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DanESCO will unveil the brand new OXO collection of small appliances, including this kettle, at the January gift fair. For more details, see page 54.

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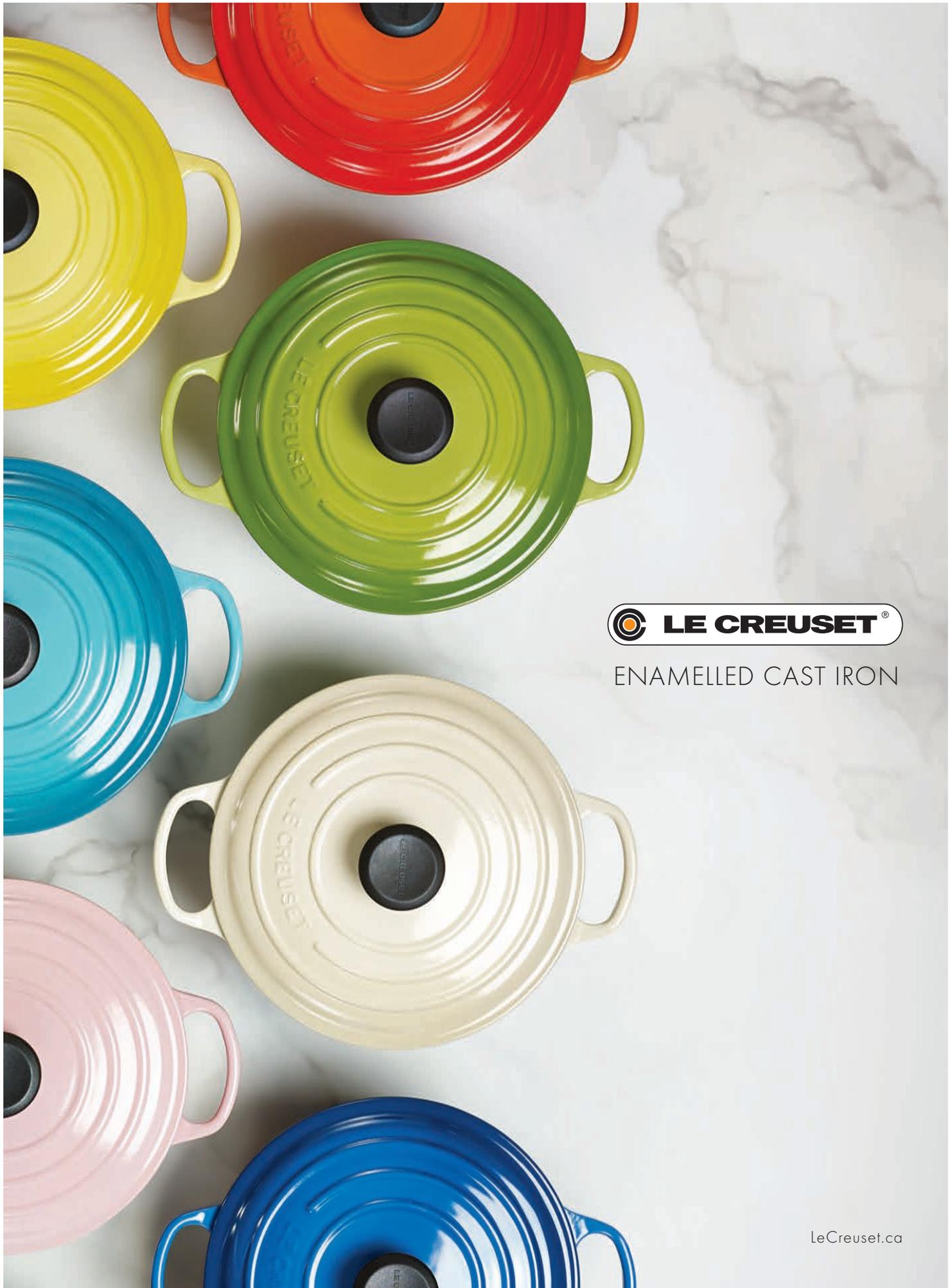
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Opening Lines

Operating in digital limbo

To sell online or not to sell online, that is the question. While most large chains are scrambling to keep up with Amazon, hundreds of smaller, independent retailers are still trapped between the traditional hands-on retailing style of the past and the cold digital world of the future.

Independent store owners are already masters of multi-tasking. Now there is the added burden of social media, daily blogs, Facebook, Instagram and so many other digital marketing initiatives that don't always mesh with a business built on personal interactions and loyal relationships.

Increasing your digital footprint is essential to reach the next generation, but offline retailers don't need to panic just yet. A couple of early adapters (such as Golda's or Cayne's Super Housewares) have excelled at online sales, but few have made money at it initially. In fact, I was surprised to learn recently that online sales account for only 2% of all Canadian retail activity. That means that people still shop in physical stores 98% of the time. Of the \$8.1 billion that Canadians spent shopping online last year, \$6.3 billion of it went to digital only players such as Amazon.ca, Wayfair and Well.ca. (However, if the Canadian government doesn't intervene, they could also become your biggest online competitive threats, as outlined in the article on page 78 of this issue.)

For millennials, shopping online is second nature. But for the retailers supplying those goods (especially 'fast fashion' outlets), it can be a costly venture that is fraught with pitfalls, such as an incredibly high return rate. With an 18-year-old daughter at home, I live this reality first hand. Every time I receive a package for her I cringe because I know that 24 hours later I will have to drive that same package to the Post Office and return whatever she purchased.

To add to the delivery dilemma, many online shoppers were victims of robbery on Cyber Monday last year. Products bought online on Black Friday are often delivered the following Monday, which is when thieves roamed neighborhoods looking for packages sitting on porches or doorsteps. They helped themselves.

