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Crestview Collection



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ON THE COVER

LBL Lighting's Astora pendant, shown here in a Gun Metal finish, brings warmth to a contemporary space. If ordered with the LED lamp, it uses 11W while delivering 816 lumens at 3000K and 80 CRI. Available in Satin Gold and Matte White finishes with coordinating cloth cords as well. www.lbllighting.com

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from the editor

VOLUME 1 . ISSUE 5

STYLE FOR TODAY

This month, our Idea Boards focus on contemporary living. I'm sure an image popped into your head when you read those words — for me, at this moment, it conjures up scenes from my current obsession, the show "Imposters" on Bravo, and character Patrick's abode.

What does contemporary really mean though, now that we're talking about it?

For me, contemporary is buzzy — I view it in varying degrees that exist across a spectrum, but generally, it's the style of now. Rather than reusing traditional elements, contemporary style utilizes new techniques, new materials and new schools of thought and creates something uniquely fresh for today's interiors. To sum it up in a few words: It's sleek and on the simple side, probably in neutrals with a splash of color. You should also expect some bold aspect as well — pattern, silhouette — that makes it stand out.

Advances in technology — LED, for example, and production capabilities — have created opportunities in the contemporary product realm that still wow me (and I hope all of you). Especially on the lighting side, innovative silhouettes that we're seeing today in the decorative space were not even possible five years ago.

Overall, I think this has forced some hands. In furniture, lighting and accessories, longstanding manufacturers are continuing to debut what they're calling "contemporary" lines or offshoot brands, or have rebranded entirely to cater to a modern customer — Drexel Heritage is the latest. At April's High Point Market, the company is set to show off a new identity as "Drexel" sans Heritage, complete with a new collection from designer Jo Sampson. This signals the manufacturer's move away from its historically European traditional product line in favor of more contemporary collections in an effort to modernize.

No doubt the Millennial generation, whose influence is large and continuing to grow, has impacted this, as the style of products they gravitate towards — Mid-Century Modern, Scandinavian, industrial — all have a distinctly contemporary look. Personally, this style is my bread and butter, so I'm thrilled to see more

contemporary products available from a growing number of avenues.

They provide great eye candy at markets, for the magazine's pages and for your stores and projects.

But before you dive into the product spreads ahead, there's something

else to note. Our new *Lighting & Decor* brand is the epitome of contemporary, but we've continued the time-honored tradition of conducting the Showroom of the Year Awards in partnership with Dallas Market Center. Even after eight years, the group of finalists still impresses us. Flip to page 25 to read about what makes each showroom unique, and don't forget to join us at Lightovation on June 21 in Dallas to celebrate the announcement of the winners. **LD**



Nicole

NICOLE BOWLING
Editor-in-Chief

For me, contemporary is buzzy — I view it in varying degrees that exist across a spectrum, but generally, it's the style of now.

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design notebook

BY ALISON MARTIN



FROM RUNWAY TO HALLWAY

Duo Mark Badgley and James Mischka's creations have been gracing the runway for decades, but now they're moving into a new realm of design: furniture.

Debuted at spring High Point Market, Badgley Mischka Home Collection puts a modern twist on Old Hollywood glamour. Here, the designers give us a behind-the-scenes look in their own words.



CALIFORNIA COOL

"The top piece is wood that has been lacquered white. What we were excited about was we always love lacquered 1940s French casegoods, but the durability factor is just not there. So we applied a surfboard finish to all the lacquered pieces to make them extremely durable. It gives you a really cool look as well as durability, and just the fact that it's a surfboard finish kind of gives it a California laidback feeling as well."

OLD HOLLYWOOD GLAM

"The Monterey lounge chair was inspired by a room we saw that Billy Haines decorated back in the 40s. So it's a vague inspiration of a Hollywood interior from that decade that we combined with some French furniture that we had seen at a museum, and then we just jumble them in our heads. Then we took the open back idea and filled it in with gilded rods that were inspired by a bamboo forest outside our office."



ON THE SQUARE

"The inspiration for the tumbling squares came from one of our beading layouts. We took the drawing and the rendering of it and blew it up to be size-appropriate for furniture. There's a feat of engineering in there as well as an aesthetic consideration in terms of the placement of the rods. The glass top we wanted to make not just a piece of glass. There's a defined inside line around the edge so it has a little bit of interest that's above and beyond what you'd expect."



BEAUTY AT ANY ANGLE

"When we design a couture gown, a woman has to look beautiful at every angle. This Monterey sofa, for example, is so beautiful from the back. We didn't take any shortcuts. A lot of sofas today, they cut corners with their design just to be slammed against a wall and they're not finished properly or beautifully from the backside. This sofa can really flow to the middle of the room and just be so gorgeous as an object from any angle. We think that's really important."



WELCOME

HOME

A fresh new quarterly publication delivered digitally to your inbox, *Millennial Home* focuses on today's and tomorrow's most influential segment of the consumer market—Millennials—zeroing in on what's important to them, what products they want to make their house a home, and how they go about finding their next purchases.

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TAX REFORM

Now that healthcare reform stalled, President Donald Trump and House Speaker Paul Ryan have turned their attention to tax reform — an area of the law that impacts the lighting and home decor industry. Both Trump and Ryan have laid out blueprints, but at press time, no official legislation has been introduced to Congress.

We know talking about taxes may make your head hurt, so here we break down what’s being discussed and what it means for your business.

PLANS ON THE TABLE

Both Trump’s campaign plan and Ryan and Rep. Kevin Brady’s “A Better Way” blueprint promise tax cuts and a lower corporate tax rate (see chart). Overall, both plans offer major tax cuts for businesses, especially Trump’s, says Eric Toder, Institute Fellow and Co-Director at the Tax Policy Center.

“The Ryan plan would allow businesses to expense all capital but eliminate interest deductions,” he explains, “so for some small businesses that are expensing most of their investments, they would just lose out on the interest side, but not gain much on the investment side.”

Toder says neither plan is better or worse for businesses, but tax cuts won’t stick around unless the plan is deficit neutral. Any cuts that add to the national deficit are subjected to a 10-year sunset, which means they’ll expire after 10 years i.e. the Bush tax cuts. With deficit-neutral reform, closed loopholes and added taxes will cancel out new cuts.

Despite Ryan’s intentions, experts at the Tax Policy Center currently estimate that his plan will add \$3 trillion to the national debt in the next decade, while Trump’s would add \$7.2 trillion over the first decade. Deficit hawks in Congress will likely oppose such plans. But business lawyer and CPA Brian Thompson says adding to the deficit isn’t necessarily a bad thing — within reason.

“When the interest rates go up to 8 percent on government debt, then the yearly interest on \$20 trillion is \$1.6 trillion annually,” Thompson says. “Significant new tax revenues

will be needed if prevailing interest rates on government debt increase significantly.”

Interest rates on government debt affect the health of the economy. Low interest rates mean the economy is expanding, then more people can afford to take out loans. Rising interest rates can cause inflation and stall borrowing.

When the economy and the deficit are growing at the same rate, maintaining a deficit isn’t a bad thing, Toder explains, but at the moment, the U.S. economy isn’t growing as fast as the deficit and it’s not expected to catch up over the next decade, due to a rise in spending on retirement and health programs resulting from an aging population.

If the deficit gets too out of control, taxes will have to go up for everyone, and inflation will drive up the price of goods and services, which can halt consumer spending. In short,

you may want lower taxes, but go too low and your business could end up paying more later.

TALKING TAXES FOR SMALL BUSINESS

Thompson describes these tax plans as a “lot of smoke and mirrors” for small businesses. Though many in Congress talk about helping small businesses, cutting the corporate tax rate doesn’t help S-corporations and LLCs.

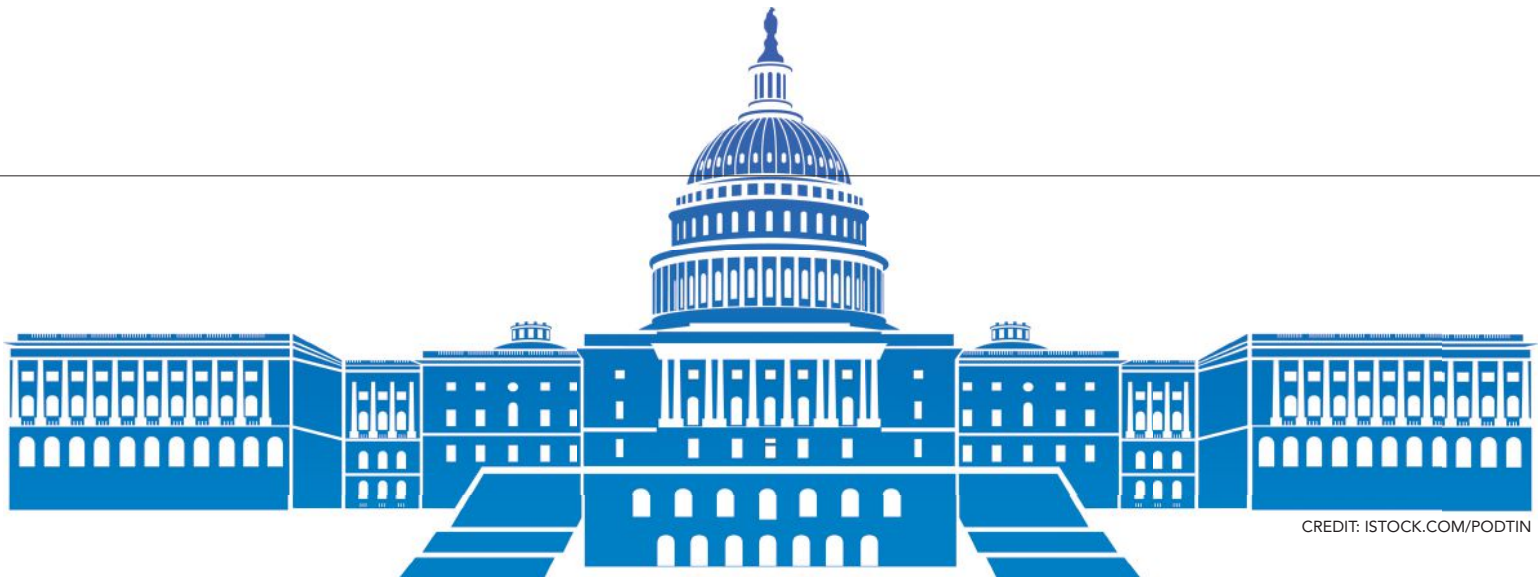
“It’s a little misleading, a lot of this talk about helping small business people,” Thompson says. “It’s really not doing anything to help them.”

Small business owners should be looking for plans that help individuals and S-corporations. Fewer tax brackets, as both Trump and Ryan’s plans propose, also help cut down on the amount small businesses pay in taxes.

Both plans offer large cuts to the wealthiest Americans, but small businesses should be

	TRUMP CAMPAIGN PLAN	RYAN’S “A BETTER WAY”
NEW NUMBER OF TAX BRACKETS	3 BRACKETS: 12%, 25% and 33%	3 BRACKETS: 12%, 25% and 33%
CORPORATE TAX RATE	15%	20%
TAX SYSTEM	No given information, previously end deferral	Territorial
TAX CUTS FOR AVERAGE INCOME EARNERS	\$1,100 per household	\$60 per household
PERCENT OF TAX RELIEF TO WEALTHIEST 1% AFTER 10 YEARS	50.8%	99.6%
INTEREST DEDUCTION	Manufacturers can elect for full expensing and in exchange forgo any interest deduction.	No net interest deduction, though a company can deduct interest expense from its interest income.
CROSS-BORDER TRANSACTIONS	No given information. No support for border adjustment tax.	All exports exempt from U.S. tax. All imports subject to U.S. tax (border adjustment tax).

Sources: Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, Tax Policy Center



CREDIT: ISTOCK.COM/PODTIN

more concerned with tax cuts to the middle class — their main buyers. Trump's plan offers a bigger cut to the middle class over the next decade, while Ryan's plan heavily favors the wealthiest Americans, according to an analysis from the Tax Policy Center.

Thompson says the most beneficial tax reform for small businesses is a single-payer healthcare system, which shifts healthcare from employers and to the government. Entire departments devoted to healthcare within companies would go away. Republicans are staunchly against a single-payer system, but even with the higher taxes that would be needed to fund it, companies would still save money in the long run.

"There's no reason every company in America should have people or entire departments devoted to administering their healthcare plans to their employees," Thompson says. "It's incredibly inefficient for those businesses. They should be focusing on what they do and their core competencies."

UNDERSTANDING THE BAT

To fund the income tax cut, Ryan's plan proposes a border adjustment tax (BAT)—a tax that could heavily affect the lighting and home decor industry.

A BAT is a "destination-based cash flow tax," which means that a tax is levied at the place of consumption (territorial). Simply put, importers pay an added tax of 20 percent; exports are tax-free. The Tax Policy Center estimates a BAT will raise \$1.2 trillion over the next decade, and that would cover the lost revenue from the lowered corporate tax rate.

For example: Suppose your company contracts with a manufacturer in China to make lighting fixtures. You pay them \$100 for five fixtures. With a BAT at a 20 percent rate, the importer cannot deduct the \$100 from its taxes, such that the \$100 is fully taxable when at the 20 percent BAT because you cannot deduct imported merchandise from the BAT. This means importers pay an additional tax.

Now suppose this company manufactures in the United States and exports its fixtures. Under a BAT, manufacturers can continue to deduct the costs of the U.S.-produced fixtures — which is currently part of the tax law. Additionally, exporters can exempt the sales revenue from their BAT. In other words, exporters can deduct from BAT all domestic costs and totally exempt any revenues from export sales.

"On the surface," Toder says, "importers would pay a lot more tax than they currently do and exporters would pay a lot less or maybe even zero or negative tax."

It's easy to see why import manufacturers argue against a BAT. As Toder points out, companies will either have to eat the cost or pass it to consumers. But BAT supporters argue the value of the dollar would increase and offset costs.

"As long as we're still investing and saving the same amount as before and things have to balance," Toder explains, "the result will be that import prices will fall because of the rise of the exchange rate and export prices will also fall. That will wipe out the loss to importers and the gains to exporters." This means that after currency values adjust, exports will sell the same amount of goods to foreigners at the same price and importers will purchase the same amount of goods at the same price.

This scenario, however, is dependent upon the value of the dollar rising by 20 percent — Thomas Keating, a trade lawyer at Hodes, Keating & Pilon in Chicago, says it usually fluctuates by 1 to 2 percent each year.

"If the assumption is a 20 percent BAT on every \$100 [a company] imports, the theory is that \$100 will actually buy more because the Chinese currency would actually be at a lower level so they [the U.S. lighting importers] are getting more for their \$100 and that 20 percent isn't going to hurt as much as they think it would," Keating explains. But he adds, "I find it hard to believe that the dollar could increase that rapidly to effect that change."

