program lets professionals save in several ways. Designers buying products directly on Houzz.com can receive substantial discounts. Also, for those that recommend products to clients through Idea Books, they'll receive 10 percent of the purchase as a credit to their accounts on the site. Finally, designers who don't recommend products can give out referral codes to clients. When used on the site, clients get 5 percent off their purchase, and designers receive a 5 percent rebate to be used on Houzz.com.

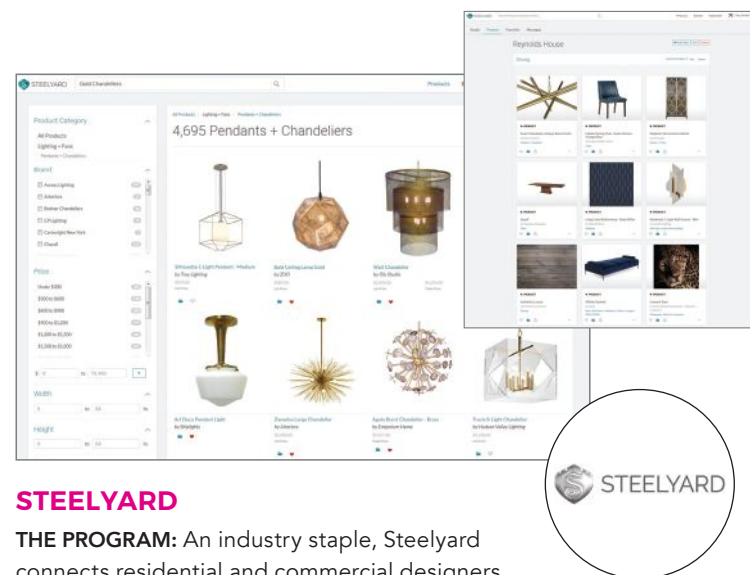
"No matter how you work with clients," Liza Hausman, Vice President of Industry Marketing for Houzz, says, "we have a way for you to be more profitable with your business."

\$ THE DISCOUNT: Designers can expect between 5 and 55 percent off, depending on the manufacturer, although some offer even larger discounts. Progress Lighting plans to offer up to 76 percent off to the trade.

🔥 THE LITTLE KNOWN FACT: Designers can score a 3 percent Houzz credit on products from manufacturers not participating in the trade program, which is great for those who like to buy off the beaten path.

🌟 THE BEST FEATURE: Houzz's account management team works efficiently as the go-between to help designers work with manufacturers on all aspects of product purchasing, whether the designer or the client handles it.

♥ THE MOST POPULAR PRODUCTS: Furniture, bath products and lighting, according to Hausman. "If they do need to do a return, we have the support for that," she adds.



STEELYARD

THE PROGRAM: An industry staple, Steelyard connects residential and commercial designers with lighting, furniture and decor manufacturers. The site doesn't sell products, but it allows designers to search company catalogs and directly connect with those manufacturers. Designers can build relationships with well-known manufacturers as well as small, niche manufacturers, all of which are vetted so they can be certain that the company will work with them.

"It doesn't matter what kind of project you're doing," Jane Dagmi, Editorial Director at Steelyard, says. "You can get a really good idea and basis on Steelyard."

\$ THE DISCOUNT: Designer net or trade pricing. "Many of the designers who use Steelyard already have accounts with brands on Steelyard, and they come to our site to get inspired by the depth and diversity we offer," Dagmi says.

🔥 THE LITTLE KNOWN FACT: Designers can keep organized using Steelyard's folders, which allow them to save products and manufacturers where they can access them later. There's no limit to the number of folders, so designers can create one for each project.

🌟 THE BEST FEATURE: Want to start building relationships with manufacturers? Steelyard provides contacts for manufacturer's representatives, so even if you can't make it to markets, you can still foster connections with your favorite brands. Steelyard's messaging system keeps all contacts between designers and manufacturers in one place.

♥ THE MOST POPULAR BRANDS: Noir, Theodore Alexander and Sunpan. Oly Studio launched on Steelyard in July.



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HOW TO HANDLE SHOWROOMING

Showrooming has become a given in the retail business. You've all seen it: A customer walks into your store, looks at an item on your shelf, and takes out his or her phone to compare prices on Amazon. In fact, a 2016 Pew study showed that 45 percent of Americans have used their phone in a store to look up online reviews or find better deals. Alyson Anderson, Partner at Retail Concepts, says the practice isn't going anywhere soon, and retailers should accept it and work with it rather than fight it.

You can't exactly ask customers to check their phones at the door, but there are tactics at your disposal for handling showrooming. Read on to find out more.

ESTABLISH A CONNECTION

When Mark Bouchett, Operations Manager of Homeport in Vermont, sees customers comparing a product on their phones in his home goods store, he confronts it gently by striking up a conversation. He chats with the customer about what they're finding out, asks how his prices compare and tactfully mentions that Homeport is family-owned.

"If I can't walk up to someone who's taking pictures of my items in the store and engage them, I've failed on a lot of levels. We don't see it so much as a threat — in fact it's kind of an invitation," Bouchett says. "We're shifting our mental paradigm and we're thinking of it as an opportunity to engage."

At Adorn House, a home furnishings boutique in Seattle, owner Renate Ruby has seen her fair share of showrooming, so she focuses on establishing strong relationships with her vendors and customers. She loves talking to customers about how products are made and the materials that are used.

"The more you make it less of an inanimate object and the more it becomes something that's a product of a craft," Ruby says, "then I think it has not only more meaning to a customer, but also they get more enjoyment out of it."



When you see a customer with their phone or tablet out in your showroom, don't be afraid to approach them and tactfully strike up a conversation about their research. They took the time to come all the way to your store, after all.

SET YOURSELF APART

One of the best ways to combat showrooming is setting your business apart with strong customer service, unique products and services and a fun environment.

"The ability to touch and feel products is huge," Anderson says. "Brick-and-mortar will never fully go away. Screens can't show color the same way, or smell or texture. [The internet] is a great researching tool, but people will still want that high-touch aspect. There are so many creative ways to compete."

Creating a unique atmosphere in your store is one way to gain a competitive edge. Bouchett says he teaches his staff that Homeport is in the entertainment business and that the customer experience is paramount.

"We're in theater. We have to delight people when they come through that door," he says. "Their experience, whether or not we sell them anything, is important to us."

Offering specialized services will also help you stand out. At Adorn, Ruby helps clients find and source items using her vast product knowledge and interior design background. She is able to offer a personalized experience that scrolling through pages online can't match.

Much of the motivation behind showrooming comes down to pricing, so do your best to stay competitive even with ecommerce sites. If your prices are higher, be ready to explain

why, whether it's the expensive rent at your prime location or how you support your staff. Offering financing options, as Bouchett does, can help you close the sale and open up options for your customer as well.

While it may be hard to do at first, try taking on an "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em" attitude. For Bouchett, embracing and working with customers who have their phones out has proved successful. He describes a recent situation where a woman was looking at online reviews for a coffeemaker on his shelf. He casually approached her and asked if she had questions, and she replied, "Not really, but I might in a minute." After a few minutes, he checked in with her again, and this time she did have questions. After some conversation, he set her up on a store computer so she could look up product details and reviews on Amazon. When she finished browsing, she was ready to make the purchase at Homeport.

Ultimately, seeing a customer with their phone out doesn't have to be cause for alarm. Google data illustrates that 82 percent of shoppers consult their phones for items they're planning to buy in-store. The internet within reach has empowered consumers with more information, and it's up to you to work with that, offer a rich shopping experience and close the sale. **LD**

By Katie Caron



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DANIEL BERKMANN- STOCK.ADOBE.COM

HOW TO MAKE LIVE BROADCASTS WORK FOR YOUR BUSINESS

The reality series “Married at First Sight” follows three couples as they say “I do” the very first time they meet.

Sound a little fast to you? Us too!

Unfortunately, many businesses and brands use this too-much-too-soon approach in their social media marketing. Think of your followers as first dates. Before you try to seal the deal with a ring — errrrr, sale — try talking with them first so they can get to know you.

Enter live streaming, the new way to bring your customers directly into your world through video. Here’s what you need to know about this cool social media tool.

GIVE... GIVE... GET!

You’ve probably heard “It’s better to give than to receive,” right? This is just as true on social media as it is in life. When designing your social media content, be sure to follow the model “Give... give... get!”

Better yet, since customers need to see consistent brand messaging at least seven times before they’re ready to purchase from you, perhaps your model should be: GIVE, GIVE, GIVE, GIVE, GIVE, GIVE, GIVE, GET!!!

So how do you do this? Create social media content that not only provides followers with information that they will find helpful, but also relates to what you will eventually sell to them. Each time you provide your followers with useful info, you’re building onto a foundation that will ultimately get prospects to consider you an expert in your field and trust you when you recommend your product or service to them.

Live streaming is just one form of social media content, but when used effectively, it can give your brand the boost it needs to attract customers and cultivate a loyal following.

LIVE FROM YOUR BUSINESS

One of the easiest and most effective ways to deliver valuable content and build valuable relationships with your followers is through live video broadcasting on social platforms like Facebook and Instagram. Live video is a proven engagement-getter — did you know people spend three times longer

watching live broadcasts compared to replays and recorded footage? Use it to get people’s attention so you can ultimately get their money, honey!

When you broadcast live, your video is shown to your followers in real time. You can see followers’ comments as you broadcast so that you can respond or answer questions, and there’s no better feeling than seeing a sea of little thumbs up and heart symbols floating across your screen as viewers let you know they “like” your content.

So aside from viewer interaction (which is AH-mazing for building engagement!), why go live? To outsmart the algorithm, of course! Facebook and Instagram recently announced that their algorithms — the computer ranking systems that determine what content appears in a user’s newsfeed — will prioritize live videos when they are being broadcasted.

Plus video is proven to boost your business’s results. According to Adobe, shoppers that view videos are 1.8 times more likely to purchase from you than non-viewers, and Nielsen studies show that purchase intent increases 72 percent after just 10 seconds of viewing.

LIGHTS, CAMERA... THEN WHAT?

Once you’ve brainstormed broadcast topics related to your biz, get ready to go live one to two times a week. Visit www.lp2boutiqueagency.com/lightinganddecormag for a free video training on broadcasting live and our full Go Live Guide, which includes a step-by-step tutorial on creating a broadcast plus tips for a fabulous Facebook or Instagram Live. **LD**

By Linley Paske and Lauren Pasqualone



Linley Paske and Lauren Pasqualone:
Social media ‘entertainers’ and co-owners of the marketing firm LP2 Boutique Agency.