Selling online is expensive, and not for everyone. Fulfillment times, costs to refurbish returned product into a resaleable state at regular margins, combined with the high cost of digital marketing and IT, can be unsustainable for many. And in a country as vast as Canada, the costs to ship can be prohibitive.

For most Canadian retailers, brick and mortar operations continue to comprise 85-95% of their total company sales and virtually all of their operating earnings. Put simply, online sales are less profitable than store sales and can add as much as three percentage points to a retailer's cost structure.

At this point in time, most consumers still use the internet primarily to search and find information, and this is where small retailers can shine without selling online. The internet itself is a marketplace, a tool that can be leveraged to get your message out. But technology will never replace the human interaction that has been the hallmark of so many retail entrepreneurs. It's something that every store owner I know has grappled with. You have built a business based on your personality, you enjoy interacting with the customers and helping them select the right product. For those of you who got into this business because you loved the personal approach, investing in a digital presence can seem counterintuitive. But it doesn't have to be. Your website is merely a reflection of you and your store. As Fred Pritchard of Golda's Kitchen advises: "Don't overcomplicate things. Show a map of your location and talk about the things that make your business unique".

When it comes to e-commerce, take it slow, keep it simple and invest wisely. You don't want to jeopardize your core business. Just as it is with life in general, retail today is all about finding the right balance.



— Laurie O'Halloran
laurie@homestylemag.ca

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People In The News

• **Brian Miller** has been appointed director of marketing for Breville Canada.

• Jacques Gatién, chairman and founder of Atlantic Promotions, has announced the appointment of **Gilles Gosselin** to the position of president of Atlantic Promotions. Gilles first joined the company in 1984 and has gradually climbed the corporate ladder. From the beginning of his career, he stood out for his exceptional sales talent and was named vice-president of sales in 1997. In 1999, he was



promoted to V.P. of sales and marketing and, since 2007, has been vice-president and general manager. In his 30 years with the company, Gilles has

contributed greatly to the business development and success of the Atlantic Promotions Group.

• **Rick Simpson** was recently named Canadian sales director for Hamilton Beach. He was formerly with Cuisinart.

• Now under new ownership, the Metal Ware Corporation has named **Rick Carey** president and **Ross Niemi** has been named executive vice-president and COO. Wess Drumm will remain with the company as co-owner and chairman of the board.

• **Intercontinental Mercantile** is the new Canadian distributor for **VacuVin** and the Tomorrows Kitchen product range. The company will be showing the lines at the upcoming Toronto Gift Fair.

• A belated congratulations to **Jerry**



Cayne, the owner of Cayne's Super Housewares in Thornhill, Ontario, who celebrated his 30th anniversary in 2016. Recognized as one of the most astute retailers in the business, Jerry is also a former global innovator award winner.

Correction

On page 10 of the November issue, we listed an incorrect email address for Andrew Rae of Sistema. The correct address is andrewr@sistemaplasticus.com. We apologize for the error.

The Latest Trends, the Newest Products

Asia's leading houseware event, the **HKTDC Hong Kong Houseware Fair** offers buyers the most comprehensive selection of products for the home from over 2,100 exhibitors, revealing trendy, chic ideas fresh in the market. In 2016, over 28,000 buyers from 114 countries and regions took advantage of this unrivalled opportunity to take an overview of the latest industry trends.

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Interiors showcases exhibitors of home décor products including product zones like Interior Décor, Festive Décor, Best of ASEAN as well as Creative Arts & Cultural Craft.

Feasts features Tableware, Wine Tools & Accessories, Kitchenware & Gadgets, Home Appliances and the new HORECA zone.

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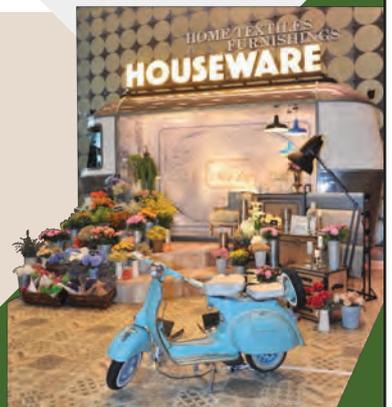
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Letters To The Editor

I just finished the editorial from the November issue of *Home Style*. I think that you've absolutely captured the essence of Kate Wise, and it's a wonderful tribute to her professionalism, her skill and talent, and the goodness of her spirit.

In these bleak times that we find ourselves living through, we need more heartfelt messages like this, especially when it's so beautifully written.

Margot Adam (formerly with Wiltshire)

What a heart warming and beautiful editorial in the last issue. It puts the soul into our business in such a touching way and was very well written. We will all miss the beautiful Kate Wise.

Caren McSherry,

Gourmet Warehouse, Vancouver

First, I would like to thank you for being such a wonderful spokesperson on behalf of housewares retailers across Canada. Secondly, I want to thank you for writing such a wonderful tribute to Kate Wise.

You painted a beautiful picture of her career, although you did have the "perfect subject" to work with.

I know from my personal dealings with Kate that all you wrote about her is true. I have looked up to Kate throughout the years as a person of great character, intelligence and a force to be reckoned with in the most positive way. Her ability to zone in on an "IT" products is uncanny. Most importantly, she treats every customer, from independent retailers to big box corporate chain store buyers, with the same respect, which is rare these days.

Kate has earned the admiration and respect of this entire industry. I hope she will stay in the business in some capacity so that we will continue to learn from her. She will be very difficult to replace.

Fontaine Wong, Ming Wo, Vancouver

Read the article on Brad Rothblott – a wonderful piece. Much deserved praise for one of the more astute people in the industry.