Toder adds, "It will rise 20 percent assuming a uniform tax/rebate and sufficient time for adjustment. It may not rise 20 percent immediately and the tax/rebate will probably not end up being uniform, so skepticism about the full adjustment occurring quickly is warranted."

In the lighting and home decor industries, leaders are voicing concerns about the BAT.

"The costs of items such as food, gasoline, medications, clothing and lighting products will experience price hikes," Michael Weems, Vice President of Government Engagement at the American Lighting Assn., said in a recent statement. "Middle class families will spend a lot more to purchase these everyday items, to the tune of \$1,700 per household, per year. This proposal would negatively impact the lighting industry, not to mention the American economy."

"The border tax adjustment will materially increase decorative ceiling fan and lighting prices," Nathan Frampton, President of Fanimation, says.

BAT supporters also argue the tax will bring manufacturing jobs back to the United States, but Thompson and Keating remain skeptical. Keating says the lower cost of labor may still offset a BAT, though Thompson adds that wages in China are increasing. Toder says a BAT removes the tax benefit for U.S. businesses to invest overseas, so business may create jobs, but they won't be the low-skill manufacturing jobs Trump promised on the campaign trail. Automation replaced them, even overseas.

At press time, the White House had not taken an official stance on the BAT.

MOVING FORWARD

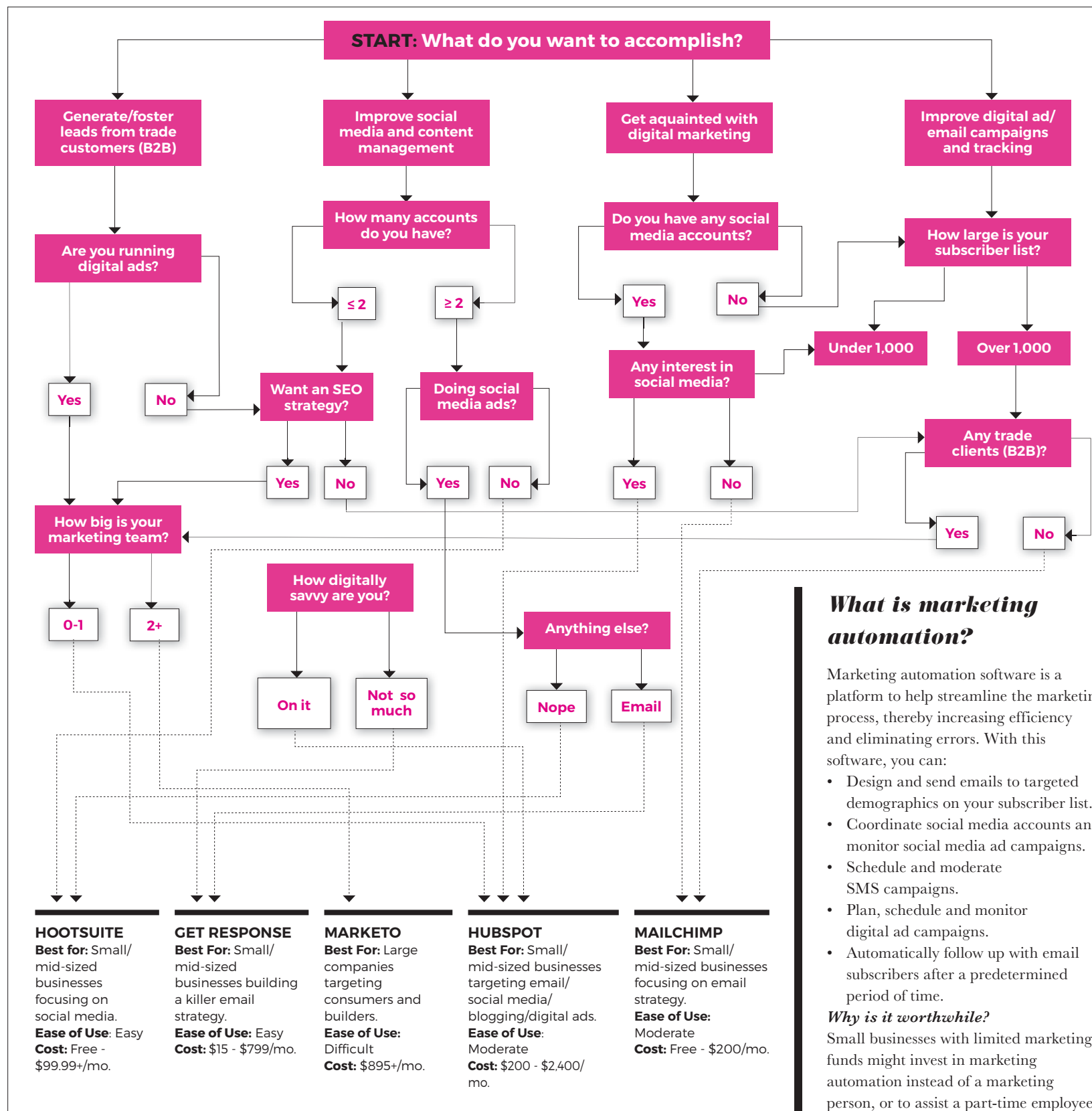
The 1986 tax reform took two years to pass. As you wait, stay updated from trusted news sources and nonpartisan groups like the Tax Policy Center.

All businesses favor paying less taxes, but when it comes to tax reform, remember to look to the forest, not just the trees. **LD**
By Alison Martin

BY ALISON MARTIN

WHICH MARKETING AUTOMATION SOFTWARE IS BEST?

FOR ANY BUSINESS OWNER, marketing automation software can save time and sanity. Capable of running email campaigns, social media and digital ads, it simplifies marketing — no matter your budget or experience. So which program is right for your business needs? Follow our flowchart to find out. Need to learn more about marketing automation software first? Check out the sidebar below before you begin.



3 tips from the lighting doctor

BY RANDALL WHITEHEAD, IALD

HOW CAN I PROPERLY LIGHT A SPACE WITH HIGH CEILINGS?

Tip 1: Design and conquer

Rooms with tall ceilings can be a gift ... and sometimes they can be a pain in the butt. How do you make a voluminous room feel inviting? If you install accent lighting — either track, monopoints or recessed — who's going to be the brave person that gets up on that tall, tall ladder to change bulbs and adjust the lights? These are the issues to think about.

Tip 2: Oh the humanity!

People can be intimidated by a room with a high ceiling. They feel insignificant in the space. It's the same kind of feeling you get when you walk into a house of worship with tall or vaulted ceilings. You are humbled. This is not the way that you want to make your family and guests feel in your home. It's much better for people to be subtly drawn into a space, pulled in by what feels like the glow of a crackling fire. This comes from the addition of ambient light. This is indirect lighting that's bounced off the ceiling and then back into the room. You can hide the light source using crown molding, an architectural cantilever or box beams. This soft fill light helps physically and emotionally warm up the space. But ambient lighting by itself is not enough. It creates what is referred to as the "cloudy day effect," where everything in the room has the same visual value. You need to add the other three elements of good lighting design: decorative, accent and task lighting. Depending on the size of the room, hanging one, two or three pendant fixtures helps create a secondary ceiling line, which instills a more human scale into the space. If these luminaires have translucent elements, they can be both decorative and ambient light sources at the same time. Reading lights would fall into the task lighting category. Having little pools of illumination in the seating

areas helps draw people into the space and enhance a people-centric vibe.

Tip 3: Up light and out of sight

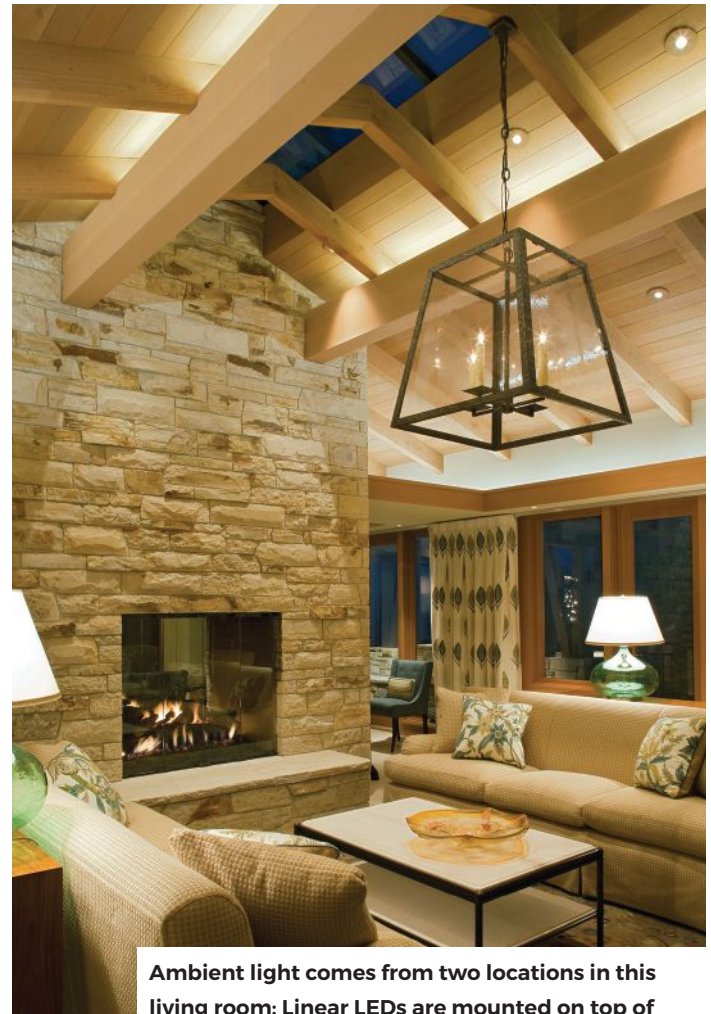
My main tenet of successful lighting design is the addition of ambient light. It softens the shadows on people's faces and helps create an inviting environment that welcomes them into the room. As I mentioned before, there are architectural solutions and faux-architectural solutions to this challenge. In more traditional homes you can install a crown molding that runs the perimeter of the room with indirect light concealed behind. For more modern homes, it can be a shelf-like cantilever that hides the linear light source. Using a linear LED product provides you with a long life and low energy consumption. You can choose your color temperature to match incandescent light at full brightness (2700K) or dimmed incandescent light (2400K). You can also choose an

RGBW LED source that gives you a full range of colors, including realistic gradations of incandescent-feeling illumination. You can also specify an LED that goes from daylight (5000K) down to candlelight (2150K).

Another faux-architectural solution is to install a series of box beams. These are non-loadbearing hollow beams that also act as decorative elements. They should be 2 feet to 6 feet down from the ceiling depending on the height of the room. Indirect lighting can then be installed on top of these



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.



Ambient light comes from two locations in this living room: Linear LEDs are mounted on top of the horizontal beams, while additional runs are installed above the cantilever that runs along the perimeter of the room. The oversized pendant fixture makes the room feel cozier, while the table lamps create little islands of illumination.

beams to provide the very desirable fill light. The same beams could also hold recessed adjustable fixtures that would be installed into the bottom side of the beam, making them more accessible for relamping and adjusting.

A quick and non-architectural solution would be to add torchiere lamps as the source of ambient light. Select a style that has an opaque or semi-translucent shade. You don't want to draw attention to the light source. You can also use portable uplights, hidden behind tall potted plants, to cast a shadow pattern up along the ceiling. Using any one of these options is a step in the right direction to create a room that says, "Hey, come on in. Sit down and take a load off." **LD**

PHOTO BY RUSSELL ABRAHAM

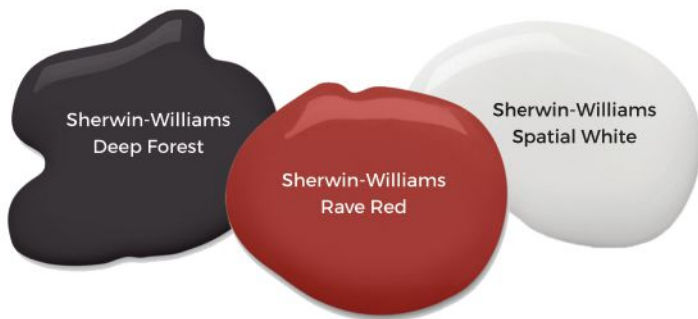
IDEA BOARD

CONTEMPORARY LIVING

BY NICOLE BOWLING

HERE AND NOW

Whether soft contemporary or ultramodern, decor with sleek style fits the desires of today's consumers.



The Alston Collection from Brian Patrick Flynn for Crystorama is a play on simplicity and shape. Available in cylindrical and drum shapes and black and white finishes, these metallic fixtures work well in a variety of locations. www.crystorama.com



From Boca do Lobo, Imperfectio leather sofa is built upon the irregularities and flaws on the manual hammered brass back and sides. Nearly 7.5 feet long, this avant-garde sofa makes a statement. www.bocadolobo.com



Inspired by the 1920s De Stijl movement and Gerrit Rietveld's Steltman chair, Bernhard's Marcel chair plays with positive and negative space and is finished in a high gloss dark espresso color. www.bernhardt.com

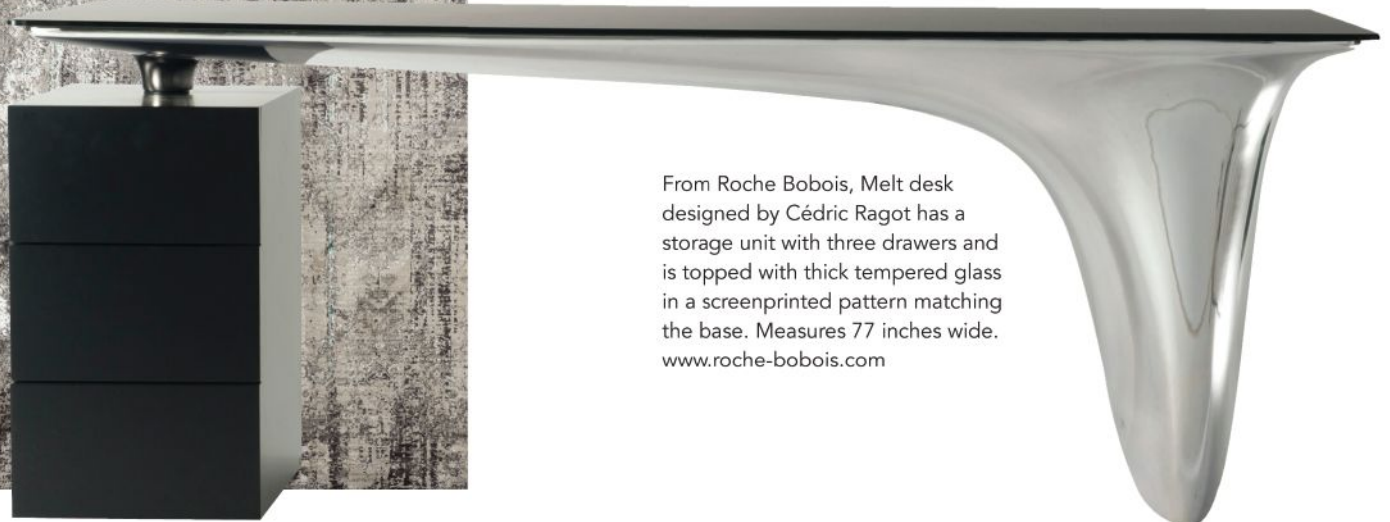


Eurofase's large Valley two-tier LED pendant is modern in look and technology — the 3000K, 80+ CRI LEDs throw 3,900 lumens. www.eurofase.com