HOME DÉCOR

ALL THE FINISHING TOUCHES

More than half of the exhibitors at High Point Market offer home décor and accessories and nearly 70% of the products shown can only be found here. A wide selection of home décor, wall art, decorative accessories and unique finds are available at a great mix of price points and styles. Find established brands and newcomers in the accessory category showing the newest trends throughout our buildings.

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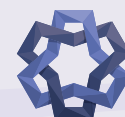
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3 tips from the lighting doctor

BY RANDALL WHITEHEAD, IALD



When working out the lighting design for a room, take a moment to look upward. There is a vast canvas available that could benefit from your inspiration.

CEILINGS: THE FIFTH WALL OFFERS GREAT POSSIBILITIES

TIP 1: Flaunt what ya got

Ceilings are often the forgotten component when it comes to lighting. Architects create some wonderfully inspired elements below the roofline. There are vaulted ceilings, coffers, domes and beams that would simply fall into shadow after the sun sets unless some light was pointed upwards — don't let these treasures be lost at night. In the image on the far left, the architect has created a circular step ceiling detail. The interior designer selected three Cascade fixtures by Boyd Lighting, which in addition to being an inspired decorative element, also project a subtle illumination onto the raised areas so that they add dimensionality to the ceiling at night.

TIP 2: Make some outta none

Sometimes an architectural challenge can turn into an architectural home run. The far right image shows a dining room in a high-rise

condominium with concrete ceilings. There was a dropped soffit on one side of the room that hid the HVAC system. A matching soffit was



Randall Whitehead, IALD, is a professional lighting designer, author and recognized expert. Visit www.randallwhitehead.com for more information on his books, upcoming seminars and the latest lighting trends.

fabricated on the other side, which is used to run the wiring for the lighting. A series of five box beams were suspended between the two soffits. These hollow beams were open at the top, so that linear indirect LED lighting could project a pleasing glow of illumination along the ceiling, which then bounced down to soften the shadows on people's faces. The beams were used to house recessed adjustable fixtures with

12V LED MR16 bulbs, which highlighted the tabletop and sculptural pieces placed around the room.

Smaller box beams could be used to create a coffered detail over a concrete ceiling as well. Adding a crown molding or a cantilever detail around the perimeter of a room creates a place to hide indirect lighting. Here's your chance to play architectural dress-up.

TIP 3: Trip the light fantastic

Sometimes, just light itself can do a pretty good job of adding visual interest to a ceiling plane. The image in the center shows a living room with a pattern projected onto the ceiling — this comes from an LED projector made by Beachside Lighting. There are hundreds of patterns to choose from, and the focus of the projector can also be adjusted to be soft or crystal-clear.

Placing a floor mounted uplight behind a palm tree or a ficus can also create an intriguing shadow pattern on the ceiling while adding some flattering ambient light to a room. For \$25 on Amazon, I got a Soothing Ocean Wave projector that looks like gentle ripples of water traveling along the surface of my bedroom ceiling. I find it very calming. **LD**

PHOTO CREDITS: LEFT: DOUGLAS SALIN, CENTER: DOUGLAS SANDBERG, RIGHT: DENNIS ANDERSON; INTERIOR DESIGN CREDITS: LEFT: BETHE COHEN, CENTER: MICHAEL MERRILL, RIGHT: TURNER MARTIN



Vantage fan shown in Driftwood finish

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Module fan shown in Brushed Nickel finish



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BEDROOM

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An approachable, no-frills style, farmhouse chic continues to dominate: Just add rustic elements with vintage touches and a bit of sparkle to create the coveted look.

BY NICOLE BOWLING



From Soicher Marin, piece #TW-0160B, part of the Willd Mum series, is right at home in a farmhouse setting. Measures 26.75 inches long and 22.75 inches wide. www.soicher-marin.com

Forty West's Addison console brings country-chic storage to any bedroom. It features smoky mirrors and rusty metal scrollwork, plus it's finished in a Cottage White with a natural-looking pine top. www.fortywestdesigns.com



The Nori six-light chandelier by Feiss features vintage elements such as cascading Driftwood Grey wood beads and the rustic flair of a Dark Weathered Zinc finish. Exposed candelabra lamping completes the antique feel. www.feiss.com



WOOD IMAGE: IRISIMAGES - STOCK.ADOBE.COM

The Aster Linen pillow from Howard Elliot is part of the Davida Kay designer pillow collection. It features a 100 percent natural linen fabric by Robert Allen, decorated with flower embroidery and trimmed in a coordinating rope. www.howardelliott.com



From Candice Olson's collection for Surya, this Modern Classics rug is hand-tufted with a lustrous sheen, and the paisley pattern brings just a bit of boho flair into the mix. www.surya.com



Britton side tables from IMAX, constructed of 100 percent mango wood, work perfectly as a nightstand. The larger table measures 32 inches high. www.imaxcorp.com



Crystorama's Highland Park chandelier wears an Old-World Silver finish and classic crystal design elements for a touch of tradition and sparkle. www.crystorama.com

This king deconstructed bed from the Roslyn County Collection, part of Hooker Furniture's new American Life brand, offers details like exposed bolts and beams, and is crafted in Walnut and Hickory providing that rustic farmhouse appeal. www.hookerfurniture.com



IDEA BOARD

BEDROOM

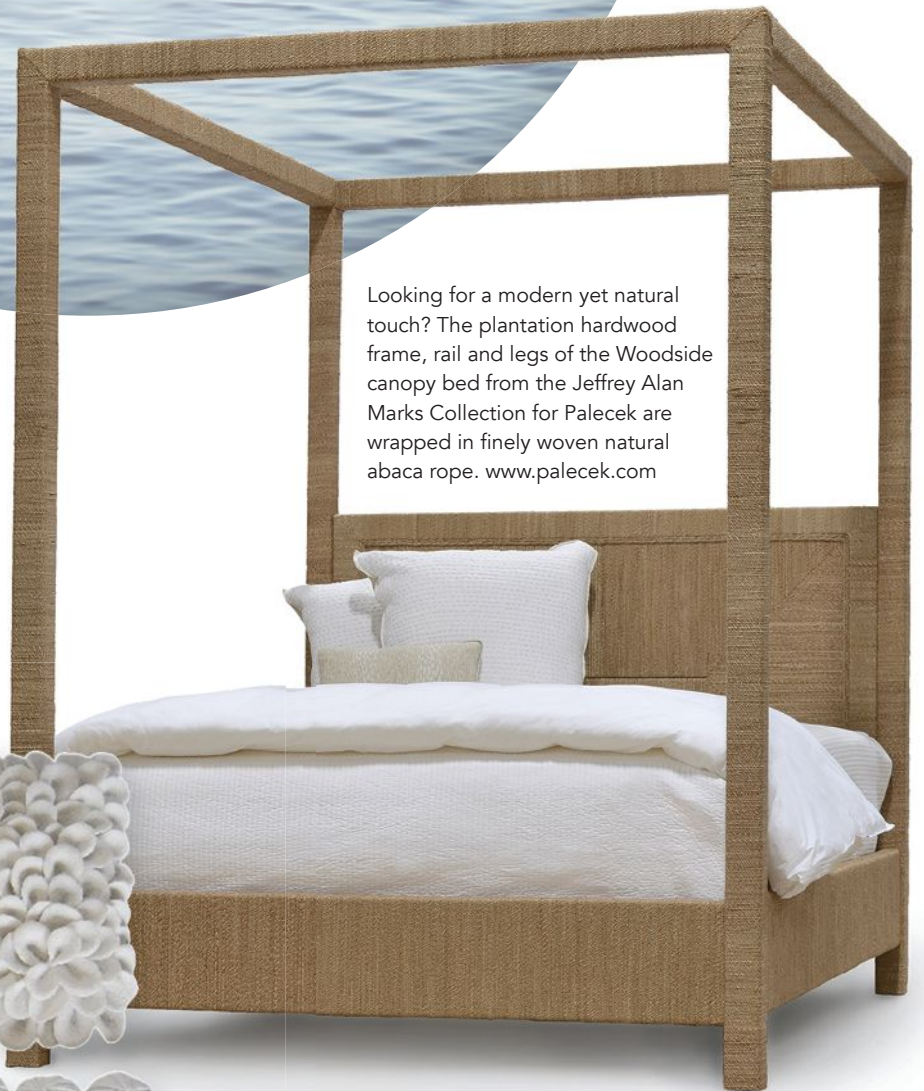
Breathe easy

When coastal meets organic, you're left with serene scenes perfect for the bedroom.

BY NICOLE BOWLING



Shades of shell pink and pearly alabaster diffuse light from beneath an off-white linen shade in Currey's Opal table lamp. A creamy hand-applied Amber finish ensures no two are exactly alike. www.curreycodealers.com



Looking for a modern yet natural touch? The plantation hardwood frame, rail and legs of the Woodside canopy bed from the Jeffrey Alan Marks Collection for Palecek are wrapped in finely woven natural abaca rope. www.palecek.com



Sagebrook Home's coastal resin Shell wall plaques, sold in sets of four, measure 8.5 inches by 8.25 inches. www.sagebrookhome.com

WATER IMAGE: GUELLAPHOTO - STOCK.ADOBE.COM



Relax: Laurel bedding from Eastern Accents by Thom Filicia wears a soft sage color palette. Its painterly floral accent is paired with a geometric motif for a clean, versatile aesthetic. www.easternaccents.com



This pillow, part of the ED Ellen DeGeneres Collection with Loloï, blends wool, cotton and viscose in a beautiful neutral tone, accented by subtle braiding details. www.loloïrugs.com



The base of Stein World's Clearcut table lamp is full of natural wood in cross section, topped with a Sand-colored linen fabric shade. www.steinworld.com



From Phillips Collection, the Chamcha Wood console table now comes in a Super Bleach finish, adding an air of lightness to this organic piece. Sourced from Thailand and measures 87 inches long. www.phillipscollection.com

From KAS Rugs, the Landscapes Blue Contempo rug is machine-made of 100 percent polypropylene. www.kasrugs.com

IDEA BOARD

BEDROOM

BLAST FROM THE PAST

Layering mixed materials with vintage industrial influences creates a thoroughly modern bedroom you'd want to crash in.