Ian Lafayette (retired from Fox Run)

You got it dead right in your last editorial. Kate Wise is a fascinating and tough lady, a wonderful friend who can be a pain in the... Your article was spot on and you are correct, we will miss her.

Gerald Siegel, CEO, Cupcake Creations

Great article on Brad Rothblott, owner of *binz*, in the November issue. You have such a great gift, and truly know how to put words to paper. I love getting my copy of *Home Style* and always read it cover to cover! I also enjoyed your editorial about Kate Wise. So happy for her that she is retiring, but sad for those of us who will miss her.

Cindy Parisi, manager, binz

Your editorial highlighted many of her strengths but you did miss one major area of her life. While Kate was building her amazing business career, she also raised two great sons on her own, each of whom is a success in his own right.

Dennis Heffron, Housewares Distribution

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Breville debuts new Nespresso line-up

Chef Massimo Capra, star of *Chopped Canada*, (shown above) was the guest of honour at St. Lawrence market on October 14th as Breville debuted their latest small appliances as well as those of their new partner, Nespresso.

Nespresso announced the partnership with Breville in Canada last summer. Starting this month (January) all Nespresso machines will be distributed to Nespresso Club members by Breville, Delonghi and KitchenAid.

During the evening, Chef Capra prepared a delicious range of appetizers using Breville blenders and ovens while retailers browsed the new line-up of Breville espresso/cappuccino machines and Nespresso coffeemakers.

The new expanded distribution model will cover both the U.S. and Canada with Breville, Delonghi and KitchenAid handling the entire Nespresso range as well as all co-branded products. The partnership is in line with Nespresso's global approach of working with multiple strategic partners in key markets.

Breville hosted special launch events in several Canadian cities to give retail customers an opportunity to learn more about the new distribution strategy, see live demonstrations of the appliances, and enjoy the culinary prowess of one of the Food Network's top chefs.



Breville president Steve Krauss, right, welcomed Anna Janicki and Slawek Janicki of I Drink Coffee in Milton, Ontario.



The host of the evening, Tom Simpson, with his wife Shelley.



Breville's Tania Henderson greets guests arriving at Toronto's famed St. Lawrence Market.



Vince Menchella, left, Tyler Cardy and Stephanie Howe of iQ Living.



David Ou and Romnick Migrino of BEANWISE (Cultured Coffee Bean) in Toronto.



Home Style publisher Laurie O'Halloran with Amol Jain of O/A Cook It.



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Groupe SEB buyout of WMF is approved

The European Commission has approved Groupe SEB's acquisition of WMF, allowing the two companies to finalize the deal announced last year. In May, Groupe SEB announced its intent to purchase WMF, the German housewares supplier, from private equity firm KKR for \$1.14 billion.

Groupe SEB officials say the purchase of WMF will give them solid leadership in the professional coffeemaker segment, strengthen its position in the cookware segment and accelerate its development of kitchen accessories.

Electrolux to focus on small appliances

Electrolux is selling its Eureka floor care brand to Midea. The Electrolux Group has made a strategic decision to focus its North American small appliances busi-

ness on its strongest categories, and as a result has agreed to divest its North American vacuum cleaner brand, Eureka, to Midea Group. Terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

"This move allows us to focus on our most profitable categories in the U.S.," says Ola Nilsson, head of Electrolux small appliances.

The agreement includes most of the assets related to the Eureka brand. Sales of products under the Eureka brand amounted to approximately \$60 million over the past 12 months.

A rebrand is planned for Picnic Time

Picnic Time enjoyed tremendous growth in 2016 with the launch of several new items in categories such as craft beer accessories and stove-to-table serving stations, and focused on building on the Legacy brand within the

housewares industry. As these new segments grew, it became obvious that Picnic Time was expanding outside of "picnic" and it was time to re-brand the company.

With over 30 years of history, the founders want to stay true to Picnic Time's roots. The new company name, which will launch officially this January, will be the *Picnic Time Family of Brands*. With this new company name, four additional brands – segmented by product type – will also be unveiled in January. The line-up now includes Picnic Time, Toscana, Oniva, and Legacy and will be unveiled at the Don Schacter booth at the spring Toronto Gift Fair.

Newell Brands to buy Sistema Plastics

Newell Brands has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire New Zealand-based food storage container company Sistema Plastics for \$470 million. As well, the company plans to acquire home fragrance product provider Smith Mountain Industries for \$100 million. Smith Mountain sells candles under the WoodWick Candle brand.

"These two acquisitions strengthen our leadership positions in food storage, beverage and home fragrance," says Michael Polk, CEO of Newell.

"We have a proven track record of accelerating the growth of businesses that we acquire in our core categories," adds Mark Tarchetti, president of Newell. "Sistema and WoodWick are both design and innovation driven brands that are already generating strong top-line growth and highly attractive margins.

Sistema has annual sales of about \$145 million. Its food storage products are available worldwide, including in several markets where Newell's Rubbermaid food storage products are not currently available, creating significant potential for geographic expansion.

Sistema has also been expanding into the beverage category and will soon complete a manufacturing facility in New Zealand that will enable Newell to meet continued category growth.

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Shopping should be a social experience

Researchers in food and public policy from the University of Hertfordshire have suggested that supermarkets should introduce “slow lanes” for the elderly, for whom shopping for food is part of a social experience that new technology is eroding.

Automated check-outs and efficient service ignore a vital community aspect of food shopping, the researchers claim.

Older people want to remain active but can feel intimidated because they “know they’re really slow. They want staff that are going to spend time talking to them rather than rushing them.”

As well, researchers believe that online food-shopping is not a viable way to help older, less mobile people because it ignores the need for people to come together.