From Kelly Wearstler's collection for EJ Victor, the stately Ives console wears both Ebonized Oak and White Venatino Stone finishes. www.ejvictor.com



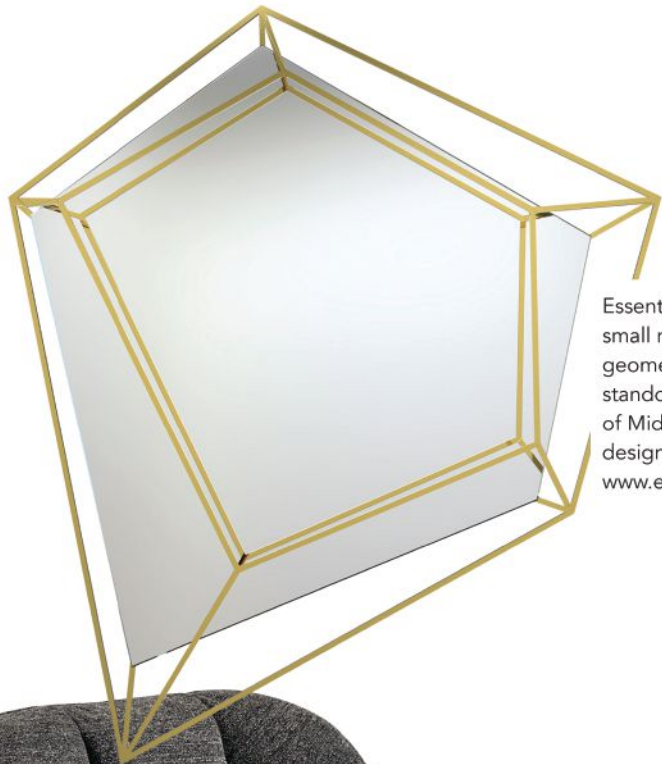
From Amer Rugs, this Cambridge Collection machine-made rug in Dove Gray provides a neutral yet edgy backdrop. www.amerrugs.com



From Roche Bobois, Melt desk designed by Cédric Ragot has a storage unit with three drawers and is topped with thick tempered glass in a screenprinted pattern matching the base. Measures 77 inches wide. www.roche-bobois.com

IDEA BOARD

CONTEMPORARY LIVING



Essential Home's Diamond small mirror plays on geometry to create a standout, asymmetrical piece of Mid-Century Modern design in polished brass. www.essentialhome.eu



Sherwin-Williams
Black Swan

Sherwin-Williams
Citronella

Sherwin-Williams
Popular Gray

From Fredrick Ramond, Gigi's asymmetrical silhouette brings drama and sophistication to a room. Available in a crystal version with a semi-translucent shade and Polished Nickel finish, or the two-tone Heritage Brass and Satin Black combination shown here. www.fredrickramond.com

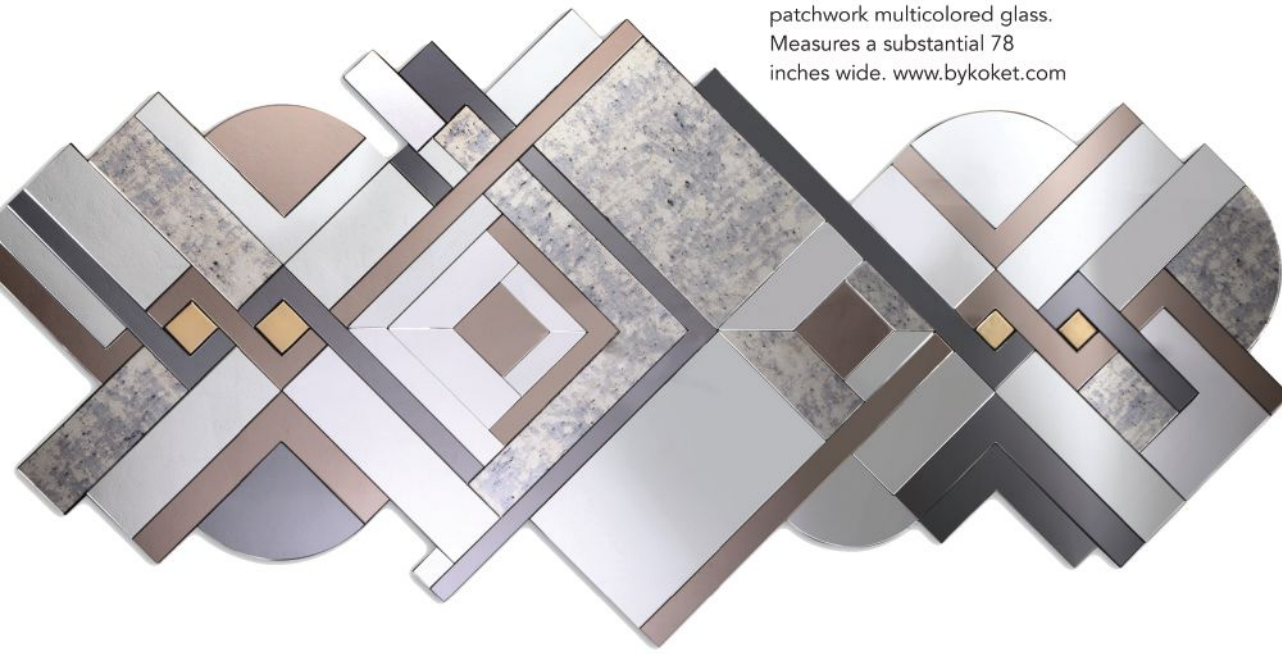


The Bartlett chair from Adesso is meant for lounging. Finished with a slim, brushed steel frame and textured charcoal fabric. Seat width is 40 inches. www.adessohome.com

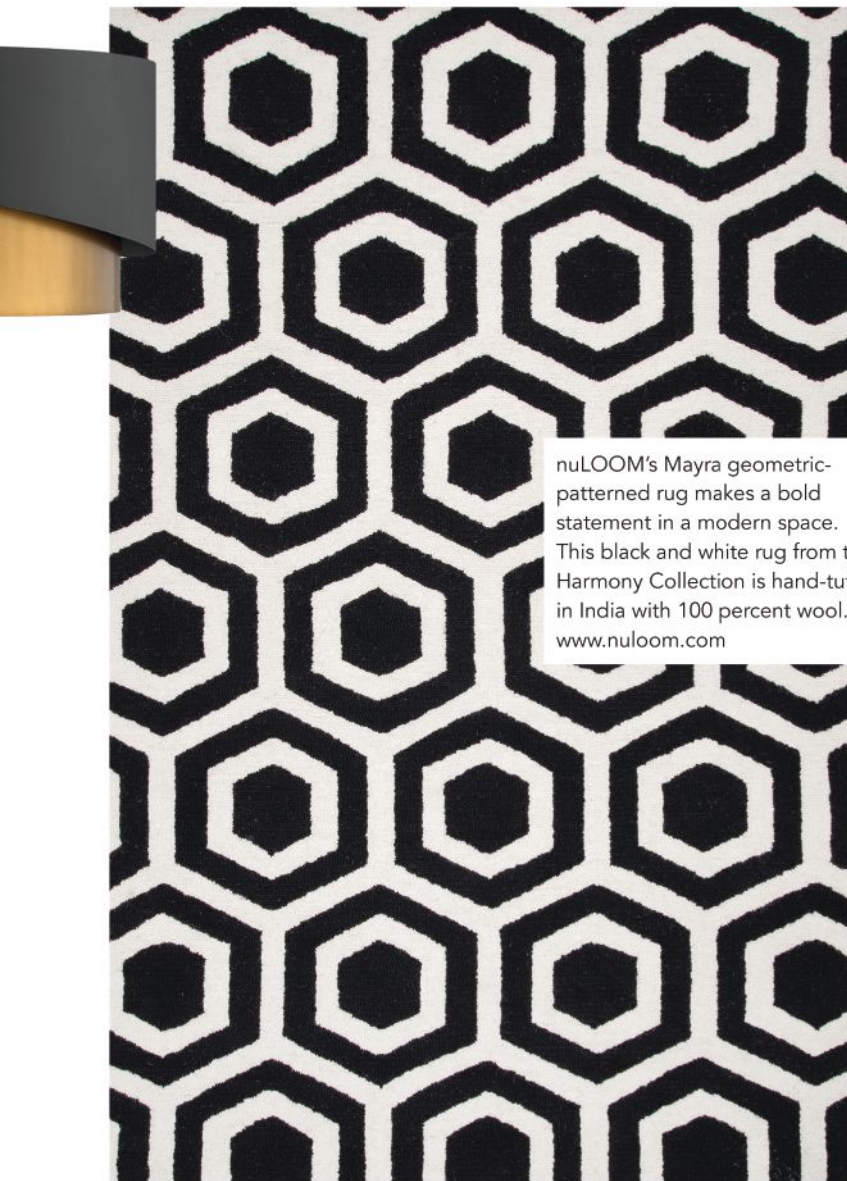


Pablo's new Superlight desk lamp provides minimal form and maximal function. It achieves fluid, sweeping movement in every direction with a full three-axis range of motion providing warm, glare-free LED light exactly where it's needed. Shown here in Mustard. www.pablodesigns.com

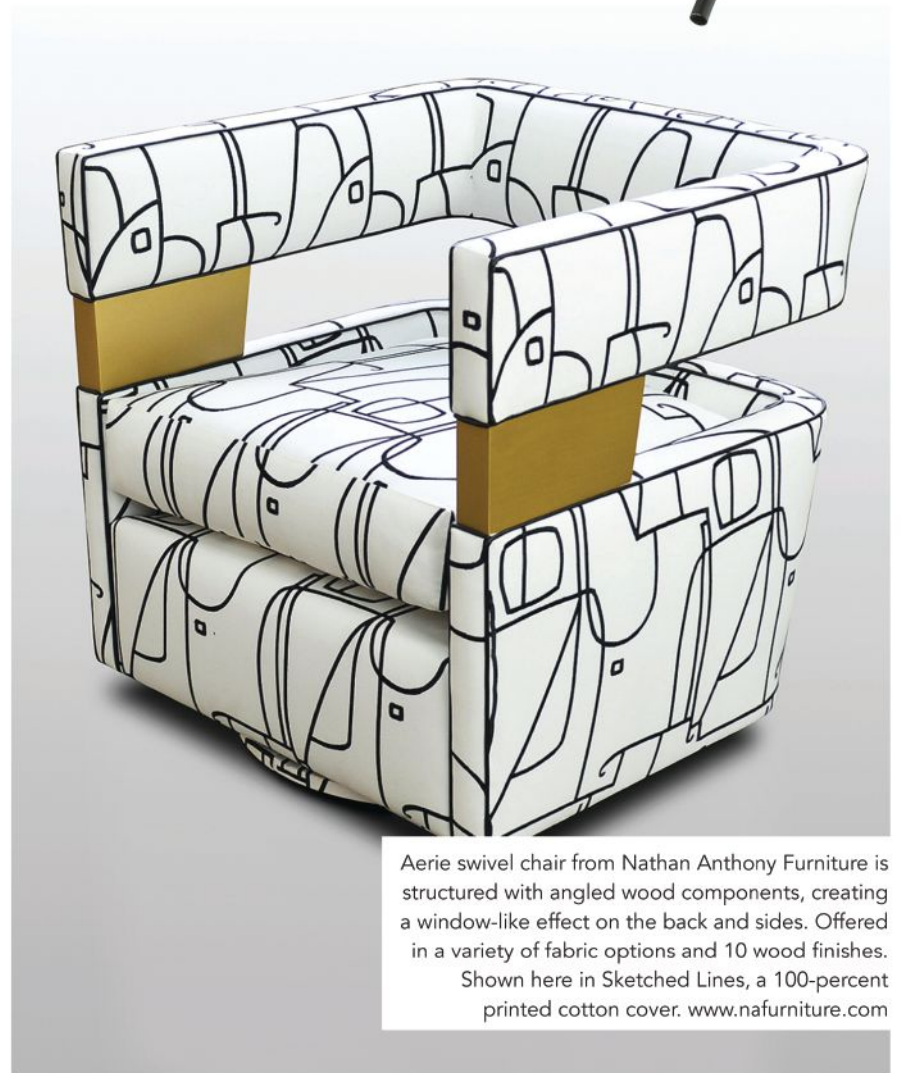
From Koket, Lemprica mirror lends an Art Deco feel with its patchwork multicolored glass. Measures a substantial 78 inches wide. www.bykoket.com



The simple and modern Quana table lamp from Lite Source features a black finish metal body and shade with brushed nickel accents. The collection also includes a matching floor lamp and arc lamp. www.lite-source.com