BY NICOLE BOWLING



Regina Andrew's sputnik Nebula chandelier brings a Mid-Century Modern element in a hot-right-now brass-and-black combo. www.reginaandrew.com



From Fashion Bed Group, the vintage-inspired, all-metal Westchester bed is distinguished by its bold headboard and footboard, both of which feature panels accented with decorative rivets and signature top rails. Finished in a hand-applied Blackened Copper. www.fashionbedgroup.com



The Lindy bench from Four Hands is covered in soft, ebony waxed leather with traditional tufting and supported by a simple iron base. Striking at the foot of a bed. www.fourhands.com

LEATHER IMAGE: TOM - STOCK.ADOBE.COM

Harp & Finial's faux fur Navajo bolster pillow in a Gray Multi colorway adds texture to top of bed.
www.harpandfinial.com



From Moe's Home Collection, the Klondike dresser, made from reclaimed wood, brings a rustic touch to a bedroom.
www.moeshomecollection.com



Jamie Young's Vilhelm task lamp, shown here in Antique Brass, stands 19 inches tall. Its finish will patina over time, adding even more vintage appeal.
www.jamieyoung.com



Traditional handcraft arts brought to the American colonies from England are apparent in the needlepoint pattern of this hand-knotted wool Revolution rug from Jaipur Living.
www.jaipurliving.com



DRESSED DOWN

Casually cool indigo and white combos
rest easy on top of bed.

BY NICOLE BOWLING

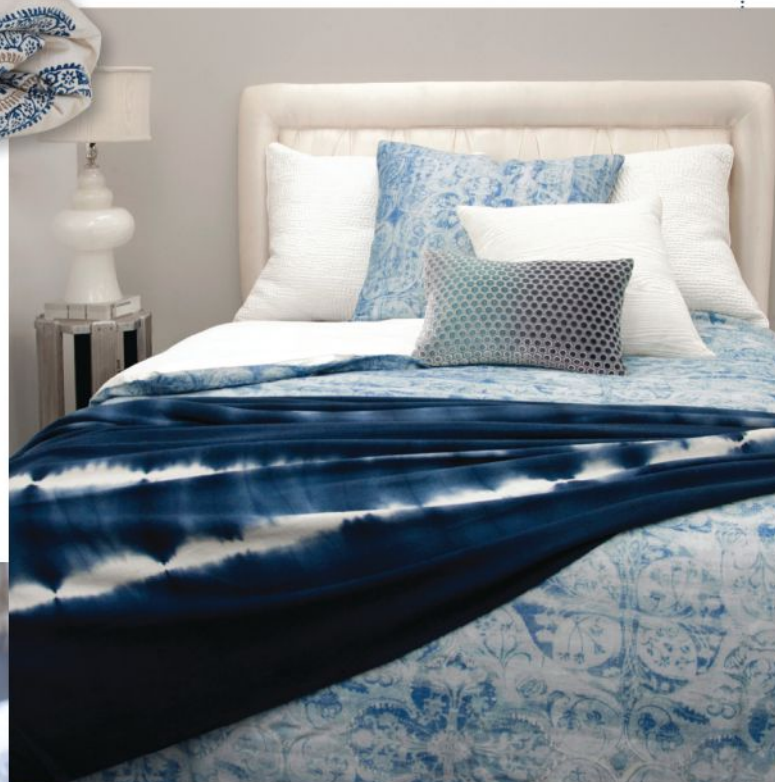
Pine Cone Hill's Aylin linen duvet cover was created based on the elements of glass, stone and wood to infuse aspects of nature into a living space. pineconehill.annieselke.com

The Tartu Indigo pillow from Pittsburgh design studio Savannah Hayes showcases a funky geometric print on 100 percent Belgian linen. An exposed antique brass zipper adds a fun touch. www.savannahhayes.com



Double whammy: From Curated by Kravet, this linen/cotton blend duvet cover features Kravet Madira.516 on the face and Kravet Kashmira.516 on the reverse. It comes with an upholstered button closure and internal ties for duvet securing. www.curatedkravet.com

Kevin O'Brien's Persian linen/cotton blend duvet in Denim is inspired by the ornate motifs seen in Persian arts and architecture. The printed linen/cotton blend bedding is machine-washable. www.kevinobrienstudio.com



John Robshaw's Rupani quilt, printed on 100 percent cotton voile, is soft and lightweight. Hand-quilted in India, the orange accents pop against blue and white. www.johnrobshaw.com



Pom Pom at Home's Dali hand-blocked pillow is made using a century-old Indian art where hand-carved wooden blocks are dipped in dye and stamped by hand onto the 100 percent cotton fabric, showcased beautifully in blue and white. www.pompomathome.com



The Vast ceiling fan from Progress Lighting fits seamlessly in large and covered outdoor areas. A hand-held remote controls dimming and speed. This model features a 3000K LED source. www.progresslighting.com

LIGHT IT YOUR WAY

As more homeowners start to use ceiling fans for task lighting rather than ambient, newly available models provide light kit options.

BY ALISON MARTIN





With blades measuring 54 inches, the outdoor-rated Tier fan from Regency comes in an Oil-Rubbed Bronze or Brushed Nickel finish. An optional light cover is available. www.regencyfan.com



With optional LED light kits and more than 50 varieties of blades available, the Carrera Grande Echo from Emerson makes customization look easy. When the LED kit and the EchoMotor combine, the result is an energy-efficient fan. www.emerson.com



There once was a room with no style. It was unoccupied for a while. The Limerick was hung and a new life begun for this room was now more versatile (especially with the optional lens cover). From Craftmade. www.craftmade.com

Avvo Max's blades wrap around the motor housing like flower petals before bloom. A finishing cap is included for use without the light. The fan is damp-rated and available in four finishes. www.montecarlofans.com



The Olympia includes Kichler's full function CoolTouch control system with independent up and down light control and 6-inch and 12-inch downrod options. Varying light kits and finishes available. www.kichler.com



With a teardrop motor housing, the Donaire 316 fan from Matthews Fan Co. is finished in Brushed Bronze or Brushed Stainless and is equipped with a 16W dimmable LED light kit and optional metal cover. www.matthewsfanco.com



The Energy Star-rated LED light kit in Fanimation's Subtle fan delivers 1,300 (my email from John says 1300) lumens of soft white light. The kit is also dimmable and can be set to a timer for maximum customization. www.fanimation.com



8th ANNUAL

SHOWROOM

OF THE YEAR 2017



FIXTURES: SAVOY HOUSE

and the WINNERS ARE...

Winners of the 8th annual Showroom of the Year Awards were announced at a special opening night reception during Lightovation at Dallas Market Center.

THE 2017 WINNERS ARE:

REVENUE UNDER \$2 MILLION

The Lighting Design Center at Warshauer Electric,
Tinton Falls, NJ

REVENUE UNDER \$5 MILLION

Ferguson Enterprises, Clive, IA

REVENUE \$5 MILLION AND OVER

Lightology, Chicago, IL

OUTSTANDING MERCHANDISING DISPLAY

WaterPlace, Crown Point, IN

EXCEPTIONAL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Crest Lighting, New Lenox, IL

SOCIAL MEDIA STAR

Montreal Lighting & Hardware, Montreal, QC

FOLLOW US AT #SOTYAWARDS

*Entry and nomination forms for the 2018
Showroom of the Year Awards will be available on
LightingandDecormag.com starting in November.*

SPONSORED BY:

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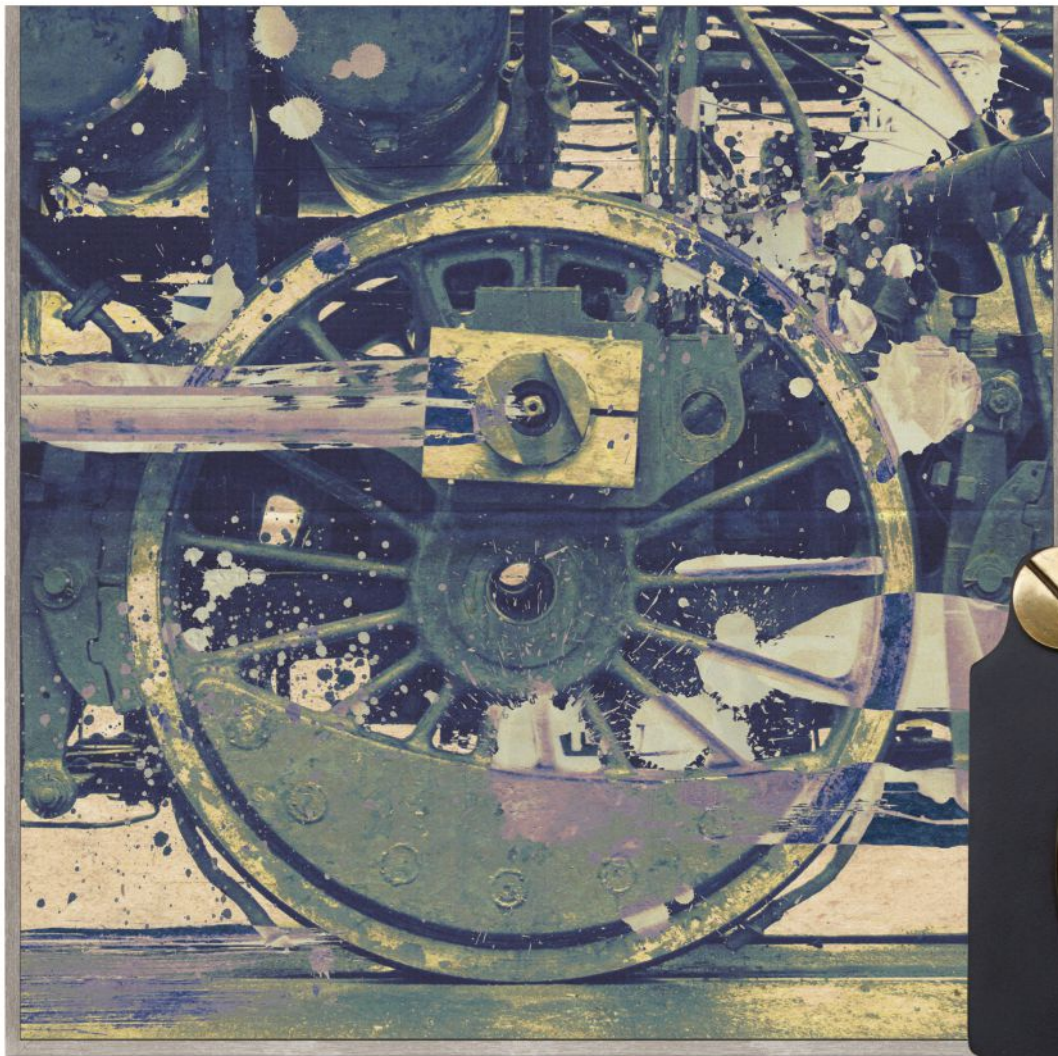
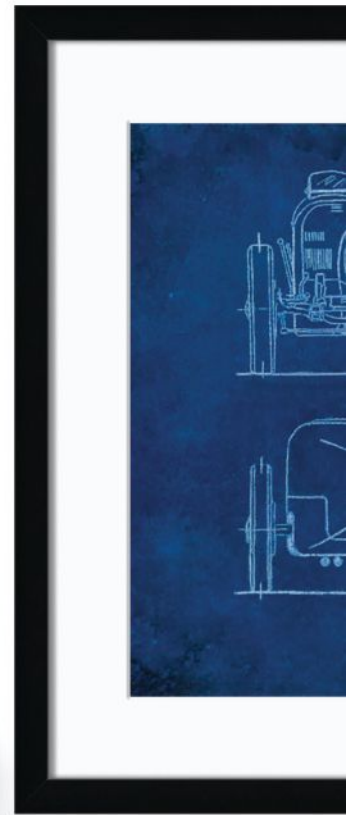
lighting
& decor



PLANES, TRAINS ≡ AND ≡ AUTOMOBILES

Vintage-styled wall art captures the spirit of travel.