The UK team recently released the findings of research into how older peo-

ple shop for food, based on ethnographic research with 25 households of people between the ages of 60 and 93. That’s a small sample, but it involved spending hours with each participant, accompanying them on shopping trips, to lunch clubs, and a host of data including journals, video, and photos.

None of the participants used automated check-outs, and none shopped for food online, though many of the households were proficient users of technology for other purposes.

Progressive retailers look to enrich lives

The town square concept is being used by forward thinking companies as a way to attract shoppers. Apple is among those setting the standard, along with Whole Foods’ new stores, called 365.

Apple’s next-generation stores don’t exist merely to sell computers. They

focus on “enriching lives,” with classes and workshops for children, adults and teachers, as well as visits from artists and musicians. By the end of 2016, Apple was operating 95 such next-generation stores

Whole Foods, meantime, is pursuing a similar “Main Street” retail approach with its 365 by Whole Foods stores. These include independent vendors called “Friends of 365,” which could range from local juice bars to bike mechanics. Whole Foods operates three of these 365 stores and plans to open an additional 16 in 2017 and beyond.

The sum of these efforts may be greater than mere store numbers, however, as this could transform what consumers come to expect at the store.

If Apple and Whole Foods’ community-type store concepts are to take hold more broadly, the retail experience could be rooted not in product, but in how a retailer positions the lifestyle nature of its brand. This would mean a potentially major change in how retail space is used.

Ikea Canada posts strong sales gains

Ikea Canada racked up record numbers in 2016, with sales rising 14.2% to \$2.05 billion as the home furnishings retailer saw strong gains in both its store and online operations.

It marks the second year of double-digit growth for the subsidiary of Netherlands-based Ikea Group and it more than doubled the 5.1% pace of sales growth in the overall home furnishings retail category in Canada for the same period, according to data from Fusion Retail Analytics.

Market research firm eMarketer predicts that overall Canadian retail sales will grow 1.7% this year to hit \$522.6 billion, with e-commerce sales growing 15%.



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Social media attracts younger customers

While Facebook and Twitter have long been mainstays in the social media game, Instagram has been picking up steam with gourmet insiders, bringing in a new demographic and opening up a new way to market their businesses.

“Instagram is reaching a different demographic for us,” says U.S. retailer Denise Lindbo, owner of Gourmet Chef. “The older audience is using Facebook and the younger audience is really on Instagram and Snapchat now. It’s bringing in different people.”

Lindbo says that she has differentiated her strategy from other social media channels since Instagram is mainly visual, using quick photos of in-stock items or cooking classes.

Karen Braver, owner of The Peppermill in New York, has also tapped Instagram to showcase new products. The social media platform, she says, has

been interactive and engaging thus far. The Peppermill has also run a few contests on the social media site and is steadily increasing its followers. While she is not sure how much Instagram boosts her foot traffic or sales, she says it’s important to be tuned in to the demographic of people that are using the site – especially since it’s free to use.

Demographics are also key as retailers reach out to new, younger customers but many are also using the social media tools to catch would-be shoppers that are on the cusp of becoming customers in their own right. It also informs them about upcoming store promotions.

And those on Instagram aren’t just passive followers — they are making purchases, according to industry reports. Yotpo.com, a company that offers a new social curation tool for Instagram, reports that 30% of Instagram users have purchased products discovered on the social media platform.

Wayfair launches a bridal registry

Wayfair has launched a new bridal registry, with the goal of offering options for every room of the house across all styles and price points.

Consumers can choose from traditional registry items such as housewares and tabletop, in addition to the company’s selection of furnishings and home décor. The wedding registry can be accessed via desktop, mobile app and tablet. The company offers free shipping on all orders going directly to the couple and white glove delivery for large items and an extended 90-day return policy.

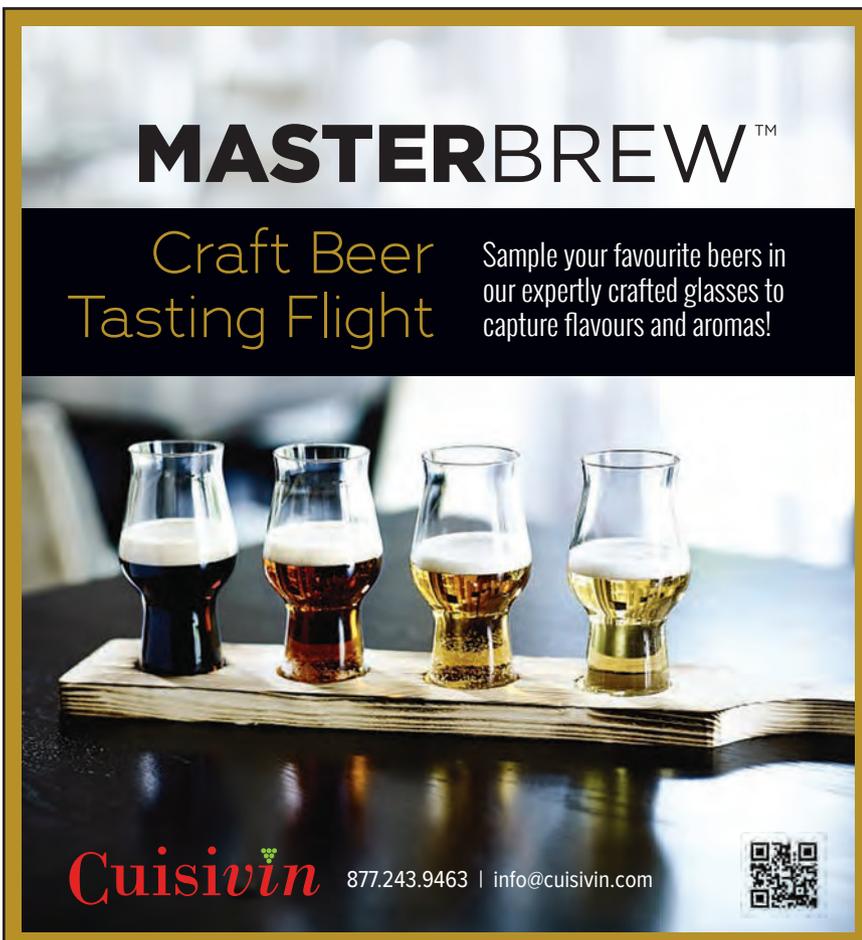
Top brands featured in the wedding registry include Kate Spade, All Clad, Cuisinart, Le Creuset, Lenox and Wüsthof. For inspiration, couples can access curated collections and ready-made registries that range in style and fall under designations such as Glam & Posh, Boho Cool and Modern Mix.