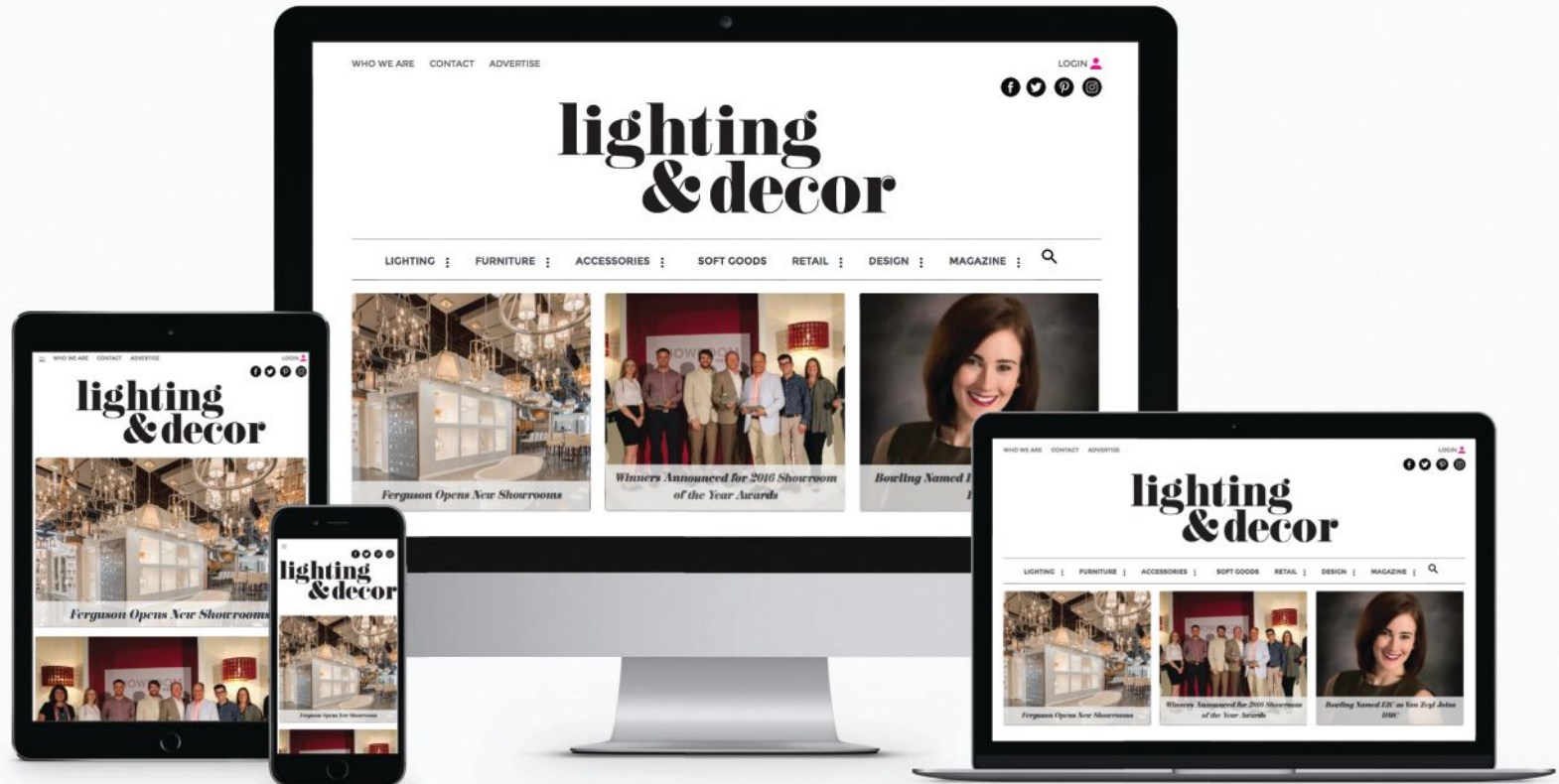
nuLOOM's Mayra geometric-patterned rug makes a bold statement in a modern space. This black and white rug from the Harmony Collection is hand-tufted in India with 100 percent wool. www.nuloom.com



Aerie swivel chair from Nathan Anthony Furniture is structured with angled wood components, creating a window-like effect on the back and sides. Offered in a variety of fabric options and 10 wood finishes. Shown here in Sketched Lines, a 100-percent printed cotton cover. www.nafurniture.com

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- 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):

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- 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 Other

A PERFECT MATCH

These wall decor-pillow pairs are meant for each other.

BY NICOLE BOWLING

BRIGHT & BOLD



Safavieh's Metallic Grid pillow, colored in Artic Denim, was inspired by splash art. Artist Patrick St. Germain used a similar glacial color scheme in his Savannah cow skull wall art for Renwil. www.safavieh.com, www.renwil.com



Christian square pillow from Lili Alessandra's Platinum Velvet with Ivory and White Collection marries well with the pretty pink in Soicher Marin's Atelier Collection K-JP-17L-0010-S art piece. www.lilialessandra.com, www.soicher-marin.com

SOOTHING & SERENE





LUSH & LOW-KEY



Kevin O'Brien's Triangles velvet pillow in the Nickel colorway complete with feather/down insert has as much depth as Paragon's 4041 "Remembering You" textured print, which measures 52 by 41 inches. www.kevinobrienstudio.com, www.paragonpg.com



This 22-inch square pillow at right, part of the ED Ellen DeGeneres collection with Loloï, is constructed of a cotton, wool and viscose blend, and features a nubby texture for tactile and visual appeal. Paired with Oliver Gal's Breathe moss wall art, the combo brings an organic vibe to life. www.loloirugs.com, www.olivergal.com



NEUTRAL & NATURAL

A PERFECT MATCH

STRUCTURAL & STRIKING



In this new piece from Trisha Yearwood's collection for IMAX, stylized ginkgo leaves are highlighted with gold leaf on an ivory field. Throw in Napa Home & Garden's St. Tropez suede square pillow in orange and you'll make a vibrant statement.
www.imaxcorp.com,
www.napahomeandgarden.com



Phillips Collection's Antique Iron Sheet wall tiles create soft texture with sturdy material. This handmade pillow from Aviva Stanoff's Stardust Collection has a silk duponi back with a complementary metallic look and feel.
www.phillipscollection.com,
www.avivastanoff.com



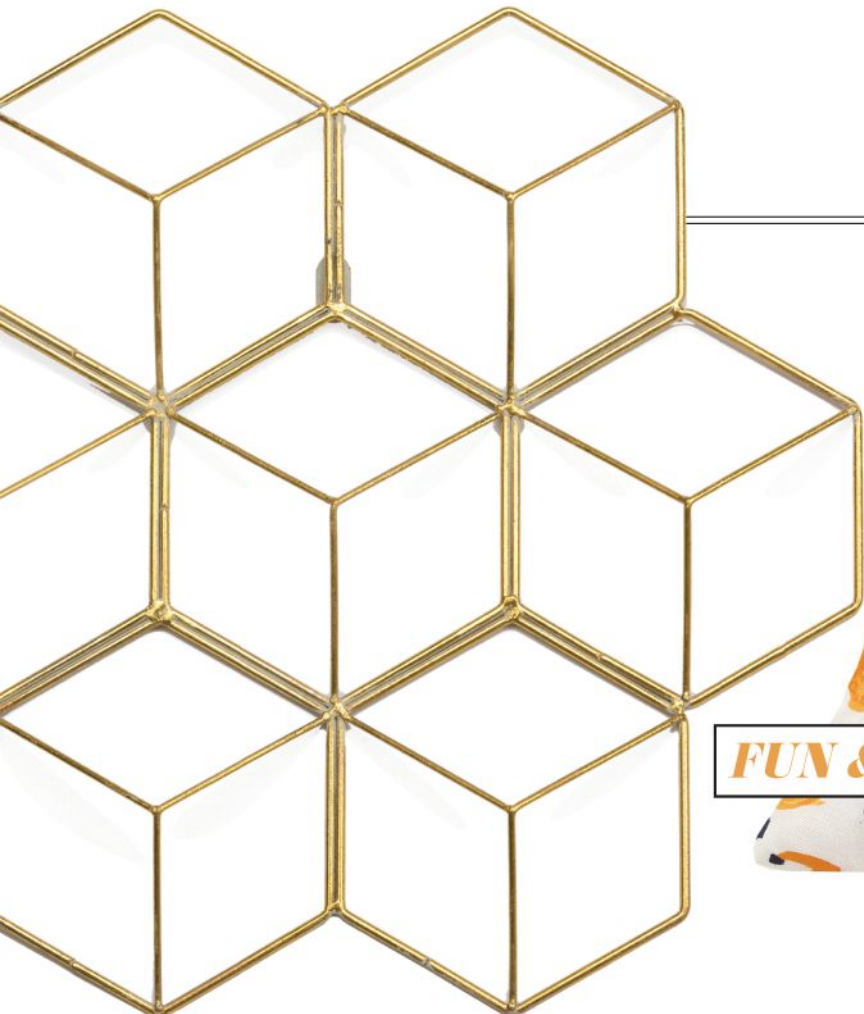
DRAMATIC & DIMENSIONAL





RICH & REFINED

Available through John-Richard, Carol Benson Cobb's "The Crossing Textile No. 2" comes in an Ebony gallery frame. Paired with Harp & Finial's faux fur Navajo pillow in Gray Multi colorway, warmth exudes. www.johnrichard.com, www.harpandfinial.com



FUN & FUNKY



From Gold Leaf Design Group, the Hex wall grid designed by Allan Howze is meant to fit together in multiples to create a large-scale wall art piece. Equally as spunky, Peking Handicraft's Swans canvas pillow, designed by Bouffants and Broken Hearts, is printed on both the front and the back. www.goldleafdesigngroup.com, www.pkhc.com

8th ANNUAL

SHOWROOM

OF THE YEAR | 2017



FIXTURES: SAVOY HOUSE

and finally, THE FINALISTS

Congratulations to the 2017 SHOWROOM OF THE YEAR AWARDS finalists. The winners will be announced at our June 21 reception during Lightovation at Dallas Market Center. The finalists will be profiled in the May issue of *Lighting & Decor*.

For more information about the show, visit www.DallasMarketCenter.com.

FINALISTS - REVENUE UNDER \$2 MILLION

Bright Ideas, Rochester, MN
Hall Lighting and Design, Victoria, TX
Heritage Lighting, Lambertville, NJ
Inland Lighting, Yakima, WA
Light Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA
Lumen Nation, North Canton, OH
Northtown Lighting Inc., Appleton, WI
The Lighting Design Center, Tinton Falls, NJ
The Saltbox Lighting, De Pere, WI
WaterPlace, Crown Point, IN

FINALISTS - REVENUE UNDER \$5 MILLION

Crest Lighting, New Lenox, IL
Ferguson Enterprises, Clive, IA
Illuminating Interiors, San Diego, CA
Lucia Lighting + Design, Lynn, MA
Montreal Lighting, Montreal, QC
NorthWest Lighting, Mount Prospect, IL
Pace Lighting, Savannah, GA
Passion Lighting, Grapevine, TX
The Lighting House, Shelburne, VT
WeGotLites, Staten Island, NY

FINALISTS - REVENUE \$5 MILLION AND OVER

Avenues Lighting, Jacksonville, FL
Dominion Electric Supply, Chantilly, VA
Hermitage Lighting Gallery, Nashville, TN
Idlewood Electric, Highland Park, IL
Lightology, Chicago, IL
PDI, Lawrenceville, GA
Village Home Stores, Geneseo, IL
Wabash Lighting, Fort Wayne, IN

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SHOWROOM

OF THE YEAR | 2017

THE FINALISTS' FOUR

In four quick facts, find out what makes each of this year's Showroom of the Year candidates stand out from the fray. **BY JENNY PINTO**

about Showroom of the Year

IN ITS EIGHTH YEAR, the Showroom of the Year Awards, presented in partnership by *Lighting & Decor* and Dallas Market Center, recognize top retailers in the lighting industry. One winner will be named in each of three dollar-volume categories, and all finalists are also eligible for three specialty awards: Outstanding Merchandising Display, Exceptional Community Involvement and Social Media Star, an award that you can help us determine. Visit www.Facebook.com/LightingDecorMag to vote. The awards ceremony will take place at summer Lightovation on the evening of Wednesday, June 21. All market attendees and exhibitors are welcome with no additional registration required.

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 'entertrainers' and co-owners of the marketing firm LP2 Boutique Agency.

Revenue Under \$2 Million ▼

► BRIGHT IDEAS | Rochester, MN

1. Great people

Minnesotans are known for their courteous nature and friendly smiles, and the folks at Bright Ideas are no exception. "Once a customer steps foot in our showroom they are treated to the best customer service experience from all of our staff," says Julie Eggenberger, Marketing and Office Manager. "We are all cross-trained to help them."

2. Big hearts

Serving their customers is not just about the smiles; it's about taking care of their communities, as well. Each year, Bright Ideas donates their time as well as product to local charities. The showroom gives thousands of dollars worth of lighting fixtures to the Rochester-area Habitat for Humanity.

3. Merchandising that connects

Bright Ideas believes that the best merchandising not only makes an emotional connection with customers, but it also allows them to touch and feel the products. "Low-hanging fixtures and meticulously arranged vignettes satisfy customers' curiosity around the showroom's every turn," says Nick Curtis of Décor Lighting Sales Inc.

4. Inspiring social media

Bright Ideas makes it easy for customers to keep up with showroom news and the latest lighting trends thanks to frequent updates on its Facebook page. The retailer also relies on Houzz to show off its capabilities with photo galleries of past projects and rooms that inspire.



Revenue Under \$2 Million ▼

► HALL LIGHTING AND DESIGN | Victoria, TX



1. Elevated service

It's hard to debate the convenience of picking up a bath bar while you're at your local big box buying painter's tape and spackle, but such transactions leave out an essential part of the lighting retail experience: customer service. At Hall Lighting and Design, it's something customers have come to love and expect. "We will always go above and beyond for anyone," says Hall's Kristen Turek. "We treat our customers like family."

2. Dynamic displays

Hall Lighting designed its 12,500-square-foot lighting showroom with merchandising in mind. Designated areas for different fixture categories keep the busy space organized, while merchandising experts pull lighting, furniture and accessories together into well-appointed vignettes.

3. Good habits

To raise money for Habitat for Humanity, as well as offer affordable lighting products to low-income residents, Hall Lighting donates product to the Golden Crescent Habitat for Humanity ReStore. Hall also partners with the local group to provide low-cost lighting packages for homes its volunteers build in the area.

4. Communication

Weekly staff meetings ensure the entire staff is up to speed on what's happening. They're an integral part of the work week and a source of motivation. According to Turek, the meetings have even helped increase productivity. "We start off each meeting with a round of recognitions for deserving staff," Turek says. "It's a fun way to highlight the positive things going on and for employees to show their support for one another."

► HERITAGE LIGHTING | Lambertville, NJ



1. Perseverance

When Heritage Lighting's owner Barbara Stanton died last year, Showroom Manager Jose Velez stepped up and hasn't looked back. "It was a sad time, but our customers were counting on us, and Barb would have wanted us to keep going."

2. International appeal

Heritage Lighting is known for its carefully curated mix of American-made fixtures, locally handmade exterior fixtures and vintage lighting as well as lighting from France and Italy that customers won't find anywhere in the state.

3. 'Wow' factor

One of the showroom's highlights is massive fixtures from the French company Ironware Intl. Pieces like a 60-inch orb and a 75-inch-wide island fixture appear throughout the showroom at a height where customers can see their detail and feel their weight.

4. Custom capabilities

Heritage Lighting offers its customers the opportunity to customize the glass or finish on their favorite interior or exterior fixtures. Velez does the custom work onsite to make sure customers are 100 percent satisfied with their new lighting.

► LIGHT SANTA BARBARA | Santa Barbara, CA



1. LED education

Seeing is believing at Light Santa Barbara. The showroom's Light Lab educates customers on the

latest innovations in light strips and LED fixtures. It also breaks down and explains customer-befuddling concepts like color temperature and coloring rendering index (CRI).