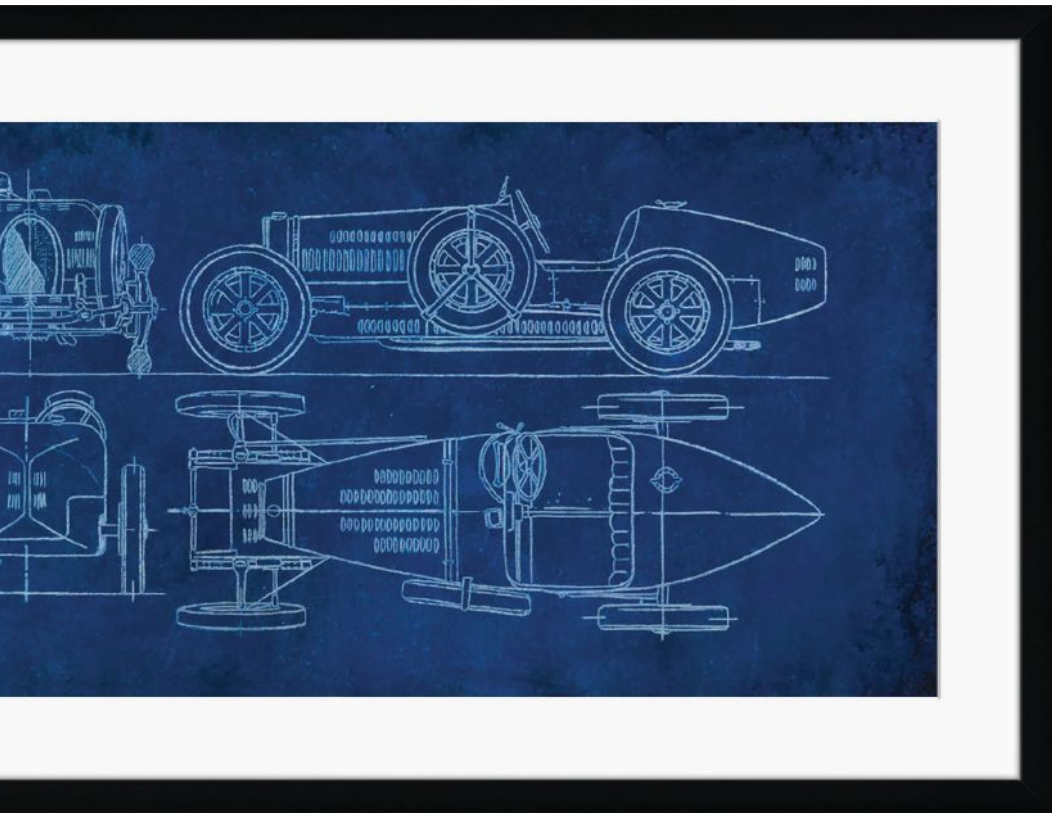
BY ALISON MARTIN



This train wheel image is worn like a vintage photograph, providing a perfect old-timey accessory. Printed on premium canvas from Oliver Gal. www.olivergal.com

This clock from Pendulux is an enlarged version of one found in World War II Army Air Corps planes. The dial is a reproduction of an authentic altimeter that displayed a plane's altitude in thousands of feet. www.pendulux.com





Framed in wood, this automobile blueprint from Surya comes in four sizes. Made in the USA. www.surya.com



Crafted in 100 percent metal, this wall art from Moe's Home Collection is a detailed study of a World War II fighter engine. Measures 31.5 inches square. www.moeshome.ca

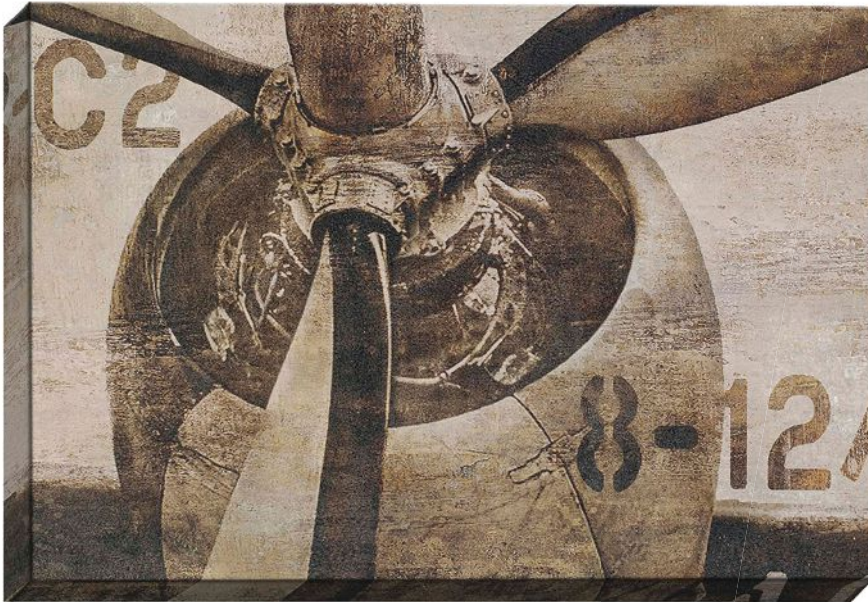


This oil painting from Streamline Art is 3-D. The rocks and metal lines come right off the canvas, adding texture and interest. www.streamlineart.com

Go into the wild, blue yonder with Iconic Pineapple's Vintage Propeller I. This black and white print measures 40 inches by 30 inches. www.iconicpineapple.com



PLANES, TRAINS AND AUTOMOBILES

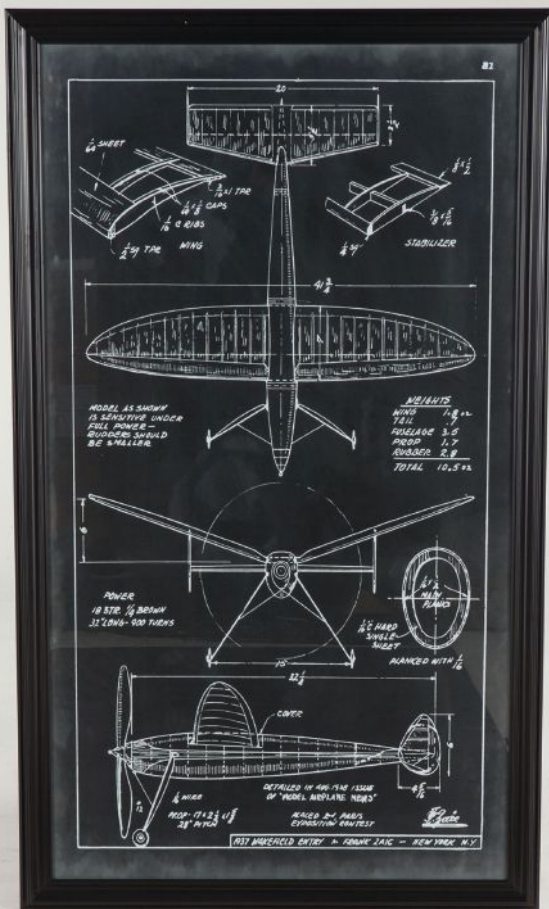


Sepia tones and typography highlight this vintage propeller from Paragon. The canvas is gallery-wrapped and measures 36 inches by 49 inches. www.paragonpg.com

Part of Wendover Art's Vintage Contours series, this automobile print is giclée on paper. Measures 22 square. www.wendoverart.com



Perfect for any train enthusiast, this engine pops with splashes of red. The piece is high gloss on a burnished metal panel. www.stylecraftonline.com



Part of a series of three, this airplane schematics artwork from Home Trends & Design breaks down the plane and provides a detailed look at the wings and propeller. www.htddirect.com



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2017 SHOWROOM OF THE YEAR: ON BEING A WINNER

The 2017 Showroom of the Year winners blew the judges away. Find out how these showrooms are facing the challenges of today and the technology of tomorrow.

BY ALISON MARTIN

June Lightovation feels incomplete without the Showroom of the Year awards ceremony. This year, amazing retailers from across the continent came to Dallas Market Center for the big announcement on June 21, and six showrooms — the Lighting Design Center at Warshauer Electric, Ferguson Enterprises, Lightology, WaterPlace, Crest Lighting and Montreal Lighting & Hardware — took home top prizes.

So what does it mean to be a Showroom of the Year winner? We asked these cutting-edge showrooms how they take chances, invest in technology and look to the future. **LD**

2017 Judges



PAMELA N. DANZIGER:

Columnist, market researcher and author of seven books, including "Shops That POP! 7 Steps to Extraordinary Retail Success."



MARY MAZZEFFI:

Retail visual display designer and two-time Christmas decorator for the White House.



**LINLEY PASKE AND
LAUREN PASQUALONE:**

Social media 'entertainers' and co-owners of the marketing firm LP2 Boutique Agency.