The registry gives customers the option of uploading photos, sharing notes for their guests and tagging their favorite finds. Couples also can control gift shipping destination and track who purchased what, making sending thank you cards easier.

Home Hardware is still a top retail brand

Home Hardware was recognized again last year as one of the most influential brands in the country. According to the 2016 ranking by *Canadian Business* magazine, Home Hardware came in at number two. Sports equipment company MEC (aka Mountain Equipment Co-op) held on to the top spot for the second year in a row.

The list of *Canada’s Top 25 Brands* spotlights companies that connect most with their customers. An online survey asked 1,500 Canadians to provide their opinions on key aspects of a company’s reputation including the quality of its products, customer service, commitment to innovation, and community involvement. A score is then given to each brand based on the results.



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Ambiente to present the best of Britain

Ambiente, the Frankfurt Spring Fair, will be welcoming buyers from all over the world to the Frankfurt Exhibition Centre from February 10th to 14th to see all that's new in tableware, kitchenware, furnishings and gifts. The fair is divided

into three major product groupings: Dining, Living and Giving. The entire eastern end of the Frankfurt Exhibition Centre, with Halls 1 to 6, is dedicated to the Dining sector, where it will be exhibiting its latest trends. Giving and Living occupy the western half of the Exhibition Centre.

A total of 4,367 exhibitors from 96 countries came to Frankfurt in 2016 to promote their new products. In all, 137,000 people from 143 countries visited the show and for the first time, 55% of the trade visitors came from outside Germany.

The new partner country for Ambiente 2017 is Great Britain. Following on from the Italian Tricolore, the upcoming fair will be held under the banner of the Union Jack. An extensive display – the Partner Country Presentation – will promote products from British exhibitors. This exhibition will be curated and designed by British designer Janice Kirkpatrick. A Scot, Ms. Kirkpatrick is one of the United Kingdom's leading graphic and product designers. On the Monday of the show, 'Great Britain Day' will be organized by British exhibitors.

For more show information, visit www.messefrankfurt.com.

Tendence benefits from new timing

One of the most prominent international order platforms for the second half of the year will be presented in a new light this year. Held in Frankfurt from June 24th to 27th, Tendence will now be positioned ahead of all other autumn order fairs. It will be characterised by plenty of new products revolving around the worlds of furnishing, living and giving. At the same time, Tendence gives the high-volume international trade the chance to order in good time for their spring and summer collections. And, for the first time, there will be an extra hall for the overseas container business.

Based on the new timing at the end of June, it has been possible to create a new hall constellation. In the interests of visitor traffic flow, Messe Frankfurt is providing more space and a new set of halls. Halls 8, 9 and 11 will be used and Hall 11.0 will be available for Young Gifts and Culinary Gifts, which include table and kitchen accessories, as well as gourmet gifts, such as high-quality oils and tea specialities.

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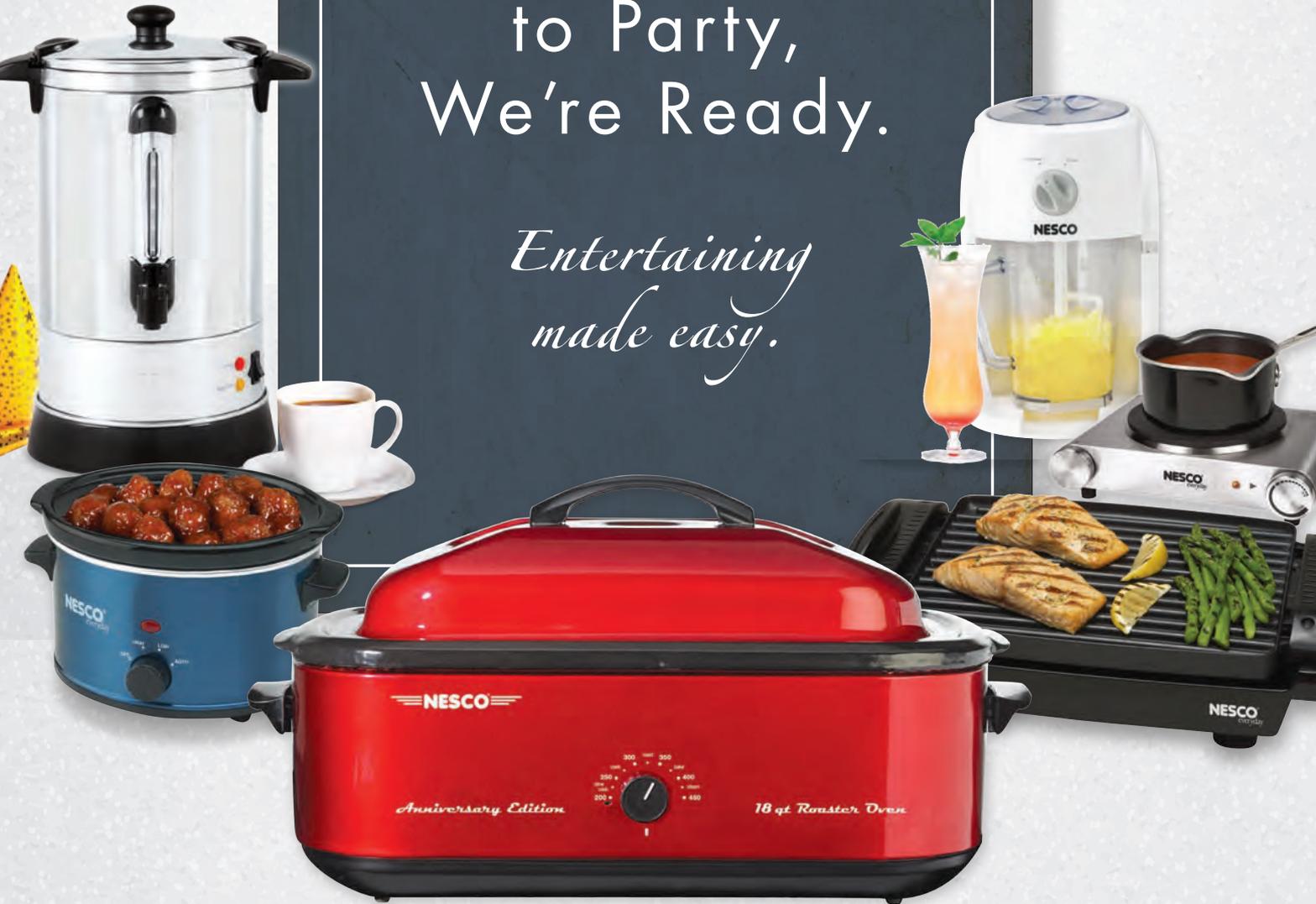
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HGTV host Scott McGillivray (centre), the new brand ambassador for Hoover, Oreck, and Dirt Devil, is pictured with Patricia Noronha (left), and Ken Kwok, (right) of TTi Floor Care.