2. Monthly wine tastings

Located about one hour southeast of the heart of Santa Barbara wine country, Light Santa Barbara plays up its local vintner connections to host wine tastings each month where homeowners, designers and builders can socialize and shop.

3. Design services

Store Owner William George offers free design services to each of his clients, and given the complex nature of some of the products the store sells, he'll even oversee the installation of fixtures that require extra attention. Recently, George went to a client's home to advise her on the proper hanging height of her new fixture and an array of light bulbs, so she could choose those she liked best in the context of the space.

4. Internet savvy

In addition to posting news and product information regularly on social media like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, Light Santa Barbara watches its competition on the web. "We constantly monitor online pricing to make sure we are on par with the best online price," George says. "This consistency earns the trust of our clients, so they never need to shop for more competitive pricing online."

► INLAND LIGHTING | Yakima, WA



1. Creative use of space

The building that Inland Lighting inhabits has been around since the early 1900s, and with ceiling grid work measuring in at just over 9 feet and a long, narrow layout with lots of small separate rooms, the space presents some unique challenges. Owners Tina and Jim Engbretson often build their own displays to fit the unusual dimension.

2. A nose for fun

The Engbretsons don't shy away from having a little fun in their showroom. Take, for example, the chrome-plated T-Rex outfitted with a color-changing LED in Inland's front window. And to their customers' delight, the couple's yellow lab, Tooley, is a regular visitor to the showroom floor.

3. Continuing education

Inland employees know their stuff. The retailer employs two certified lighting specialists and one certified lighting consultant, and members of the staff frequently attend classes during the Dallas Market twice a year. In between markets, the staff takes in American Lighting Assn. webinars and manufacturer representative-led mini lessons that arm them with the information they need to sell the product to the best of their ability.

4. Real relationships

While they are not a large account, the folks at Inland create strong, loyal relationships with the manufacturers they know will reciprocate their commitment. The same goes for electrical contractors, builders and designers. "Gaining their trust has played a huge part in our success," Tina Engbretson says. "When these specialists recommend us to clients, it builds trust and life-long loyalty."

► LUMEN NATION | North Canton, OH



1. Clear vision

Tom Rafferty has been in a lot of showrooms throughout his 25-year career in the lighting industry. So when he had the opportunity to design and build his dream showroom, he had a particular vision in mind: "to create a showroom focused on providing the best service possible and on making customers feel comfortable from the moment they walk in the door."

2. Keeping it real on social media

To engage followers on its Facebook page, Lumen Nation sticks to posts that highlight jobs the showroom has done for its customers. "We like to provide before and after images to keep our page personal and unique," says Showroom Manager Eric Veverka.

3. Transparency

Customers can experience that same transparency in person. "There's no 'behind the scenes,'" Rafferty says. "The front counter area, which doubles as our main office, is in the center of our store, so customers are involved in all steps of the buying process."

4. Passion

Customer service and "going the extra mile" are top priorities at Lumen Nation, and the staff works hard to make sure clients feel that passion from the minute they step foot in the showroom. "People have many options for places to buy lighting, so you really have to stand out from the crowd, and I believe we do," Veverka says.

► NORTHTOWN LIGHTING INC. | Appleton, WI



1. Community involvement

Northtown Lighting may be one of the Midwest's premier showrooms, but it can always use a little help from its friends — and it has plenty of them. Northtown is a member of area chambers of commerce as well as local business and homebuilder associations. "Being part of these organizations is a good way to get to know other local business and for them to get to know us," says owner Deb Krueger. "In fact, we've done business with several of the members since joining."

2. Personal attention

Northtown delivers its whole-home packages to builder clients. While errors are rare thanks to the retailer's three-point delivery check system, mistakes can happen, and if something isn't right, Northtown fixes it with no questions asked.

3. Bird's-eye view

Technology is the showroom's friend. Northtown recently commissioned a Google 360 of its showroom so customers can take a peek inside before making the trip to experience it in person. Krueger also suspects that it drives more people to Northtown's website when they do a Google search.

4. Experience

Northtown has been in business since 1987, and its lighting consultants have more than 35 years of combined knowledge in the lighting industry, so they can expertly navigate the "when, why and how as it relates to lighting," Krueger says.

► THE LIGHTING DESIGN CENTER AT WARSHAUER ELECTRIC | Tinton Falls, NJ



1. Commitment to community

"When our communities flourish, we flourish," says Executive Vice President James Dunn. That's why, no matter how busy they are, the staff of The Lighting Design Center finds time to support organizations like Family & Children's Services of Monmouth County and the local chapter of the American Heart Assn. Every summer, the showroom hosts a blood drive to support the Central Jersey Blood Center.

2. 21st-century vignettes

The Lighting Design Center designs its in-store experiences to reflect a "21st-century approach to value-added solutions," says Dunn. One of the showroom's standout displays is a fully functional shading vignette featuring Lutron's shading solutions alongside Lutron fixtures and wireless controls.

3. Social media worth its salt

The Lighting Design Center takes that same care in designing its virtual spaces, as well. The showroom's online platforms adhere to what marketing experts call the social media "rule of thirds:" One-third of its content promotes the brand and generates sales; one-third shares industry information and trends; and one-third engages and builds transparency.

4. Incentives for designers

The lighting industry moves fast, so to make sure its designers keep up on the latest trends and technology, The Lighting Design Center asks its designers to participate in weekly product training.

Revenue Under \$2 Million ▼

To raise the stakes, the showroom rewards designers with an in-house point program. Designers can redeem points for cash prizes like gift cards, concert tickets and hotel packages.

► THE SALTBOX LIGHTING | De Pere, WI



1. Location, location, location

Housed in the old De Pere Journal in downtown De Pere, Saltbox Lighting makes the most of a space that is rich in history as well as architectural details. Original wood floors and red brick walls offer a striking backdrop to new products from Crystorama, Visual Comfort, Savoy House and others.

2. Free freight days

Saltbox takes advantage of free freight days that some of their vendors offer as perks. Whether it's a reward for hitting a revenue threshold with the company or a promotional deal for one month out of the year, Showroom Manager Amy MacCarthy says free freight is a huge benefit.

3. Word of mouth

Working with customers from their initial visit to the final walk through, Saltbox staff doesn't stop until clients are fully satisfied. As a result, business continues to grow largely through word-of-mouth.

4. Local presence

Saltbox Lighting continues to establish a strong local presence through its charitable endeavors as well. The showroom donates to many organizations like the Boys and Girls Club, the Red Cross and several area schools and churches.

► WATERPLACE | Crown Point, IN

1. Star power

When WaterPlace opened its newest showroom last year in Crown Point, IN, home design and TV personality Ty Pennington was on hand to celebrate.

2. All-in-one appeal

WaterPlace is a one-stop-shop for homeowners, builders and designers looking for a wide selection of plumbing, cabinetry and lighting under one roof.



3. Hands-on experiences

Customers don't have to worry about how different products will look in their home thanks to WaterPlace's interactive experience room where they "try before they buy," says Doug Van Der Weide, Designer of WaterPlace's Crown Point location. To educate customers about different color temperatures, the WaterPlace team built its own Kelvin lighting display in an area so customers can compare the different lights side-by-side.

4. Fewer clouds

To avoid a sea-of-lights scenario, WaterPlace only uses 14 clouds to hang fixtures throughout its 9,800-square-foot space. Most lighting hangs strategically around the showroom to complement a vignette or to make an educational statement.

Revenue Under \$5 Million ▼

► FERGUSON ENTERPRISES | Clive, IA

1. Reputation

Long regarded as one of the go-to spots for kitchen and bath, Ferguson Bath, Kitchen & Lighting Gallery is building a reputation for lighting, as well. Upon entering the showroom, Ferguson hopes customers will take one look at the Schonbek crystal chandelier hanging above a freestanding soaking tub and know they're in for a treat.

2. Lasting relationships

Customer service is at the heart of everything they do. Ferguson takes pride in building lasting relationships with their customers whether they're homeowners, builders or designers.

3. Showroom camaraderie

One of Ferguson's secrets to success are the relationships showroom staff build and maintain with each other. "We motivate each other because when one of us succeeds, we all succeed," says showroom consultant Amber Pirillo.

4. Trade show savvy

Thanks to their background as a kitchen and bath business, Ferguson goes to more than just the lighting-focused trade shows. Ferguson also sends its lighting associates to vendor-sponsored training sessions as well as to events like the local Home + Remodeling Show.



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- John Maxwell, leadership author

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► ILLUMINATING INTERIORS | San Diego, CA



1. Power of reinvention

One year ago, Illuminating Interiors was what General Manager Anne Thomas Keen calls “a hot mess.” The lack of an organized and intuitive layout was among her chief complaints. To give her showroom a fresh start, Keen initiated a storewide sale to move out older product, followed by a complete renovation of the store’s interior space. The result: updated product, new vendors, new clients – and a showroom that makes its staff proud.

2. Energy-building activities

The busy showroom keeps staff on their toes, but Keen makes sure there are plenty of opportunities to recharge and inspire. In addition to a once-a-week sales meeting to talk about what’s happening at the store, sales representatives from Illuminating Interiors’ manufacturer partners visit at least once a week to tell staff about new products. Together, the group attends the Dallas and Las Vegas markets and visits vendor factories.

3. Programs for designers

Illuminating Interiors works closely with the American Society of Interior Designers and offers continuing education unit credits to area designers who attend product training sessions led by sales reps. The showroom also features a designer’s studio, where they can meet with their clients or work on projects.

4. Flexibility

San Diego traffic can be challenging, so to compete with web-only retailers, Illuminating Interiors goes above and beyond to help any and all customers who walk through its doors. “We had a customer bring in an old chandelier with a broken socket,” Keen says. “We are not in the repair business but he drove over an hour, and our guys can fix anything. So we got it done.”

► CREST LIGHTING | New Lenox, IL



1. Complimentary house calls

Based on feedback from its members, Houzz named Crest Lighting “Best in Service” in its 2017 Best of Houzz competition. And it’s not hard to see why. Crest offers complimentary jobsite visits to help customers feel confident about their choices and where to put them. Crest has also been known to personally deliver items to customers.

2. Local presence

But Crest isn’t satisfied to rest on its laurels; the showroom makes sure it stays in the local spotlight and offers itself as the lighting expert whenever the opportunity arises. Local AM radio station WJOL featured Crest during last year’s National Decorating Month. Products from Crest and its parent company Paramount EO also appeared on Chicago’s CBS 2 news in advance of the business’s participation in the 2017 Ideal Home Show.

3. Premier partnerships

Leveraging relationships with brands like Hinkley and The Littman Group, Crest offers customers a larger inventory of stocked product as well as perks like hassle-free exchanges. “We strive to offer unique products and [due to] years of ethical business conduct and a demonstrated ability to sell, we’re able to obtain deals and discounts that help us to show more product in our showrooms while staying within our merchandising budget,” says Amy Fimbianti, Showroom Manager.

4. Out-of-the-box thinking

Crest builds important partnerships outside of the lighting industry as well. To add value for its customers, it invited Seigle’s Cabinet Center to share some of its showroom space. The concept has been so well received, Crest is now working to bring in an outdoor landscaping company too.

► LUCIA LIGHTING & DESIGN | Lynn, MA

1. Working kitchen

Among its many room setting vignettes, Lucia Lighting & Design gives a special nod to the kitchen. With built-in features like undercabinet lighting and

a lighting control system, the showroom’s “working kitchen” shows customers how different products can transform their own kitchen spaces.

2. Memorial scholarship

In 2012, owner Lucy Dearborn established the Cynthia Blaesteri Ray ‘03 Memorial Scholarship to honor the memory of a store employee who was killed by a drunk driver in 2010. Every year, Lucia Lighting & Design awards a \$1,000 scholarship to a local interior design student at Endicott College.



3. Scheduled social media

“Social media is a job in itself, and it’s hard to stay active on it while also running a full-time business,” Dearborn says. But Lucia Lighting & Design manages to do both thanks to a schedule of pre-determined topics for its posts on Facebook. Themes like “Pillow Talk Tuesdays” and “Favorite Fixture Fridays” take the pressure off and help make posting more of a no-brainer.

4. Custom designs from local artists

Lucia Lighting is a popular destination for the “shop local” set. The showroom prides itself on partnerships with local artists like Tracy Glover Studio, Connie Kolman and Studio Bel Vetro, which create custom designs for lighting customers.

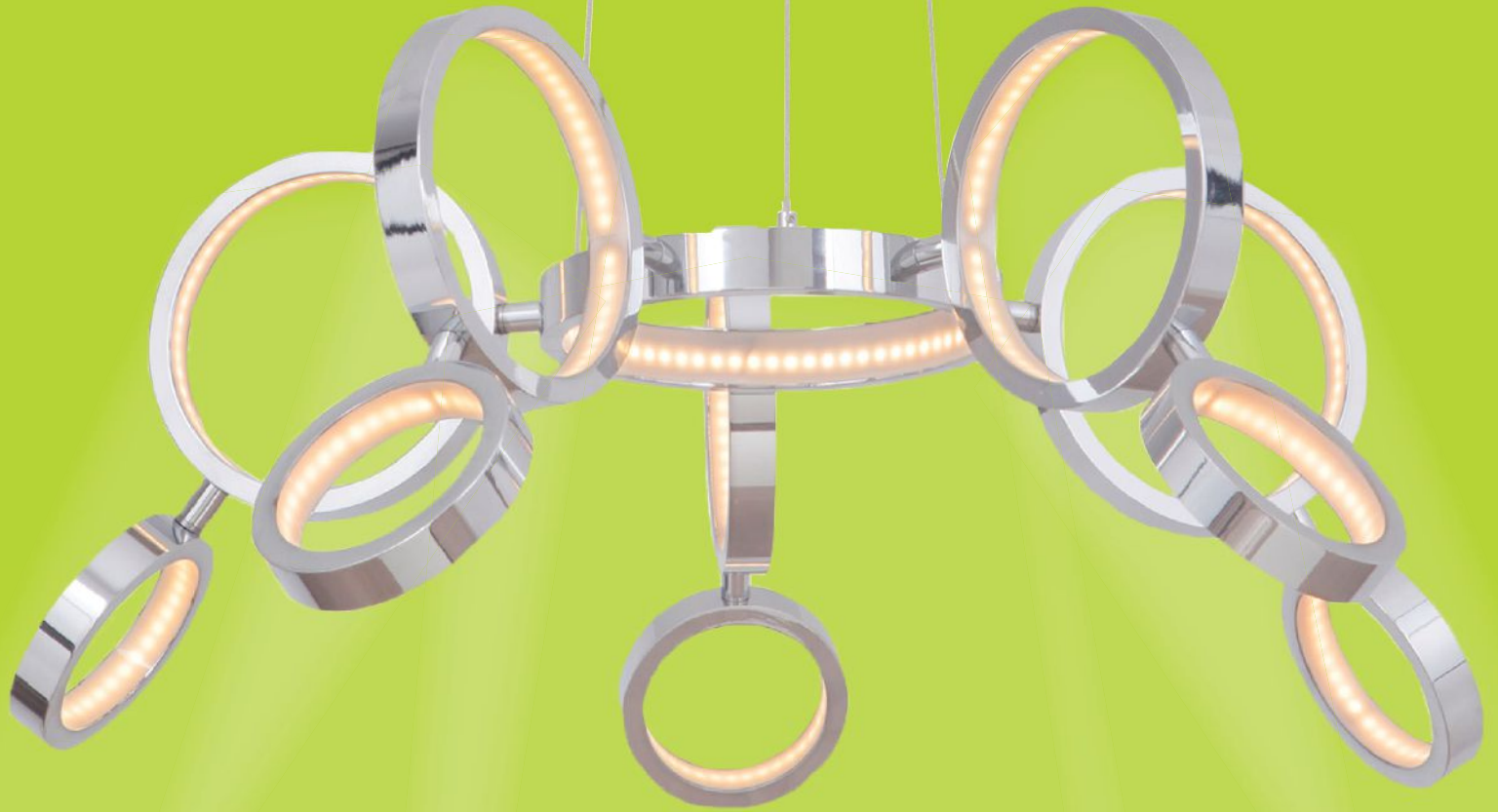
► MONTREAL LIGHTING & HARDWARE | Montreal, QC



1. A clear view

To help customers visualize different lighting styles

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in their own homes, Montreal Lighting keeps things simple by installing fixtures on drywall ceilings and walls rather than on tracks or grids.