#sotyawards

Revenue Under \$2 Million:

THE LIGHTING DESIGN CENTER AT WARSHAUER ELECTRIC

TINTON FALLS, NJ

Family-owned for more than 60 years, the Lighting Design Center at Warshauer Electric blends the latest technologies with expert lighting design, offering an exclusive product selection from the industry's leading manufacturers. "This award is true validation of all our hard work, energy, effort and resources spent to bring our Lighting Design Center to where it is today," Executive Vice President James Dunn says. "It was truly an entire team effort — from our management team, marketing staff, lighting designers, vo-tech employees, to our fully committed manufacturer partners and their representatives. Everyone bought in 100 percent and are all equally responsible for our success."



DUNN ON THE BIGGEST RISK EVER TAKEN:

In 2010, we invested in a complete remodel/makeover in the throes of a recession. Not only was our showroom business off drastically, but also our overall electrical supply business was in sharp decline. Thankfully, our owner, Jim Warshauer, trusted the vision to invest instead of recoil, and we took the downturn as an opportunity and completely remodeled our entire showroom. Seven years later, the business is doing very well. We went from two full-time designers to six, and we are the current Lutron 5-Star Showroom of the Year winner and now our latest award — just awesome.

DUNN ON THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACING THE HOME DESIGN/RETAIL INDUSTRY:

Keeping up with the changing technologies, especially LED, is one. Installing LED fixtures is a lot like installing a laptop: The minute it's up and running, it's obsolete and replaced by something brighter and more energy-efficient. The second biggest challenge is getting paid for adding the real value our designers offer everyday. We do complete designs, specify the right products for the right applications, ensure total satisfaction, just to have the homeowner or business owner shop our prices online or at a competitor who did nothing

more than lower a price. Hopefully, the first part will be handled by our manufacturer partners strictly enforcing healthy IMAP policies.

DUNN ON THE MOST EXCITING TECHNOLOGY:

Voice-activated automation like Google Home that really simplifies lighting control by using voice commands. We recently became a Google Nest Pro distributor, so we are in the process of rolling out a complete Google Home automation story tied in to our existing lighting control vendors that support it. Simple home automation has been around a long time, but has yet to really hit the mainstream — when Amazon sold out of Alexa this holiday season, it really hit home that this new technology is here to stay. We feel Google Home, and independent tests have proven, take this voice automation to a whole new level.

DUNN ON THE FUTURE:

I think we'll be selling most of our one-off products and accessories online, and our Lighting Design Center will be 100 percent focused on projects — whole home, major renovations or boutique stores and restaurants.

Michael Estrin of
Estrin Zirkman
Sales accepted the
award from L&D
Managing Editor
Alison Martin
on behalf of the
Lighting Design
Center.



Shannon Nogar from Ferguson's Dallas location accepted the award from L&D Editor-in-Chief Nicole Bowling on behalf of the Clive, IA showroom.



Revenue Under \$5 Million: **FERGUSON ENTERPRISES** **CLIVE, IA**

Though they were unable to attend Lightovation in person, Ferguson consultants Amber Pirillo, Amy Kimberley and Jessica Richardson huddled together to watch the live stream of the ceremony in Iowa. When their name was called, they screamed, hugged each other and started crying. “We are honored to receive such a prestigious industry award and can’t thank the judges enough for believing in our showroom the way that we do,” Pirillo says.

PIRILLO ON THE BIGGEST RISK EVER TAKEN:

We take risks everyday in our showroom, to think outside of the box and create new design trends. We want to stay ahead of current trends, be innovative and different. Whether it be creating a custom shower design tailored to a client’s needs, or selecting light fixtures that don’t match, per se, but bring an entire open floor plan together by mixing finishes, styles and textures, if you want to be a trendsetter, you have to take risks.

PIRILLO ON THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACING THE HOME DESIGN/RETAIL INDUSTRY:

Internet shopping. Clients have found that online shopping is oftentimes less expensive than coming into a specialty showroom. Well, let’s face it: A lot of the times, fixtures can be less expensive when purchased online. The way we overcome the challenge is by explaining that by visiting a showroom, they are not only receiving the fixture they need, but they are receiving guidance in the selection process by consultants with years of experience in the industry, assurance that they select a fixture that will perform the way they need it to, and a name

and face of someone they can count on to give them a personal shopping experience that they will never forget. Our industry is all about building relationships. You can’t get that experience by ordering something online.

PIRILLO ON THE MOST EXCITING TECHNOLOGY:

Technology changes faster than I update my wardrobe, which is too often according to my husband. The convenience of controlling lighting in your home, or away from home, has become an amenity homeowners can’t get enough of. You not only have access from your cell phone or tablet, but also you can control it with your voice. Amazon Echo allows you to control light bulbs that work with Alexa by voice activation.

PIRILLO ON THE FUTURE:

Change ignites creativity and allows for industry innovation — change is a good thing. In five years, I think our showroom will expand both in size and reputability within the lighting industry. We will continue to grow stronger as a team and strive to be the best we have ever been. It only gets better from here!

Revenue \$5 Million and Over:

LIGHTOLOGY

CHICAGO, IL

Winner in this category for the second year in a row, Lightology continues to keep its finger on the pulse of design, always looking for new ways to make design more accessible. “Amongst a field of some of the most innovative and successful lighting showrooms in North America,” Steven Schranz, Vice President of Sales & Marketing, says, “we are truly grateful to be considered one of the leaders in contemporary lighting.”



Vice President of Sales & Marketing Steven Schranz took home Lightology's Showroom of the Year Award with L&D's Bowling (center) and Martin looking on.

SCHRANZ ON THE BIGGEST RISK EVER TAKEN:

Early on, we decided to curate a selection of lighting no other showroom had in North America. To achieve this, we traveled frequently to Europe and worked with countless vendors around the globe, hand-selecting some of the most unique and groundbreaking lights on the market today. The technical differences between lighting overseas and lighting in the U.S. can be like night and day, but we committed to helping many of these boutique brands redesign and engineer their products for the U.S. market, and today it's what truly sets us apart.

SCHRANZ ON THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACING THE HOME DESIGN/RETAIL INDUSTRY:

Like every industry, technology is advancing lighting at a breakneck speed. LED and computer-driven technology have changed the lighting landscape, with every element of your fixture now controllable with the tap of a button. We have an incredibly knowledgeable staff and hold four-month-long lighting classes twice a year to keep us on the cutting edge. If you have a vision for your space, we can make it work, from ideas and prints to installation, complete with all the latest LED controls.

SCHRANZ ON THE MOST EXCITING TECHNOLOGY:

Tunable white LED lighting is one of the most exciting technologies we see evolving in the lighting industry. Tunable white fixtures give you the ability to completely customize the lighting in your living or working environment. With the turn of a dial, you can change your room from a bright, cheerful 4000K daylight to a warm, cozy 2000K sunset color temperature.

SCHRANZ ON THE FUTURE:

The retail landscape has changed drastically over the past few years and will continue to evolve as digital channels grow. Succeeding in the future will require a retailer to distribute through multiple selling channels, offer unique value-adds and services, such as custom lighting designs and consultations; fine tune their marketing towards micro-audiences; and showcase new technologies, both in-store and online. At Lightology, we strive to understand what technologies and sales channels drive our customers' buying behavior and patterns and adapt our operation to meet their needs. We work hard to ensure our digital footprint and showroom experience go hand-in-hand.



Outstanding Merchandising Display:

WATERPLACE

CROWN POINT, IN

When designer Doug Van Der Weide heard his showroom's name called, he says he felt utter and complete shock. Since the showroom opened last October, it's been a whirlwind experience. "We are humbly thankful, blessed and appreciative for just being considered," he says.

VAN DER WEIDE ON THE BIGGEST RISK EVER TAKEN:

The showroom itself is our biggest risk. Even though we have been in business since 1954, creating a new showroom brand over the past year with a wider offering of quality products at competitive prices is a huge risk for us. We expanded to include lighting, cabinets, furniture vanities, kitchens, tops, hardware and accessories on top of decorative plumbing fixtures. We also wanted to create a showroom that doesn't look and feel like everyone else's. It is all about the customer's personal experience that we focus on.

VAN DER WEIDE ON THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACING THE HOME DESIGN/RETAIL INDUSTRY:

Not being stale, thinking out of the box. Showrooms tend to go with the "Well this is how it has always been done" attitude. We at WaterPlace realize that the next generation is slowly returning to the brick-and-mortar store to make a purchase, but they don't want to visit a stale outdated showroom from

a time gone by. Today's showrooms must have more than just an educated staff: You need to create an emotional, personal shopping experience for your guests that they will never forget.

VAN DER WEIDE ON THE MOST EXCITING TECHNOLOGY:

Bluetooth integration, touch technology and LED lighting. These three forms of technology are forever-changing new products making them better, sexier, easier and safer. And are these four adjectives not the reasons why we purchase most products in the first place?

VAN DER WEIDE ON THE FUTURE:

In our industry, I believe we will find more decorative plumbing showrooms following WaterPlace's example of adding larger product offerings like lighting lines to sustain their showrooms and to be competitive, and we will once again be trying to think outside the box and be ahead of the curve, creating something new again.

WaterPlace designer Doug Van Der Weide accepted the award from Dallas Market Center's Laura Van Zeyl (left) and Cindy Morris.

Exceptional Community Involvement:

CREST LIGHTING

NEW LENOX, IL

From supplying over \$20,000 worth of new fixtures to Habitat for Humanity, to toy and coat collections, Crest Lighting embodies community service. The company's philanthropic endeavors have touched people throughout the Chicagoland area. "Our community relationships have given us strength and have allowed us to grow through the years, and that's why giving back to them is so important to us," says Erica Gallagher, Chief Technology Officer.



Amy Fimbiati, Showroom Manager at Crest Lighting, accepted the award from Dallas Market Center's Van Zeyl (left) and Morris (right), accompanied by her fellow Crest colleague Patty Cunningham.

GALLAGHER ON THE BIGGEST RISK EVER TAKEN:

One of our biggest risks was giving up a sizeable portion of our showroom space to partner with a local cabinet company, Seigle's Cabinet Center. Fortunately, it has worked out really well, generating a significant amount of business crossover/referral business.

GALLAGHER ON THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACING THE HOME DESIGN/RETAIL INDUSTRY:

What continues to be a challenge for the brick-and-mortar stores is the perceived value of the big-box stores. Clients assume big-box stores have good product at good pricing, when in reality, they have average product at average pricing. Our staff's experience and our strong relationships with our manufacturers allows us to offer an extensive selection, great quality, style and design, at competitive prices, resulting in a better value for our customers.