TTi partners with popular HGTV host

TTi Floor Care has announced that Scott McGillivray, award-winning HGTV host and celebrity contractor, will represent Hoover, Oreck and Dirt Devil brands as an official brand ambassador in Canada.

Through the new partnership, fans will find Scott participating in a vast array of engaging initiatives from videos, contests, articles, tips, announcements, events, appearances and more. As well, Hoover and Oreck machines will be featured in Scott's *Reno to Reveal*, a new microsite hosted on ScottMcGillivray.com.

Last fall, Hoover was featured on Scott's new series, *Moving the McGillivrays*, which followed Scott and his family as they built their dream home and home for a family in need.

"Scott McGillivray seemed a natural fit for Hoover, Oreck and Dirt Devil," says Patricia Noronha, vice president of sales and marketing for TTi Floor Care North America. "Like many of our customers, he knows what it's like to lead a busy and very demanding lifestyle, and he's always looking for solutions that make things simple. From getting a home ready for a big reveal to powering through tough kid messes, Hoover, Oreck and Dirt Devil products will deliver a powerful clean faster and easier."

Exhibit pays tribute to Fiesta

To commemorate Fiesta Dinnerware's anniversary, the West Virginia Division of Culture and History is hosting a special exhibit at the West Virginia Culture Center at the Capitol complex in Charleston, WV.

The exhibit officially kicked off in early October of 2016 and will be on display until early spring 2017.

A dramatic assortment of plates are featured throughout the exhibit, including a large wall where Fiesta is spelled out in a mosaic pattern using broken pieces of the brand's newest colour, Claret. Other highlights include original pieces from 1936 and a Raspberry bowl valued at thousands of dollars.

Fiesta is made by The Homer Laughlin China Company, the largest remaining major china manufacturer in the United States. Homer Laughlin was founded in 1871 and is based in Newell, WV. Fiesta was designed by noted ceramist Frederick Hurten Rhead. Introduced in 1936, the dinnerware features art deco styling and bold, bright colors — 14 or 15 at any given time. Over the years, 48 complementary colors have been produced. The line was discontinued in 1973 and reissued in 1986 to mark



its 50th anniversary.

Fiesta is made in the USA, lead free, microwave and dishwasher safe, oven proof, and offers a five-year chip replacement warranty.





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Lack of sleep is costing Canadians

Working long hours and not getting enough sleep? According to a new study by Rand Europe, you're not alone. The study found lack of sleep among Canada's working population costs the economy up to \$21.4 billion a year, or 1.35% of our country's gross domestic product.

Apparently, sleep deprivation leads lower productivity in the workplace and higher mortality risk. A person who sleeps less than six hours a night on average has a 13% higher mortality risk than someone who gets a solid eight hours a night.

Amazon's house brands can't be beat

Amazon's private label brands, which include everything from batteries to USB cables to diapers, are having an un-

precedented amount of success at the expense of other brands who seek their products on the site, reports *TechCrunch*. As a category, batteries are a good example. Online battery sales are a \$113 million market yet 94% percent of these online battery sales take place on Amazon, with the AmazonBasics brand accounting for one-third of those sales!

More men are at home in the kitchen

Men are now spending as much time in the kitchen as women and, in many cases, are the main chef at home.

According to a 2012 University of Michigan study, GenX men (born between 1961 and 1981) cook an average of about eight meals a week, much more often than their fathers did and nearly as often as women. As a result, men are as likely as women to drive the design

decisions in new kitchens.

The National Kitchen & Bath Association says some of the design trends associated with men in the kitchen include more contemporary styles, such as flat-front cabinetry, bolder colors, contrasting-color palettes and upgraded appliances. Men spend about 30% more than women on appliances.