2. High-end service

Montreal Lighting & Hardware prides itself on a business model built around white glove service and offering a “carriage trade” or high-end experience. That starts the moment customers step into the showroom. Staff greets customers and offers espresso, cappuccino or tea paired with fresh biscotti and dark chocolate as they shop.

3. Community involvement on a new level

The showroom has supported local charities for years and now has plans to take its philanthropy to a whole new level. Montreal Lighting & Hardware will donate its showroom as the venue for several upcoming important charity functions. In May, 200 guests will visit the space for an evening fundraiser benefitting the Centre de Cancerologie Fondation Charles-Bruneau, a pediatric cancer center serving the entire population of Quebec.

4. In-house workshops

Montreal Lighting & Hardware hosts design professionals at “5 à 7” happy hour workshops six times a year in its Lutron Experience Center. Each seminar features speakers on a range of topics such as home automation, social media and best business practices. “These events allow us the privilege of helping design professionals expand their knowledge and grow their businesses,” President Freddie Naimer says. “They strengthen our client relationships, build increased loyalty, and further position us at Montreal Lighting & Hardware as experts in our field.”

▶ NORTHWEST LIGHTING AND ACCENTS | Mount Prospect, IL



1. Small displays that make a big impact

NorthWest Lighting and Accents wows customers with large brand-specific galleries featuring folks like Swarovski, Hubbardton Forge and Hinkley. But even its small displays pack a mighty punch. A Tech Lighting mini gallery proved so successful that the showroom added another. The new display features all the bells and whistles of Tech’s latest recessed

linear system as well as light boxes showcasing the newest trends and offerings from Tech.

2. Internship program

In addition to learning opportunities for local aspiring designers, NorthWest offers an internship program drawing local interior design students to educate them about the world of lighting design. According to Marketing Manager Amanda Wolfe, the showroom often gets a new crop of lighting designers out of the effort.

3. Internal LED testing

NorthWest tests and evaluates each and every LED product before it agrees to carry the line, making it a trusted resource for manufacturers, designers and architects working in the field. “Our suppliers routinely ask us to evaluate and consult on new product offerings and features,” Wolfe says. “They want to discuss market viability of new product concepts to gauge customer reception prior to development.”

4. An engaging blog

NorthWest has an outlet for sharing its expertise with consumers, as well. The showroom’s WordPress blog features a steady flow of photos and lighting design ideas curated by employees in all areas of the business from marketing to management.

▶ THE LIGHTING HOUSE | Shelburne, VT



1. Staff-led merchandising

At The Lighting House, salespeople do more than sell lighting; they put the products together and install them as well. “Each salesperson has to physically put the fixture together and hang it up themselves, so they really get a feel for and better knowledge of how the fixture operates and the materials that are used,” says Marketing Manager Zach Blanchard.

2. Team-tied bonuses

The Lighting House encourages top-notch customer service and builds camaraderie among its sales staff by setting team sales goals. “So if you happen to get caught up with someone else’s customer, you are going to treat them just like they’re your

customer because all the sales go to our final numbers,” Blanchard says.

3. An extensive email list

Customers can sign up for the showroom’s email list of preferred customers while they’re browsing or creating an online wish list at thelightinghouse.net or while they’re in the showroom at the point of sale. Those who join receive news on current and upcoming sales, deals and the latest products. “Every time we do a blast out to our list, we get a handful of customers who come in saying they got our latest email and want to see a specific product or to order something new,” Blanchard says.

4. Display programs

The showroom also takes advantage of partnerships with a handful of vendors who offer up good deals on displays and display resources. For example, Hubbardton Forge recently sent a team out to the showroom to repaint walls and rearrange fixtures in an effort to update the manufacturer’s display and make it easier for customers to navigate.

▶ PACE LIGHTING | Savannah, GA



1. At home feel

To create an atmosphere that feels “homey and luxurious,” Pace Lighting installs every one of its fixtures and fans onto finished walls or ceilings “just as they would be in your home,” says showroom CEO Lisa Dixon. Every light fixture is fully functional, dimmable and connected to the showroom’s control system, so sales staff can isolate them one at a time.

2. Accreditation for all

Pace’s entire sales staff is accredited through the American Lighting Assn. Two employees are lighting associates and three more have gone on to become lighting specialists courtesy of the showroom. Pace treats its veteran employees (on an rotating basis) to an all-expenses-paid trip to Dallas for Lightovation.

3. Industry friendships

In business since 2001, Pace Lighting is a respected member of the lighting community. “I now count people I only see in person twice a year but interact



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with almost daily among my closest friends,” Dixon says. “I’ve built a support structure of vendors and showrooms that I can source with questions, thoughts, complaints and just general friendship. The lighting industry is my passion and my family.”

4. “Little things” that add up

Friendly smiles, unlimited personal attention, in-room delivery: These things really add up. “It isn’t one little thing we do that elevates our customer service, it’s all the little things we do added together that create a customer experience that is enjoyable and successful,” Dixon says.

► PASSION LIGHTING | Grapevine, TX



1. Start-up cred

In 2007, Bruce Paul was a man with a dream of opening his own lighting store but very little else. He started from scratch, and over the next 10 years, he paid back \$750,000 in start-up loans, grew his

staff to 16 employees and added a 4,000-square-foot warehouse.

2. In-house landscape design

An in-house landscape lighting design and installation team were part of the plan from day one. Now, landscape makes up 10 to 15 percent of showroom sales and is a big differentiator between Passion and its competitors in the market.

3. Thoughtful website

Recently, Passion Lighting completed an overhaul of its showroom that included new product, flooring and wall finishes. But it didn’t stop there. To help create brand continuity, Passion tackled its website next. “We completed a brand new website roll out for the second time in 24 months, leveraging the new look of the showroom with our website design and layout,” Paul says.

4. Dedication to community

During its 10 years in business, Passion Lighting has donated \$15,000 to Cook Children’s Hospital to support its efforts to serve children in North Texas. Even as Passion Lighting was losing money during the economic downturn, the showroom continued to support the hospital.

► WEGOTLITES | Staten Island, NY

1. DIY displays

Located in a sprawling warehouse in a Staten Island industrial park, WeGotLites doesn’t look like much from the outside. But what it lacks in curb appeal, it more than makes up for inside with creative vignettes that CEO Joshua Marshal and his staff build themselves using things like recycled materials and hand-molded bricks.



2. Group volunteer projects

The WeGotLites staff works together to take care of its community. In addition to frequent donations to local schools and charities, around the holidays showroom staff shops for, wraps and hand delivers toys to children being treated at the local children’s hospital.

3. House calls

If one of its clients is having trouble assembling products at home, WeGotLites comes to the rescue. “Recently, an elderly customer was having trouble finding someone to assemble and install the new fixture she purchased for her kitchen,” Marshal says. “We sent one of our employees to her home to put it up for her at no charge.”

4. Onsite customization

As a teenager, Marshal began making lighting fixtures from lamp parts. Given his passion for creating, it’s no surprise that his lighting showroom offers its customers the option to customize fixtures based on crystal quality and color, finish and size.

Revenue \$5 Million and Over ▼



► AVENUES LIGHTING | Jacksonville, FL

1. Roadside location

Avenues owner John Blanchard has been owning and operating lighting stores since 1977, so when it came time to find a location for “Florida’s newest and brightest lighting and fan superstore in 2008, he knew right where to put it. The showroom’s location at a busy intersection directly across from a high-traffic mall can’t help but grab the attention of passersby.

2. An electrician in house

Experience also led Blanchard to hire an in-house electrician to visit job sites and troubleshoot if customers are experiencing problems with their lights.

3. Dedicated display person

At Avenues Lighting, it’s out with the old and in with the new, and there’s a full-time employee on staff that makes sure the store’s displays are clean, working and up to date.

4. Strong vendor partnerships

The showroom relies on strong partnerships with its vendors to get the best possible pricing and other perks. “We use the amount of business we do with them to our advantage,” says Marketing Manager Zachary Blanchard. “Free ship dates, displays for our showroom and even co-op dollars to spend on advertising – these are little things we do to make sure we keep costs down and maximize our store’s potential.”

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► DOMINION ELECTRIC SUPPLY | Chantilly, VA



1. Lighting labs

Dominion Electric's light labs – room set-ups that focus on recessed, landscape and undercabinet lighting – give customers the opportunity to experience the showroom's more technical offerings firsthand. The staff constantly updates the displays to reflect the latest lighting trends and technology.

2. Community leadership

A fixture in the Washington D.C./Baltimore community for more than 75 years, Dominion Electric makes giving back a priority. Among donations to various local organizations, in 2016, Dominion supported C.A.S.E.'s Branching Out Gala fundraiser this year with a sponsorship and silent auction donation.

3. Professional development

To arm employees with the tools and resources they need to reach their professional goals and their full potential as a showroom team, Dominion participates in the Vistage Inside executive coaching program. Select staff members benefit from individual coaching as well as monthly meetings and a speaker series featuring business leaders.

4. Deep roots

With nine locations, including three showrooms, the Dominion Electric of today looks quite different from when it first opened in 1940. But beneath the surface, the business has stayed true to its founding principles. "We're still family-owned, independent and locally operated, and we intend to keep it that way," says Richard S. Sharlin, Chairman and owner.

► HERMITAGE LIGHTING GALLERY | Nashville, TN

1. Reputation

A family-owned business for more than 70 years, Hermitage Lighting Gallery is a pillar of

the Nashville community and of the lighting industry at large.

2. Customer service in its DNA

Hermitage Lighting's mantra is "outrageous service" and the company hires folks who can get that done. "We can train people in the ways of lighting, but a positive, caring attitude is just something you're born with," says Brad Dobson, Showroom Manager.

3. Team effort merchandising

The showroom recently underwent a transformation – fresh paint and new displays – at the hands of an experienced artist and decorator. But the entire team has a hand in constantly updating the store's merchandising displays and vignettes, so that customers are treated to a new and exciting experience around every corner.



4. Fondness for philanthropy

Hermitage Lighting staff donates its time and money to several causes and charities, but Habitat for Humanity and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital make up the lion's share. The showroom donates new lighting product to Habitat for Humanity's building projects. In 2017, Hermitage donated lighting product to a newly built Nashville-area home that was raffled off for the annual St. Jude Dream Home Giveaway fundraiser in Tennessee.

► IDLEWOOD ELECTRIC | Highland Park, IL

1. Dynamic past, present and future

Idlewood Electric has been serving Chicago area customers for nearly 60 years. "It's very common that our customers today used to come into Idlewood many years ago with their parents," says Rachel Lansing Sotoloff, granddaughter of showroom founder Iz Scheinman. But Idlewood doesn't dwell on the past. Rather, the showroom stays at the forefront of showcasing LED technology and breakthroughs in home automation.



2. Interactive display

Idlewood is currently building out a "smart room" that will feature the latest tools and techniques for controlling home systems with a smartphone or voice-activated technology like Amazon's Alexa.

3. "Real-life" vignettes

For now, fully operational vignettes continue to be the workhorse of the showroom's merchandising strategy. In every "room," sales staff can show customers their options for product, finish and placement. For instance, in the bathroom set-up, a recessed fixture positioned above a mirror at the sink demonstrates a common placement mistake. Sales staff can then switch off the single recessed light to reveal what changes when fixtures are placed on either side and above the vanity.

4. Customer events

In 2016, Idlewood hosted two education events – one on ins and outs of renovations and new construction and one on today's smart home and the technological advancements that customers can use to control their homes. More than 60 customers attended each event. Idlewood's events don't just cater to homeowners. The showroom's Counter Days gives contractors a chance to meet with manufacturers and learn about the latest products.

► LIGHTOLOGY | Chicago, IL

1. Razor-sharp focus

Lightology knows exactly what it is and works tirelessly to do it better than any showroom around. From its 20,000-square-foot glass enclosed building in Chicago's River North Arts District, the brand specializes in luxury contemporary lighting from around the world.

2. A name that says it all

The fact that the name "Lightology" brings to mind thoughts of education and study is not an accident. Vice President of Sales and Marketing Steven Schranz sees the showroom as part store and part museum. "We have a groundbreaking collection of educational and interactive exhibits on the science of light and color, the history of electric lighting, the stories of luminaries like Edison and Tesla, and the development of LEDs." Lightology's new Morpheus

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Room educates customers about new products like tunable white LED fixtures, the CoeLux series of artificial skylights (above) and how these new technologies can improve the living environment.

3. City views

With its sweeping views of the Chicago skyline, Lightology's rooftop deck is a popular venue for weddings, parties and industry events. The space also serves as a showroom for outdoor lighting.

4. Built-in mentors

Lightology founder Greg Kay draws on his 30-plus years of experience to mentor the lighting consultants on his team and makes himself available whenever they have questions. Veteran staffers also lead weekly classes on various aspects of lighting design to help prepare new employees for certification through the American Lighting Assn.

PDI | Lawrenceville, GA



1. Whole-home solutions

If a customer is looking for plumbing, cabinet hardware, home decor or lighting, chances are they'll find it at PDI. The company's approximately 10,000-square-foot showroom caters to the whole-home design approach with lighting as the crowning jewel. Vignettes throughout the showroom and a dedicated lighting gallery showcase the latest designs from top manufacturers.