GALLAGHER ON THE MOST EXCITING TECHNOLOGY:

Home automation is certainly one of the most buzz-generating technologies we touch. Advanced lighting controls, embedded sensors, WiFi-enabled and remote-programmable systems

— paired with energy-efficient lighting, thermostats, room monitors and more — are making our environments healthier and smarter. The ability to control thermostats, ceiling fans, lighting, window shades, cameras, appliances and so much more, from virtually anywhere via smartphones, tablets, Alexa, Nest and other devices, is changing the way people interact with their environment, and we are excited to be at the forefront of these new enhancements.

GALLAGHER ON THE FUTURE:

We are just shy of our 50th anniversary in the lighting industry, and we have seen a lot of things change over that time. We have remained strong because of our ability to adapt to these changes. We will continue to be technology-driven and see growth in our online business as consumers' shopping habits continue to move more in that direction. At the same time, we anticipate greater focus on our services as our true differentiator, as no online shopping experience can replace an in-home visit and time spent getting to know our customers and understanding the look, budget and timeline that will ensure their project's success.

lighting & decor



editor's faves
July 13, 2017

On Saturday, July 29, the 17th Annual **Coombay Bash** will take over Chicago's Navy Pier Grand Ballroom in Caribbean-style fashion to raise money for cancer research. Organized by nonprofit The H Foundation, the 2017 Coombay Bash is expected to welcome 1,000+ guests, including celebrities like David Eigenberg, a star of the NBC show "Chicago Fire," for a night of Coombay Smashes, great bites and a lively auction.

The H Foundation's pledge to take down cancer is one it takes very seriously—in 2016 alone, the organization raised \$70,000 for basic science cancer research at the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University. Over the last 15 years, it's raised more than \$7 million. The funds are used as seed money, and the donations have been leveraged into more than \$50 million of research dollars toward finding a cure.

John Rot, owner of Hortons Home Lighting, was part of the team that created Coombay Bash back in 2001 after a Hortons employee lost her battle with cancer. The industry has rallied around this event and adopted it as an official fundraiser, with manufacturers donating product and sponsorships, markets donating hotel stays and plenty of individuals donating money to the cause. The impact they've made is so great that this year, the H Foundation will present the first-ever "Guiding Light" Award to six lighting manufacturers who have supported the event since its inception.

I've had the pleasure of attending Coombay Bash several times, and it's really that—a pleasure. Although this year's event is right around the corner, it's not too late to get involved. You can buy tickets and attend the actual event (Chicago is great this time of year!); purchase raffle tickets if you can't make it in person; donate items, like product, gift cards, event tickets, etc.; or even just write a check. **Click here** to make that happen.

Let's make the 17th Annual Coombay Bash one for the books.
-Nicole Bowling, Editor-in-Chief



Debuted at June 2017 Lightovation, Hudson Valley Lighting's new Mitzl Collection provides "attainable high design" with minimalist, modern feel. The line features pendants, chandeliers, portables, flush mounts and sconces, like Clara, in a variety of metal finishes with glass, rope cords and antique bulbs.

[TO CONTINUE READING CLICK HERE](#)



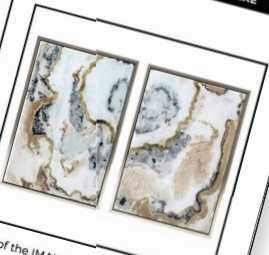
This piece is featured in a brand new collection of glam tartar cards from The Oliver Cal Artist Co. Hand-drawn images made with rich blues and metallic golds framed in a gold flatter frame, this piece features a classic perfume in a contemporary theme.

[TO CONTINUE READING CLICK HERE](#)



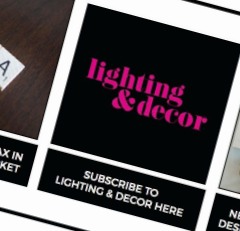
The Mission collection from KAS Ivory Vision area rug is machine made of space-dyed polyester in

[TO CONTINUE READING CLICK HERE](#)



Part of the IMAX's Nakasa Home luxury line, the Agate Profile acrylic framed wall decor hangs vertically, measuring 31.25 inches tall.

[TO CONTINUE READING CLICK HERE](#)



NEW TALENT, PRODUCT DESIGNERS STONE & ROSE

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editor's faves
June 1, 2017

I attended the ART + IDS joint conference in Scottsdale, AZ, the week before last, and besides the fabulous report our part to beautify the spaces of the homeless, I really enjoyed being a part of this year's community service project.

On the Friday afternoon of conference, we all loaded onto buses and went over to the U.S. VETS Grand Veterans Village housing facility in Phoenix where we did income and disabled veterans who live there.

The 132-room repurposed motel welcomes more than 200 homeless veterans while serving more than 30,000 nutritious meals. And while U.S. VETS is able to provide care for its residents, the facility is able to provide care for those who are unable to pay for care. They did not have the funding to decorate veterans' rooms. Enter ART + IDS, who together worked for months to collect donations of furniture, accessories, lighting, rug and more from the manufacturers, reps and retailers in our industry.

Then, in a span of four hours, attendees unloaded thousands of products assembled them, split into teams and no more than 100 rooms hanging wall decor, lighting in terms, laying down rugs and much more, all the while getting to know a bit more about each veteran they were helping.

Stamps were exchanged, family pictures and mementos were hung up in the process, and some tears were definitely shed. The veterans were so grateful to receive the items we donated, and I think many of them were amazed at all we did in such a short amount of time.

If you have time, watch the video recap [HERE](#) to get a sense of the impact the project had on the community and on us as participants.

And before you go, check out a few notable products from ICFF last week below.

-Nicole Bowling, Editor-in-Chief



Skanska Alet tables feature a solid 2.5-inch-thick granite top with rounded, beveled edges and its signature leg design. Metal and glass. Available in Black Walnut shown here or White Ash.

[TO CONTINUE READING CLICK HERE](#)



From Juniors, TRIN Multiples is a collection of 100+ thin linear LED arrays providing a functional and source with adjustable outputs to completion. The QLED, Triad and Triad together change the number of arms and scale based upon the number of arms featured in each cluster.

[TO CONTINUE READING CLICK HERE](#)



Its petite size—27 inches wide by 29 inches in diameter by 29 inches tall—makes it perfect for small-space living.

[TO CONTINUE READING CLICK HERE](#)



The York branch comes in two sizes, 30 or 45 inches long with a cushioned seat. Three magnificently attached or removable.

[TO CONTINUE READING CLICK HERE](#)



Hobbevents' Epsilon T desk lamp can be unfolded and swivel on its axis. Dimmable with a touch-dimmer, the lamp, equipped with a 2700K LED, uses 23W and throws 3,000 lumens.

[TO CONTINUE READING CLICK HERE](#)



With its spring down cushion, the Simone sofa from Bernhardt looks comfy yet modern with its tufted back and sides.

[TO CONTINUE READING CLICK HERE](#)



Available in Silver Granite (shown here) and Oil Rubbed Bronze finishes, the Designer Edition offers two USB ports, ideal for charging phones and other electronic devices.

[TO CONTINUE READING CLICK HERE](#)



Shown in a Walnut stain, the Rustic Wood console table from Howard Elliott is adorned in iron accents.

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AMERICAN HOUSEHOLDS EMBRACE CP, LED BULBS

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lighting & decor



Social Media Star:
MONTREAL LIGHTING & HARDWARE
MONTREAL, QC

When the Social Media Star campaign finished on *Lighting & Decor's* Facebook page, Montreal Lighting & Hardware had garnered over 200 likes and a ton of positive comments. Clearly, their social media strategy seems to be working. "We were very proud to have been selected amongst such fabulous showrooms," Fred Naimer, President, says.

NAIMER ON THEIR SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY:

This is largely the work and creativity of our ecommerce coordinator, Teneisha Collins. We want synergy between our showroom and our online presence. Because of this, our social media channels are designed to convey the same "wow" feeling of walking into our showroom. From photos from our designers and manufacturer application photos to our weekly contests, we strongly believe that content and engagement are key. Teneisha is the person that makes it happen. Almost all of our marketing and advertising dollars are spent on our website and social media. Today, our social media consists of regular newsletters to our registered followers on Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter and Houzz.

NAIMER ON THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACING THE HOME DESIGN/RETAIL INDUSTRY:

Our biggest challenge is getting people to appreciate and value our service and to buy locally. The large online dealers are very influential in the market today. We match or beat any price, but first, we have to be given that opportunity. This only happens by being tenacious with our follow-up and service. It starts the moment a client calls or enters our showroom, and it never really ends. We are there for the client, even well after the sale is completed and delivered. We even contact each

on-line client to make sure they have ordered what they really want and need.

NAIMER ON THE MOST EXCITING TECHNOLOGY:

I guess the technology that I love is Amazon's Alexa combined with Lutron's Casetta or Radio Ra2. Don't ask me how it works (my son and others at the showroom are responsible for this), but how great is it, when you can walk into a room and say 'watch TV' and the lights dim, the blinds go down and the television turns on. No touching your phone and waiting for an app to load. We love demonstrating this to clients in our Experience Room. Alexa will even give you the weather and tell you a joke!

NAIMER ON THE FUTURE:

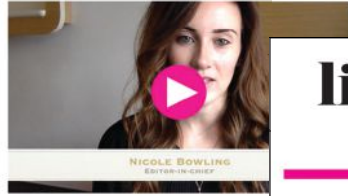
In five years, my sister and I will be fading out, and a new generation will take over. Our kids will hopefully take what they have learned from us and combine this with their own ideas and way of doing things. The lighting industry has become and will be even more technical as time passes. Our children are better equipped than us to address the technology. This, with the experience they are gaining now, should allow them to thrive in the years ahead. We are fortunate that they share our culture of hard work and passion for lighting!

Freddie Naimer (second from right), President and co-founder, and Daniel Naimer (second from left), Lighting Specialist, accept their award from DMC's Van Zeyl (left) and Morris.

lighting & decor

the scoop

MAY 25, 2017



NICOLE BOWLING
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

THE LIST OF LIGHTING & DECOR RECIPIENTS

news



ON MILLENNIAL PINK seems to be everywhere. Topics of countless think-pieces in the last few months. We got to it first to learn more facts and the implications for industry.

TO CONTINUE READING CLICK HERE



REAL TALK: WE SELL LOVE ACCENT FURNITURE Lighting showrooms & reasons for carrying it.

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JULY 06, 2017



NICOLE BOWLING
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

THE LIST OF LIGHTING & DECOR RECIPIENTS

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4 WAYS TO SIMPLIFY SOCIAL MEDIA DESIGN PATRICIA

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SCHEDULE A TIME TO SEE YOUR DREAM COME TO LIFE.