However, men still spend much less time cleaning the house – an average of 21 minutes a day, compared to 50 minutes per day for women.

According to a recent online survey of 1,000 Canadians, 92% of respondents said they shopped online regularly but only 15% said they had bought groceries on the web. While almost 40% of online-shopping spending was linked to entertainment purchases, just 4% was tied to food and groceries.



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Industry News & Notes

Golda's owners buy Regal Gifts Corporation

Through the newly-formed Regal Home and Gifts Incorporated, the owners of Canadian online retailer Golda's Kitchen have acquired the trademarks, web assets, and customer list of Regal Gifts Corporation from the appointed receiver, Fuller Landau Group.

Fred Pritchard and Howard Goldstein, owners of Regal Home and Gifts and the successful retail operation Golda's Kitchen, see this purchase as an opportunity to leverage the solid order processing infrastructure of Golda's Kitchen to support Regal Home and Gifts' direct sales model.

"Our customers have kept coming back to Golda's Kitchen for 17 years because of our ability to provide quality, functional products that provide great value. We intend to bring our skills at product selection and our passion for retailing to Regal Home and Gifts," commented Fred Pritchard.

Regal Home and Gifts will operate as a direct selling company and will distribute the iconic Regal catalogue using a dedicated network of independent sales representatives. Regal Home and Gifts will begin operations this month.

Regal began as a stationery company in Canada in 1928 and has been associated with retailing and direct sales ever since. The company was purchased in 2005 by an American private equity firm that operated it until its insolvency last August.

Started in 1999, Golda's Kitchen was the first online retailer to bring kitchenware to Canadians through the Internet. While the majority of sales are conducted electronically, customers can shop in person at the store located in Mississauga, Ontario.

Golda's Kitchen has been honoured as Retailer of the Year (housewares) by the Canadian Gift and Tableware Association and recognized as the best place to buy cookware by *Toronto Life*. Co-owner Fred Pritchard was recently inducted into the Retail Hall of Fame by the Retail Council of Canada.

For more information contact Fred Pritchard at fred@regalhomeandgifts.com.

Whole Foods forecasts top trends for 2017

Last December Whole Foods released its predictions for 2017's hottest food trends—a list that's compiled by experts who track consumer behavior at more than 400 of the chain's stores. One of the more colourful food trends of the new year is "purple everything," including purple asparagus, purple cauliflower, and purple sweet potatoes. And environmentally-friendly shoppers will be happy to know that Whole Foods predicts that food made from byproducts – whether it's leftover whey from strained Greek yogurt or spent grains from beer – will be on trend as well.

As for coconuts, Whole Foods thinks consumers will branch out from tropical fruit-flavored water in 2017. Coconut, which is a fruit, a nut, and a seed all in one, will be used to make sugar, beauty products, and its white flesh will be more commonly found in flours, tortillas, chips, ice creams, butters, and more.

Here's the list of the top eight potential food trends of 2017:

- **Wellness tonics:** Ingredients include kava, Tulsi/holy basil, turmeric, and apple cider vinegar.
- **Byproducts:** Brands like Atlanta Fresh and White Moustache are using leftover whey from yogurt production to create probiotic drinks.
- **Coconut everything:** Chips, ice cream, butters, etc.
- **Japanese beyond sushi:** Like dried kelp, wakame, and Japanese-style pickles.
- **Creative Condiments:** Such as black sesame tahini, habanero jam, ghee, and black garlic purée.
- **Alternative pasta:** Alternative grain noodles made from quinoa, lentils, and chick-peas will be on the rise.
- **Purple foods:** Including black rice, elderberries, acai, and purple corn and cereal.
- **Oven-ready meal kits:** Fresh oven-ready meal kits and vegetable medleys will be on the upswing throughout the year.



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salmon nigiri

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salmon nigiri

- 1 1/2 cups (320 g) Calrose rice (sushi rice)
- 1 1/2 cups (375 ml) water
- 1 tsp salt
- 3 tbsp (45 ml) rice vinegar
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 sushi-grade skinless salmon steak, about 1 lb (450 g)
- 1 tsp (5 ml) wasabi
- Soy sauce for sushi and sashimi, to taste
- Pickled ginger, as desired

- 1** In a bowl, cover the rice with cold water. Rinse the rice until the water becomes cloudy. Drain and repeat 4 to 5 times or until the water runs clear. Leave the rice in a strainer until thoroughly drained.
- 2** In a rice cooker, combine the rice, water and salt. Close the machine and cook on the Sushi Rice setting.
- 3** Meanwhile, in a small saucepan over medium-low heat, gently warm the vinegar and sugar until the sugar has dissolved.
- 4** Spread the cooked rice onto a tray and pour the vinegar mixture otop. Gently combine to coat and separate the grains of rice. Spread out the rice again and cover with plastic wrap. Let cool slightly.
- 5** With a sharp knife, trim and discard the discoloured sections of the salmon. While holding the knife at 30°, finely slice the fish against the grain to obtain slices 4 inches (10 cm) long. Set aside on a cold plate or refrigerate while shaping the rice balls.
- 6** With slightly moistened hands, shape the rice into 2-inch (6 cm) oblong balls using 2 tbsp of rice for each. Spread a small amount of wasabi onto each rice ball, to taste, and cover with a salmon slice.
- 7** Serve with the soy sauce and pickled ginger.



Watch how to slice raw salmon and shape rice balls for salmon nigiri at ricardocuisine.com

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Home sweet home

After heading to Toronto in search of work, Heather and Jeremy Scott discovered their best hope for future success was with a store called Kitchen Bits – back home in Sudbury

By Denise Gaze

The title of the Thomas Wolfe novel that was published posthumously in 1940, *You Can't Go Home Again*, could have been the title of Heather Scott's life story as well. Instead, as fate would have it, she discovered that not only could she return to her hometown, but she could thrive there.