2. Concierge

To make clients feel at home from the moment they walk in the door, PDI offers a concierge service. Showroom staff greets customers, gives them something to drink and offers them a tour.

3. Clean floor design

One of the most striking things about PDI is its open layout and pristine floor space. The ceiling is equipped with an electrified track system, which eliminates the need for clouds. Showroom consultants can easily pull fixtures down to take them to other parts of the showroom while they're working with a client.

4. Staff who volunteers together

PDI gives to several charitable causes, but a staff favorite is Septembeard, an organization that raises awareness and support for prostate cancer research. To date, employees have raised nearly \$50,000 by growing their beards during the month of September.

► VILLAGE HOME STORES | Geneseo, IL



1. A special space for lighting

Village Home Stores prides itself on carrying what customers need to design a well-appointed home. The store offers everything from cabinetry to flooring, but it has a special space for lighting. "It is such an important element of the overall design of a finished space," says Elizabeth Round, Marketing Manager. Village Home Stores bought an adjacent storefront and knocked out the walls to make way for the new 1,200-square-foot lighting showroom.

2. Web series

Village Home Stores has its own 30-minute program that airs once a week on local television as well as on the showroom's YouTube channel. The series takes its audience to recently completed kitchen and bath remodels and features staff sharing their expertise on various topics like project planning and current trends. The program also features guest appearances by lighting experts to talk about such topics as low-voltage undercabinet lighting and how to choose the right kitchen island fixture based on scale.

3. No-job-is-too-small attitude

While the showroom bends over backwards for its big ticket projects, the staff of Village Home Stores understands the importance of smaller jobs, too, and treats those customers to the same level of service and attention as high-volume clients.

4. Vendor discretion

"We don't just open an account with any lighting vendor," Round says. Rather, Village Home Stores signs on to carry quality products that represent its brand.

► WABASH LIGHTING | Fort Wayne, IN



1. Experience center

In 2013, Wabash Lighting invested in and built out an experience center inside the showroom to highlight real living spaces and allow customers to feel the experience of proper lighting in their homes. "It continues to be a popular source of inspiration and education for customers," says Lisa Needler, Lighting Showroom Division Manager.

2. Hors d'oeuvres for designers

Once a year, Wabash Lighting hosts a designer night that typically draws around 40 designers from the surrounding communities. Designers can participate in the Wabash-sponsored course to receive CEUs and to enjoy drinks and hors d'oeuvres with like-minded professionals.

3. Smart relationships with vendors

Wabash's size is an advantage when it comes to working with vendors. "The fact that we can buy new products in multiple quantities allows us to capitalize on market specials," Needler says. Wabash also takes advantage of stock adjustment plans with its vendors to avoid customers being charged restock fees when they return a fixture.

4. Focus on new technology

Wabash Lighting is constantly looking for ways to update its knowledge and business practices. That includes educating builders and contractors about LED compatibility and new fixture technology and home automation components. "We are committed to not let the new technology pass us by without us being a large player," Needler says.

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FROM TO PARIS FRANKFURT

Michelle Lamb, international trend forecaster and editor of The Trend Curve™, scoured January's Maison & Objet in Paris and February's Ambiente in Frankfurt for styles sure to come our way. Here's what she found.

BY MICHELLE LAMB

MAISON & OBJET

In Paris, neutrals pursued new directions, texture's popularity advanced yet again, and functionality made pieces irresistible.

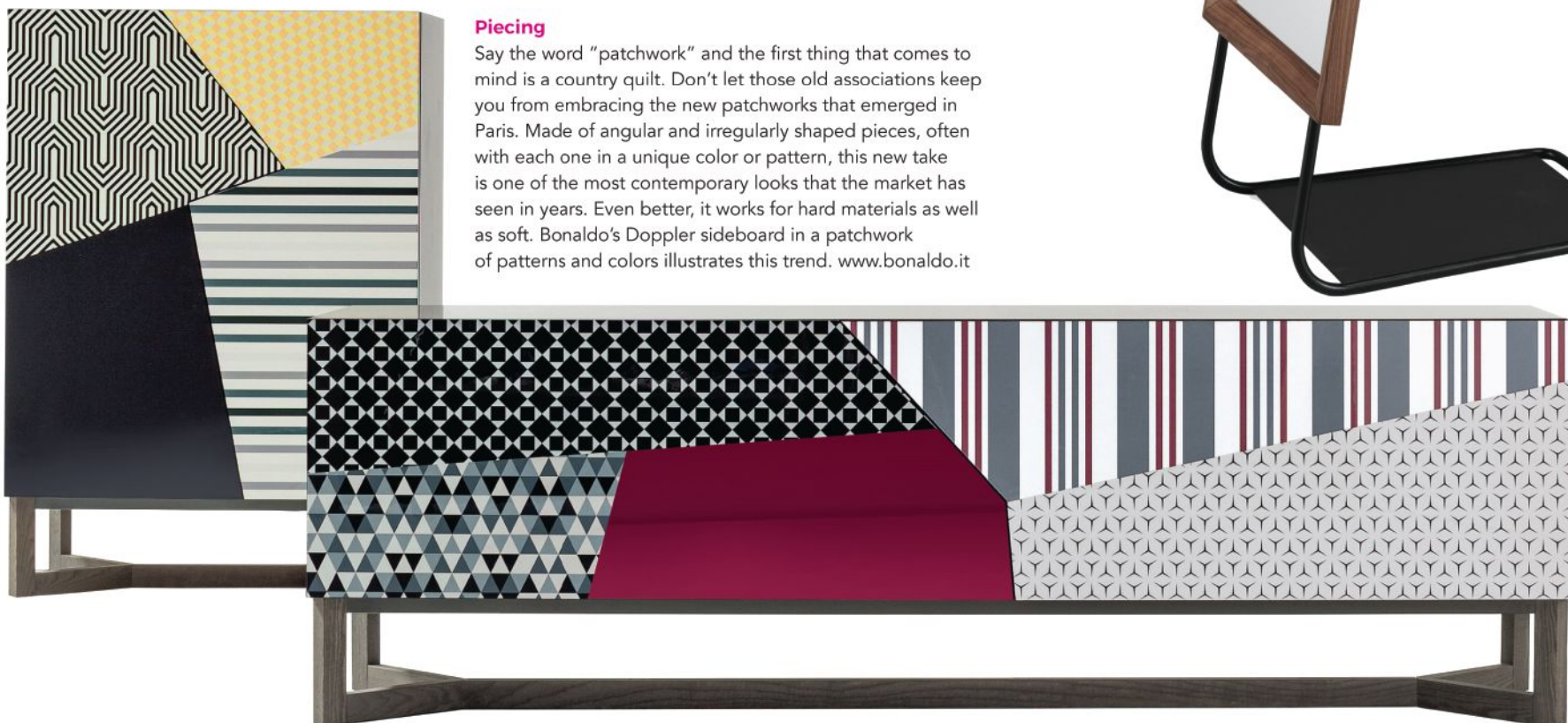
Functionality

For many people, beauty is only half the reason to consider buying a piece. Functionality is the other must-have component. At Maison & Objet, a plethora of clever items emerged. A walnut coffee table had a removable metal tray built into the surface. Four stacked shelves fit into a grooved panel, allowing them to move left or right to accommodate taller items below. A pocket was sewn onto a leather headboard. And here, Wewood debuted Hide & Seek, a full-length mirror with hidden hanging and storage. www.we-wood.com



Piecing

Say the word "patchwork" and the first thing that comes to mind is a country quilt. Don't let those old associations keep you from embracing the new patchworks that emerged in Paris. Made of angular and irregularly shaped pieces, often with each one in a unique color or pattern, this new take is one of the most contemporary looks that the market has seen in years. Even better, it works for hard materials as well as soft. Bonaldo's Doppler sideboard in a patchwork of patterns and colors illustrates this trend. www.bonaldo.it





Brown

Browns grabbed the top neutral spot away from gray so firmly that there is now no question that the latter is “post-peak” for trend. Brown came in many types and values, and there was virtually no way to do it wrong. Above, Bloomingville shows how great browns can look together. www.bloomingville.com

Metallic

Metallic effects still looked great. This was especially true of gold, which had carved out a place for itself in the mainstream. Bronze was rising. But increasingly, each of these metallics looked best as part of a larger story — think matte-luster or two-tone contrast, both of which were directional in Paris. Jetclass showed the trend that combined matte and luster finishes. www.jetclassgroup.com



Going Buggy

Entomology has returned to the realm of trend. Beetles had already seen an uptick in popularity by the time Maison & Objet arrived. The same was true for butterflies. At this fair, though, they really took off. These insects were joined by dragonflies and houseflies, which appeared for the first time. Cushion from Eightmood’s Nordic Space collection. www.eightmood.com



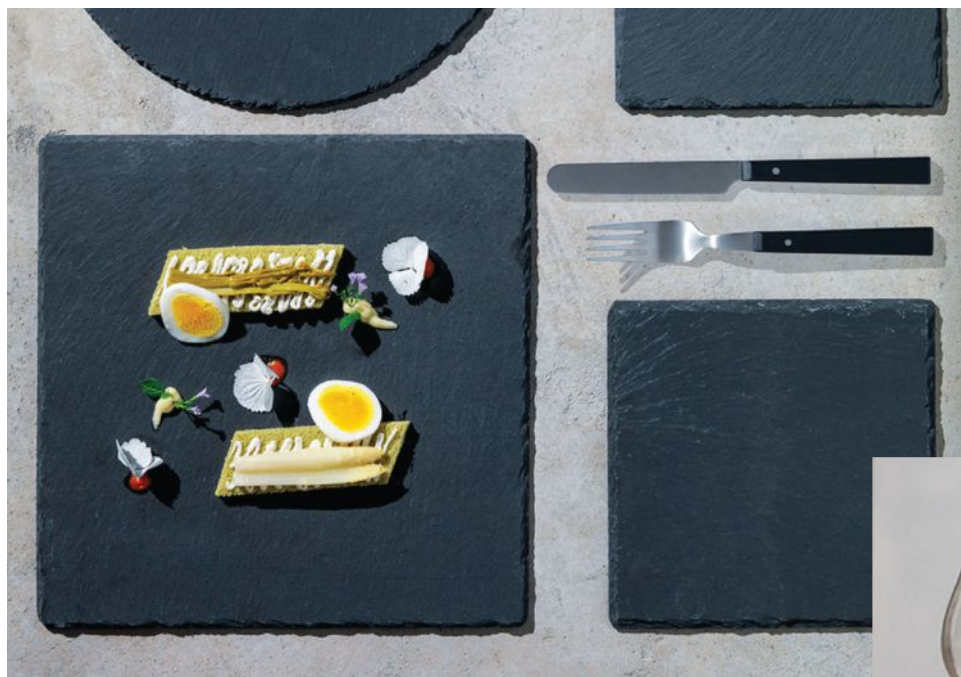
Green

Those who have been unconvinced of the green family’s rise left Paris with a changed vision. Greens teamed with many other colors, but they were so popular that it was not unusual to see two shades used together. The most directional versions tipped toward warmth. Seating from Ligne Roset in olive green. www.ligne-roset.com

FROM
TO PARIS
FRANKFURT

AMBIENTE

In Frankfurt, top trends found in assortments touched every aspect of product, from color and texture to materials and motifs.



Slate

Stone has been a major trend for some time, with marble leading the way. But at Ambiente, the first signs of potential vulnerability appeared. They came in the form of slate, directed primarily to the table. Slate appeared in cheese boards, platters and paddles that hold glasses for flights of beer, whiskey or gin. The look was also mimicked in porcelain dinnerware. Just as importantly, the amount of slate used in visual display skyrocketed. This is certainly the stone to track beyond 2018. Slate platters from Tognana. www.tognana.com

Metallized Glass

Just as in Paris, the metallic trend strengthened its hold with updated applications for functional as well as decorative items. Metallized glass was the primary vehicle for newness. Glass naturally conveys a reflective character, so adding metallic to it doubled the luster for platters, chargers and tumblers with outer coatings of matte or shiny metal. Gold, silver, copper and bronze were just a few of the choices. Layered metallic over glass also extended to reds, pinks, purples and blues. Schott Zwiesel's Viña Shine metallized wine glass is shown here. www.marken.zwiesel-kristallglas.com



Dots

Diamonds, triangles and chevrons have had more than enough time at the top of the geometric lineup — now, dots follow. These elementary motifs took off fast in Frankfurt. The most popular versions favored a two-color approach, further simplifying the look. Another application involved perforated motifs done in materials like matte porcelain, where small round holes became instantly sophisticated and compelling. In felt, they looked positively playful as shown in Hey's felt cushions. www.hey-sign.de



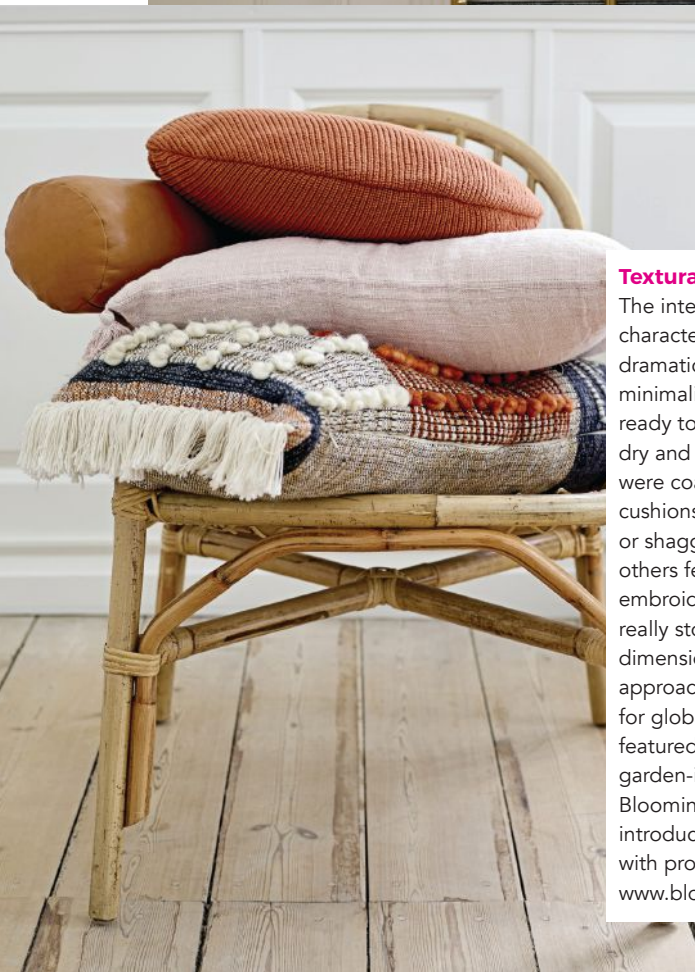
Neo-Traditional

Even though contemporary style remains an important factor for decor, neo-traditional countertrends have been gathering momentum. Color and texture both play a role, as demonstrated by busts evocative of ancient Greek and Roman sculpture in colors like aqua and candelabra covered in flock. In Frankfurt, patterns like Greek keys turned in new directions or embraced directional dimension. Updated forms were another hallmark of the look, especially items like columns and urns. Streamlining these shapes, and interpreting them in mixed-media or two-tone combinations like Holmegaard's vase here, was key. www.holmegaard.co



Facets, Phase II

Pieces must be unique to attract attention. One way to accomplish this has been the use of faceted planes, a trend that has been visible in the market for the past two years. At this year's Ambiente, facets got noticed in spite of their longevity. They were less predictable, with color applied irregularly, covering some planes and hopscotching over others, or they seemed to creep onto a smooth surface, combining angular and flat areas that were also differentiated by matte and shiny finishes. This more complicated approach reenergized the motif enough to keep it on the trend list throughout 2018. Rabbit from Lladro's Origami collection. www.lladro.com



Textural Textiles

The interest in a textural character for fabrics surged dramatically, confirming that minimalism's retreat is not quite ready to reverse. Textiles used dry and bulky yarns or they were coarsely woven; some cushions had fringed, knotted or shaggy compositions; and others featured large areas with embroidery or appliques that really stood out because of their dimension. While the textural approach felt especially right for global trends, it was also featured in contemporary and garden-inspired collections. Bloomingville's cushion introductions included those with pronounced texture. www.bloomingville.com



Two-Tone Looks

Whether the focus was on ceramic, glass or woven grasses, two-tone looks made them stand out. Never divided equally, color was most likely to combine with a natural material or a neutral ground. However, in some cases, two values of a single color were used, highlighting different textures in each one. Warm blue shades with lots of visual texture created a two-tone look at Kahler. www.kahlerdesign.com

2017 ALA CONFERENCE PREVIEW

This year's American Lighting Assn. (ALA) Conference, set for Sept. 10-12 at the Hyatt Regency in scenic Vancouver, BC, is sure to bring great networking, learning and fun. Read on for details about registration, program highlights, and things to do around the city.