We talked to showroom staff and an online scheduling software creator to learn about the benefits of offering prescheduled appointments.

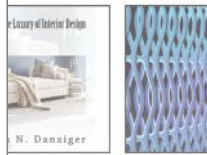
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YOUTUBE CHANNELS FOR DESIGNERS Whether you're looking to learn some trade tips, stay informed on the latest trends or just be entertained, these channels have what you need.

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let's get social



ICON HONORS TICKETS ON SALE The evening will include a buffet and cocktails, an exclusive performance from the Indigo Girls and the Honors presentation recognizing excellence in the home and gift industry.

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FACEBOOK ADS MANAGER: ALL ABOUT AUDIENCES

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AMERICAN SOCIETY OF FURNITURE DESIGNERS EXTENDS PRINCEAL AWARD DEADLINE

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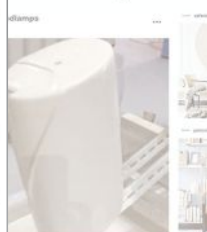
2017 SHOWROOM OF THE YEAR AWARDS ANNOUNCED AT RECEPTION DURING LIGHTFOVATION

CLICK HERE FOR MORE

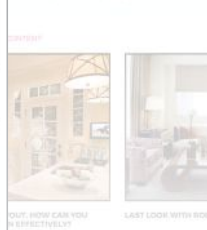
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Instagram



FROM: Karrie Kelly Design Lab
Shelley Williams' Color Predictions for 2018 are Totally on Trend



FROM: The Sofa Couch Loveseat Guide
Furniture is our Passion.

let's get social

BLOGS WE LOVE



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The Sofa Couch Loveseat Guide

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SOCIAL INFLUENCERS



FROM: The Retail Doctor
Retail Management: How To Get Your Employees To Do What You Want



FROM: Laurel & Wolf
Our 7 Favorite Color Family Homes



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2017 SHOWROOM OF THE YEAR AWARDS WINNERS ANNOUNCED AT RECEPTION DURING LIGHTFOVATION
The award recognizes showrooms across the continent that have shown themselves to be pillars of their communities and the lighting industry.

ICON HONORS TICKETS ON SALE
The evening will include a buffet and cocktails, an exclusive performance from the Indigo Girls and the Honors presentation recognizing excellence in the home and gift industry.

INTERIOR DESIGN PODCASTS WORTH LISTENING TO

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GET IN ON the scoop

An all-new bi-weekly newsletter from *Lighting & Decor*, **the scoop** includes a short commentary video, hosted by our editors, recapping the industry news you need to know that week.

the scoop also will link to relevant articles and podcasts from lightinganddecormag.com, plus social influencer content, including blogs and social media posts that we like and feel you will too.

There's nothing else serving the industry like **the scoop**.

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www.lightinganddecormag.com

lighting & decor

Award Highlights



1. The 2017 Showroom of the Year Award winners.
2. Shared on Instagram by @illuminatinginteriors: "Excited to be a finalist for Showroom of the Year."
3. Dallas Market Center's Cindy Morris (right) and Laura Van Zeyl take to the podium to announce the winners.
4. The team from finalist We Got Lites – Annalise Giglio and Joshua Marshal – smile before the awards ceremony.
5. The crowd gathers to hear the big announcement.
6. The stage is set on Dallas Market Center's 4th floor loft space for the winners to be announced.

SHOWROOM OF THE YEAR | 2018

Entry and nomination forms for the 2018 Showroom of the Year Awards will be available on LightingandDecorMag.com starting in November.

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& DECOR*.

Type of Business (check only one):

- 01 Lighting Retailer
- 02 Home Furnishings Retailer
- 03 Internet Retailer
- 04 Mass Merch/Discount Retailer
- 05 Interior Design Firm
- 06 Lighting Design Firm
- 07 Custom Builder
- 08 Architectural Design Firm
- 09 Electrical Distributor
- 10 Manufacturers Representative
- 11 Manufacturer
- 12 Other

My Position Is (check only one):

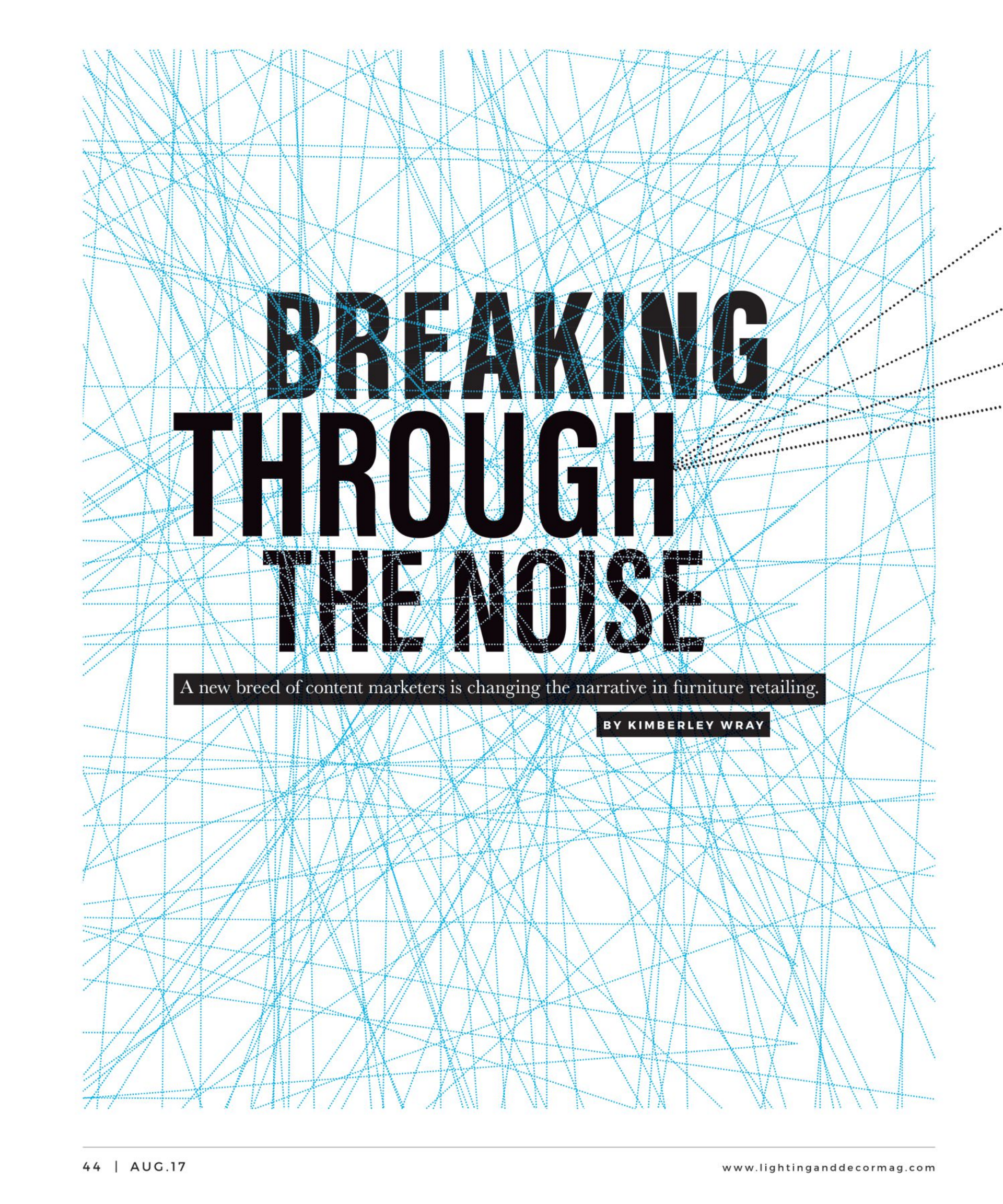
- 01 Pres/Owner/VP/Corp
- 02 GM/Store or Branch Mgr
- 03 Sales Manager
- 04 Lighting Designer
- 06 Designers & Architects
- 05 Other

Company's Annual Gross Sales
(check only one):

- 01 Less than \$100,000
- 02 \$100,000 - \$249,000
- 03 \$250,000 - \$499,000
- 04 \$500,000 - \$999,999
- 05 \$1 Million - \$1.9 Million
- 06 \$2 Million - \$4.9 Million
- 07 \$5 Million - \$9.9 Million
- 08 \$10 Million or More

Products that store Carries
(check ALL that apply):

- 01 Accent Furniture
- 02 Area Rugs
- 03 Ceiling Fans
- 04 Decorative Fixtures/
Chandeliers
- 05 LED Lighting
- 06 Outdoor Lighting
- 07 Pillows
- 08 Portable Lighting (table and
floor lamps, torchieres)
- 09 Tabletop
- 10 Wall Decor/Mirrors
- 11 Decorative Accessories
- 12 Other



BREAKING THROUGH THE NOISE

A new breed of content marketers is changing the narrative in furniture retailing.

BY KIMBERLEY WRAY

It's near midnight and John and Ivy Simon are still hard at work. While their Chapel Hill, NC, store closes at 6 p.m., most evenings the husband-and-wife team can be found bent over their laptops, diligently fine-tuning the content of their website, www.paletteandparlor.com.

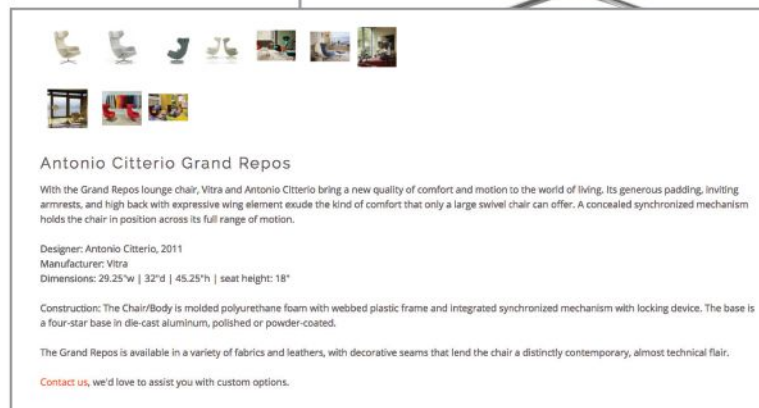
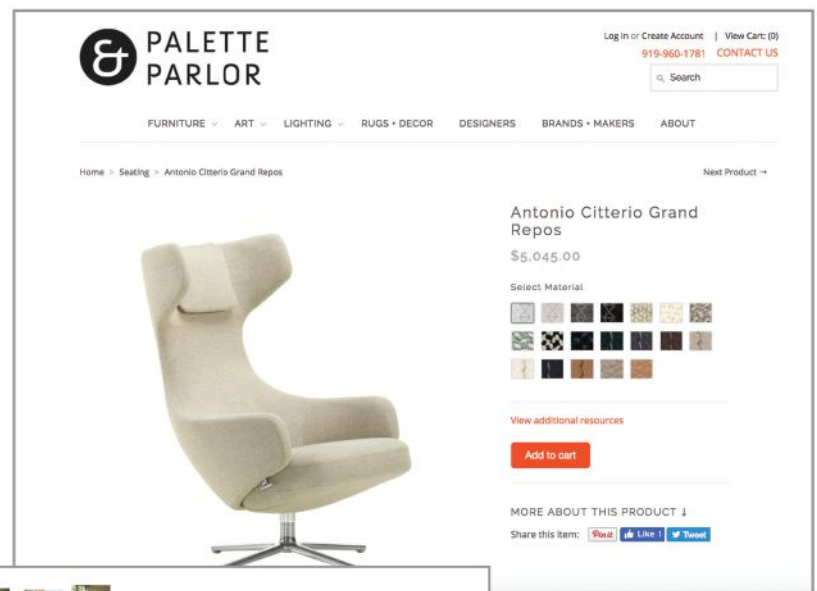
“Neither my husband nor I have any technical expertise, and neither of us can code, but there are great tools out there now like our e-commerce platform Shopify,” Ivy relates. “It’s very user-friendly, so we stay up every night, adding pictures and product descriptions, using content from our manufacturers to build and build. Along the way we learn things like how to optimize every single image alt tag and the keywords that shoppers are using when they are looking for the type of furniture we sell. We learn as we go, which I think is just part of being an entrepreneur. And I read recently that the number-one factor that distinguishes successful entrepreneurs is simply the willingness to persevere past the hard times, the ups and downs, and the U-turns you have to take.”

This Is Us

As purveyors of iconic Mid-Century Modern furniture brands (Knoll, Vitra, Fritz Hansen, Carl Hansen & Son and Kartell among them), the Simons are a prime example of a new breed of young retailers who are rewriting the book on furniture retail marketing. Armed with MBAs, they decided to put Ivy’s love of Danish design — acquired while working overseas in global marketing for a Danish pharmaceutical company — and John’s expertise in operations to work. In true omnichannel fashion, they sell modern furniture in their brick-and-mortar store as well as online through their website and social media accounts. Initially, they found selling furniture to shoppers in their local market fulfilling, yet “more of a challenge than we thought it would be.” They were pleasantly surprised by the results they saw online, which now accounts for 40 to 50 percent of overall sales.

In an industry littered with websites characterized by postage-stamp size photos and product descriptions that consist of little more information than dimensions and finish, the Palette & Parlor site is something of a revelation. Ivy is passionate about sharing the stories behind each piece of furniture the couple sells, along with bios of the designers who create them, and her effective storytelling is proving to be a winning strategy. Indeed, architects and interior designers from across the country have been attracted to Palette & Parlor via the information-laden website, and the couple has been doubling their numbers each year since opening the store in June of 2015.

This becomes all the more interesting considering that the Simons are often competing directly with the very manufacturers whose products they sell. Knoll, for example, manufactures and supplies the store with furniture, and it also operates its own showroom and website, which Ivy reports is growing every day. “It’s an interesting dynamic to navigate,” she says, “because they are also selling direct to consumers.”



Palette & Parlor owners John and Ivy Simon take the time to write in-depth descriptions about all of their products, like the chair above, which makes their site stand out from the pack.

Words to Make a Living By

For independent furniture retailers like the Simons, both the landscape and the industry's language is changing fast, with new words like Amazon and phrases like artificial intelligence (AI) rapidly entering the lexicon and quickly dominating the dialogue. With change always a constant, one thing is certain now: Consumers are more connected and have more choices and control over their media experiences than ever before, and that makes the ability to reach them with consistent messaging a major challenge for marketers.

While Palette & Parlor's social-selling techniques define the leading edge, there are also those who are breaking through the noise with old-school tools that reflect their core principles and enable them to define their companies and their personalities in ways that stand out in their marketplaces and the public mindset.

Retailer Cynthia Heathcoe of Contemporary Living in Palm Beach Gardens, FL, recognized with the coveted Emerging Star Award by her peers at the Home Furnishings Association Conference in San Antonio this past June, is leading the charge. The award, bestowed by her peers at a gala celebration, is a stunning acknowledgement of her ingenuity, hard work and just how much Heathcoe has achieved since making the brave decision to flee an abusive relationship for the relative safety of a homeless shelter 18 years ago. At the time, she was a single mother of six, with a newborn in hand.

"I didn't want to stay on government assistance so I decided to go back to school and get my business degree," she remembers. "My plan was to become a social worker and help other women going through trauma in their life, but I applied for a summer job at a furniture store between semesters and fell in love with it. I loved engaging with the customers, problem-solving and helping them choose pieces for their home."

We humans are suckers for happy endings, and Heathcoe regularly shares hers with other South Florida businesspeople via charity events, leadership groups and the Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship. Yet she connects best with her customers via her own weekly talk radio show on 900 AM, The Talk of the Palm Beaches. The radio show is regularly re-packaged as a podcast.

"I had visited the radio station as a guest on a show called 'SCORING Your Business,' with my SCORE mentor, who had asked me to come on to talk about my business," Heathcoe says. "A week later, the sales staff from the show came out to visit and pitched the idea of doing my own show, where I could share my passion for design and doing it has been one of the best decisions I've made. This is a second-home market and the listening audience is an older, wealthier demographic. Sometimes I bring in non-profits and talk about their charities and causes, and other days I have no idea what I'm going to talk about and one of the women from the station and I just get on and talk. I really don't write a script; I just talk from the heart. It's real and it's authentic." Listeners respond to her



Contemporary Living's Cynthia Heathcoe credits her radio show, The Talk of the Palm Beaches, with continually driving traffic to her retail store.

ALONG THE WAY WE LEARN THINGS LIKE HOW TO OPTIMIZE EVERY SINGLE IMAGE ALT TAG, AND THE KEYWORDS THAT SHOPPERS ARE USING WHEN THEY ARE LOOKING FOR THE TYPE OF FURNITURE WE SELL. WE LEARN AS WE GO, WHICH I THINK IS JUST PART OF BEING AN ENTREPRENEUR.

- Ivy Simon, Palette & Parlor

genuine approach. "There's no question that the show has helped build my brand and gives me more credibility with clients who see me as an authority on the subject of home," Heathcoe describes. "I've had people who have heard the show come in and hand me the blueprints of their home within 30 minutes of meeting me. Others walk into the store and say, 'I've heard your show and I think you're awesome, and I just wanted to tell you that.' Then they leave. They are not in the market to buy at that moment, but that's OK, because they eventually will be."

Star-Powered

Dallas-based Shay Geyer, owner of IBB Design Fine Furnishings, inherently understands that moving people and motivating them to buy today requires a shift in strategy and focus. The designer started IBB the blog in 2008, and is well known throughout the home furnishings industry and on a social media as a blogger and High Point Market Style Spotter, and in the Dallas television market, as a weekly contributor on design on "Good Morning Texas."

Her burgeoning collections of licensed home furnishings collections debut this fall. From a marketing standpoint, however, the quarterly, self-published, 60-page lifestyle magazine she launched in 2013 is the engine driving her family's single-store, high-end retail business.

IBB Design Fine Furnishings employs 36 interior designers who develop and write content for the glossy publication with a circulation of more than 15,000, distributed through free subscriptions and mailing lists, on site at the store, via the website and in the swag bags of various charity events that align with their targeted demographic of affluent homeowners (\$1.1M and above). Four years into the project, Geyer says, "There are people who have saved all 12 issues to date. We know, because when we announce on social media that a new issue is out, people will take pictures of past issues and post them on Facebook. They are holding onto the magazines for inspiration and they are coming in pointing to articles and saying, 'I want to see some art,' or 'I want this lamp,' or they are reaching out to a specific designer if they liked a particular article. In one case, a designer who wrote about an outdoor living area was contacted to do a similar concept and it turned into a whole house project."

Not surprisingly, staff turnover is minimal. "I may be the face of the company because this is a family business, but we think it's really important to showcase all of our designers and the work that they do in the magazine and at special events," the executive says, acknowledging that recognition continually outscores compensation in any study of why employees remain loyal to an organization. "It's really been a great tool for our designers. We get a lot of exposure from my design segment on 'Good Morning Texas,' but in terms of marketing investments, the magazine is our number-one return-on-investment by far."

Storytelling, no matter which way you do it, makes a difference in your brand ID, your marketing and your bottom line. By diving deeper and not only telling potential customers, but showing them, how your business is unique, you'll stand out in furniture retailing. **LD**



IBB Design Fine Furnishings' quarterly self-published magazine shines the light on its designers' work, among other lifestyle topics.

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PHOTO BY JULIE SOEFER. HEADSHOT BY MARITERE CASILLAS RICE.

Known for her “Classically Current” style, Houston-based Laura Umansky strives to create luxurious, livable interiors. Her firm, Laura U Interior Design, won an International Design and Architecture Award last year, and her blog continues to inspire us. In this Houston patio home, Umansky shares how she makes a child’s bedroom beautiful with room for growth.

1. I love using white in children’s rooms! It’s youthful, light and bright, and they can grow up with a white space without it ever feeling baby-ish. It isn’t a gamble if you choose the right materials like my new line of surfaces for Vetrazzo or a performance fabric from Crypton. You can install white drapery or countertops and walk away without a worry.

2. Children’s furniture definitely doesn’t have to be temporary! You may outgrow the need to soothe them to sleep in a rocking chair, but if the chair has style, it shouldn’t be tossed. Personally, I love to use a beautiful chest of drawers as a changing table. Just install a changing tray temporarily and you are taken care of for the first couple of years. Lose the tray, not the dresser, when you no longer need to change diapers.

3. A dramatic focal wall can be so impactful in an interior, and we loved the movement this motif created. One important thing to note is that this art piece is made up of decals. Once we tire of the endless train of camels, it isn’t a major undertaking to change it up.

Ideal - Barbeque Black CF330BQ
Ceiling fan shown in Barbeque Black
with Polished Nickel Accents



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