BY KATIE CARON

NOTABLE EVENTS

Pre-Conference Golf Tournament

Sunday, Sept. 10 | 10:15 a.m.

Head to the scenic Furry Creek Golf Club for this year's tournament. Participants can expect prizes, drink tickets, boxed lunch and breathtaking views. The tournament fee of \$160 benefits the ALA Education Foundation. Reserve rental clubs by calling 888.922.9462 or 604.896.2224. Clubs cost \$52 CAD plus tax. Buses to the golf course depart at 8 a.m. and 8:15 a.m. Pairing requests can be emailed to Elizabeth Ware at eware@americanlightingassoc.com.

Welcome Reception

Sunday, Sept. 10 | 7-9:30 p.m.

Kick off the conference in style on the 34th floor of the Hyatt Regency. Food and refreshments will be served. Sponsored by CSA Group.

Opening Breakfast/General Session

Monday, Sept. 11 | 8-9:45 a.m.

Keynote Presentation: "Accelerating Business Growth through Remarkable Experiences" by Ryan Estis, Chief Experience Officer of Ryan Estis & Assoc. Sponsored by Westinghouse Lighting.

Internet Retailing Panel

Monday, Sept. 11 | 10-11:45 a.m.

ALA members will share their experiences with developing online sales systems. You'll learn about basic concepts and opportunities for lighting showrooms and participate in a Q&A on the advantages and pitfalls of online sales.

Business Lunch

Monday, Sept. 11 | 12-2 p.m.

The 2017 Pillar of the Industry Award winners will be announced along with the location of the 2018 conference. You'll also enjoy a panel discussion from industry leaders on "The Future of Lighting in a Connected World."

Young Executives Reception

Monday, Sept. 11 | 5:30-7 p.m.

Members and guests under the age of 40 are welcome to participate in a networking event with beverages followed by a bar crawl to local craft breweries. Sponsored by Hinkley Lighting.

Breakfast/General Session

Tuesday, Sept. 12 | 8-9:45 a.m.

The 2017 Lighting for Tomorrow Awards will honor LED and OLED products. Featured presentations include "LED Lighting Opportunities Abound" by Jon Sayah (sponsored by Generation Brands), and "What's Up (and Coming) with Social Media?" from Crystal Vilkaitis.

Closing Dinner

Tuesday, Sept. 12 | 6:30-10 p.m.

Join the fun at this Bollywood Closing Dinner. Show off your dance moves after dinner as you say goodbye to another incredible conference. Sponsored by UL.

LOCAL ATTRACTIONS

A free evening is built into the conference schedule on Monday, Sept. 11. Check out these spots to explore.

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY:

Established in 1931, the Vancouver Art Gallery has more than 11,000 works of art ranging from 19th century landscapes to current photography. www.vanartgallery.bc.ca

VANCOUVER LOOKOUT:

Get a stunning 360-degree view of the city from an observation deck 168 meters above sea level. www.vancouverlookout.com

GRANVILLE ISLAND:

Located downtown, Granville Island is an artistic community full of waterfront restaurants, shops, cafes and galleries. Visit the Public Market for fresh eats, arts and crafts and specialty items. www.granvilleisland.com

GROUSE MOUNTAIN:

Go just 15 minutes outside the city to see some wildlife or take Skyride, the largest aerial tramway system in North America. End your night at The Observatory, a five-star restaurant with great views. www.grousemountain.com

GENERAL INFO

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

Eric S. Borden LS, CPC

Industry Consultant and Coach, Pathfinder Coaching and Guidance

Borden is a vocal proponent of recruiting, training and retaining new members in the lighting and electrical industries. He serves as chair of ALA's Education Committee.

His talk: Leadership Development: Why Mentors Matter | Monday, Sept. 11

Jeffrey R. Dross

Corporate Director, Education and Industry Trends, Kichler Lighting

Chiefly concerned with engineering for 25 years, Dross has worked in many facets of the residential lighting business. He lectures on professional organizations and writes articles about lighting for trade and consumer publications.

On his talk: "I hope to help people understand how LEDs have reignited talk of the color of light, how to deal with flicker, a brief review of the complexity of LED dimming, and we'll even dip into the murky waters of lighting 'connectivity.'"

Ryan Estis

Chief Experience Officer, Ryan Estis & Assoc.

Estis understands the challenges business leaders and top performers face. He travels the world to get an inside look into successful companies and shares that insight with leaders to help them initiate change.

On his talk: "Attendees can look forward to a high-energy keynote with specific ideas to help them navigate change, create breakthroughs and drive growth into their business."

Derreck Kayongo

CEO, National Center for Civil and Human Rights and Founder, Global Soap Project

As founder of the Global Soap Project, Kayongo led the effort to recycle and redistribute partially used and discarded soap to disadvantaged populations. He works to elevate the visibility and vision of the National Center for Civil and Human Rights.

His talk: Harnessing the Power of Observation to Make a Lasting Difference | Monday, Sept. 11

Scott Lindberg

Director of Sales & Marketing, Quell Corp.

Lindberg is a sales and marketing consultant for the electronics distribution supply chain and manufacturers' reps. He has extensive experience as a manufacturer and is a visiting professor at the University of Texas at Austin.

On his talk: "The goal of any rep firm or manufacturer is to drive revenue and grow their profits. The course on 'Line Profitability Analysis – Taking Action' is designed to share many methods to evaluate your product lines and find out where you are making money and potential changes needed to reallocate your time."

Terry McGowan, FIES, LC

Director of Engineering and Technology, American Lighting Assn.

With more than 45 years of experience in the technical aspects of the lighting industry, McGowan serves as a key contact for the industry and the media on various technical and regulatory matters impacting lighting.

On his Vancouver to-do list: "I'm hoping to take part in the ALA bike tour along with my wife and at the top of my list is a visit to Vancouver Island to see the Butchart Gardens. They've been on my 'bucket list' for years."

Mark Okun, LS

Principal, Mark Okun Consulting and Performance Group

Okun has 35 years of experience in the lighting and home furnishings industries including independent consultative selling to small retail and multilocation retailers.

On what he looks forward to most at the conference: "Different from market goals, conference is a place to listen to new ideas, share information with peers from around the country and discover the person behind the people that are in our industry in a relaxed environment."

Peter Romaniello, LC

Owner, Conceptual Lighting, LLC

Romaniello founded Conceptual Lighting in 1998 and has designed lighting systems for close to 2,000 residences. He has served as Regional Vice President and Board of Directors member of the Illuminating Engineering Society and has taught many seminars.

On what he looks forward to most at Conference: "I'm looking forward to 'integrating' with the ALA members attending the conference. I think it is important for there to be a stronger connection between professional lighting designers (like members of IALD) and the ALA."

Jon Sayah

President, Fleco Industries

In 2015, Sayah opened Lights Fantastic Pro, one of the first showrooms focused on LED lighting. He currently serves as president of Fleco Industries and manages Texas Fluorescents and Lights Fantastic.

On his talk: "Changes in lighting technology are disrupting our industry and providing more opportunities than ever — hear about the opportunities and how we can take advantage."

Crystal Vilkaitis

Owner, Crystal Media

As the go-to source for social media marketing in the retail industry, Vilkaitis has spoken to thousands of retailers about making the most of their social presence, email and mobile marketing tactics.

On what she looks forward to most at the Conference: "I'm most excited to share what's currently working and what to expect in the future. I'm in an ever-changing industry and it's hard for businesses to stay on top of everything."

REGISTRATION

Register at www.alaconference.com. Registration fee increases on June 28. Contact Elizabeth Ware at eware@americanlightingassoc.com with questions.

Registration includes:

- All educational seminars
 - Sunday Welcome Reception
 - Monday breakfast, lunch and exhibit viewing
 - Tuesday breakfast, networking lunch and closing dinner
- Guest/spouse registration includes all conference events except educational sessions.

HOTEL

Hyatt Regency

655 Burrard St.
Vancouver, BC, Canada V6C 2R7

Hotel: 604.683.1234

Reservations: 888.591.1234

www.vancouver.regency.hyatt.com

ALA members receive a special group rate of \$209 CAD per night for the first 1,260 rooms booked. The rate increases to \$229 after those rooms are sold. Reserve your room through the link at www.alaconference.com or call 1.888.421.1442.

TRAVEL

Attendees should fly into Vancouver International (YVR), which is 20 to 30 minutes from the hotel. Most attendees arrive on Sunday in time for the evening welcome reception and fly home on Wednesday. ALA members are eligible for a discount off Delta Airlines flights to Vancouver from Sept. 6-16. Visit www.delta.com/meeting, select "Book A Trip" and enter ALA meeting code NMQ7Q to make a reservation.

ATTIRE

This is a no-tie conference. Social events are chic urban casual and daytime meetings and seminars are business casual.

last look



PENTHOUSE PHOTO BY ROBIN BARON DESIGN INC., HEADSHOT BY ALAN BARRY PHOTOGRAPHY



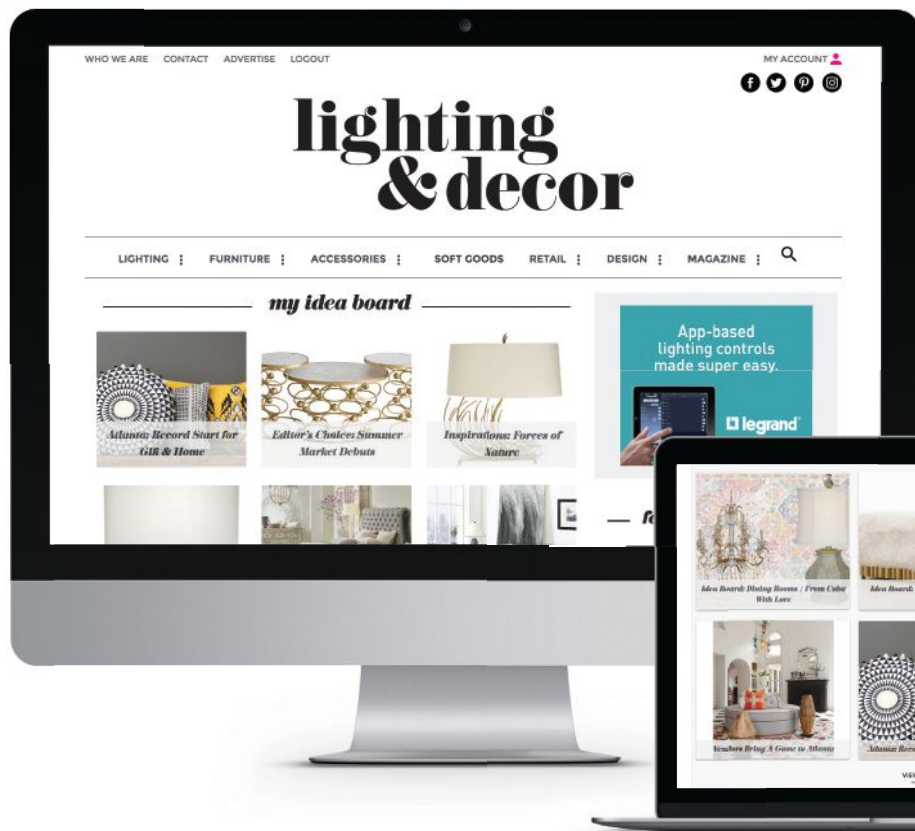
No matter what project she's taking on – a celebrity home, a new line of luxury home furnishings or a charitable cause – designer Robin Baron of Robin Baron Design Inc. exudes positive energy. Take a peak into her design process with this Soho penthouse.

1. The color palette was definitely inspired by my clients. I do like to do neutrals with a pop of color. I think it sets a really good anchor for the room, and the pops of color add personality. The husband loved purples and pinks, but mostly the purple tones so that became our inspiration for the color palettes. Because it's Soho in the middle of the art district, having a place that was modern chic with a lot of art influence was really important to the clients.

2. We all hear about color blocking, but I like texture blocking. I like the idea of playing texture on texture. That's exactly what we did here. I took the same fabric on the sofa and pillows and just mixed it in, layering it one on top of the other, keeping the idea of popping the room, but not making it busy. So we did texture on the walls. We did texture on the rugs. We did texture on the pillows and on the sofas, but all mixed together, it doesn't become overwhelming. It still has a serene look.

3. It's really a balance between just the right amount of texture and color and too much, so I felt that playing with the colors in the same fabric was going to be interesting and allow me to do something that was more textured on the rug, do the shape of the coffee table, which is quite unusual and beautiful, and do the zebra on the chair, which is very bold. It's really important for a designer or anybody doing a room to know that your eye has to be able to move through the room, to engage it, but you also have to have places for your eyes to rest. They can't be bouncing off everything in the room because you won't be able to really see anything. It's just going to feel busy to you.

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