Born and raised in Sudbury, the nickel capital of central Ontario, Heather learned the basics of customer service working at the local Dairy Queen when she was just 17 years old. She worked at DQ for five years, including her time spent at Laurentian University studying Urban Planning.

In 2002 Heather and her husband Jeremy, who was also born and raised in Sudbury, joined the mass exodus of young people leaving the area in search of jobs. They relocated to Mississauga, Ontario, where Heather enrolled in a post graduate marketing program at Sheridan College. But the couple weren't happy in their new home.

Jeremy and Heather Scott know they made the right decision to come home to Sudbury.

"I didn't like living in Mississauga," recalls Heather. "My father, who is a lawyer, was doing some estate work for the owner of Kitchen Bits, a retail store in Sudbury. He knew the business was up for sale even before it hit MLS and suggested I move back home to buy the business."

Heather liked the idea, so in 2003, with a loan co-signed by her dad, Murray Scott, she became the new owner of Kitchen Bits. She was just 23 years old.

"It was very nerve racking taking on a large financial burden like that," Heather tells *Home Style*. "We had no real experience running a retail store, but Jeremy and I felt that since we were

young, even if the venture was a total failure we could regroup and start another career."

Going home meant family was available and ready to pitch in as well. Heather's mom, Gail, and her three sisters, as well as Jeremy's sister, all lent a hand. Reina Docking, who had been employed at Kitchen Bits since 1989, also stayed on and was an invaluable part of the transition.

The original location of the store was in a strip mall, but in 2005 Heather moved to another mall primarily because she knew she wanted to offer cooking classes and have a demonstration area, something that was not possible with the space at the original location.

"Having a kitchen in your store makes everything so much easier," she says. "It's great for demos and sampling, but it also brings more people into the store. It's the number one thing I would recommend for any kitchen shop owner to include as part of their store."

Today, Kitchen Bits covers 3,000 square feet and stocks about 15,000 housewares SKUs. The store ex-



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Retail Profile: Kitchen Bits



panded in 2008 when Heather took over the unit next door in order to increase their housewares offerings and venture into bedding and bath accessories.

"The new location offers better visibility and exposure to the general public," explains Heather. "I really wanted a beautiful retail environment and a great shopping experience for the customer. We try to offer an engaging experience, not just sell a product. This is essential when you are competing with online shopping."

Kitchen Bits employs five part time staff. And Jeremy, who now works as a general sales manager for the local Hyundai dealership, still handles social media as well as some of the buying for the store. They also promote the store with TV commercials on local Sudbury stations.

With three little boys aged three, six and nine to keep her busy, Kitchen Bits

has become somewhat of a sanctuary for Heather.

"Coming to the store is a nice break. I walk in and everything is so nice and clean. There are no Lego pieces all over



Kitchen Bits moved to a much larger 3,000-square-foot location in 2008.

the floor," Heather says with a laugh.

Her mom is a big help caring for the boys and because she has such great employees, Heather can be home on P.A. days and after school to take the boys to their swimming lessons.

"Running a store is still a real learning curve for me," admits Heather. "But business has been good with a steady incline since I took over. We offer a really nice shopping atmosphere, free gift wrapping and extremely knowledgeable staff."

Now 36 years old, she says one of the most important lessons she has learned is to stand her ground and not be pushed into products or decisions that are not a good fit for her.

"I go with my gut instinct when buying," she says. "I have established a wonderful working relationship with my suppliers and also with my staff. I make the store fun, and everyone who

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Retail Profile: Kitchen Bits



works here doesn't actually need to work. They simply enjoy interacting with people and the fact that every day is different.

Tim Smith of Danesco finds Heather fits the quintessential description of a passionate and high achieving entrepreneur. "She absolutely radiates enthusiasm and is always happy to discuss different ideas, whether it's for new brands and products or new ways to merchandise in her store. Her energy level is inspiring and I always look forward to meeting with her."

Shannon Mitchell, a sales representative for Browne, adds: "I have known Heather for just over two years and I am proud to have her as a customer. I enjoy our growing friendship and I am in awe of the fact that with three young sons, pets and a husband, she is still a 100% hands-on retailer. I consider her a leader in our industry. She is always keeping up with the latest trends."

"Our approach has changed over the years as we've become hyper-focused on servicing the customer," says Heather. "We offer training on new products and every employee uses good quality knives and cookware at home because you can't sell a product if you don't understand it. The staff treat new

The on-site kitchen lets Heather offer product demonstrations and cooking classes.



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Retail Profile: Kitchen Bits



shipments as if they were opening Christmas gifts!"

When Heather is not working at Kitchen Bits, she is busy driving the boys to their various activities. She likes to keep active herself as well and makes time to work out at the YMCA at least

three times a week. She is also supportive of local charities. Kitchen Bits participates in The Kinsmen Club of Sudbury's annual house raffle. Heather and her staff donate time to decorate the home with products from the store.

Since she is so young, Heather hopes

to be working at the store for at least another 30 years.

"If you told me ten years ago where I would be now, I would not have believed it," says Heather. "We've doubled our size and worked really hard to get to this point."

Originally Heather's career goal was to be an Urban Planner with a splash of Market Managing. She is grateful for the turn of events in her life, however, and now loves going to work each day.

Because she had the good sense to listen to her father's sage advice at the tender age of 23, Heather Scott is enjoying a happy life and a job she loves. From soft serve ice cream to customer service, Heather has learned that, despite the words of Thomas Wolfe, you really *can* go home again. 🐾

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The International Home + Housewares Show delivers an inspiring mix of exhibitors in a well-organized fair. Add to that the professional and informative seminars and Chicago's great representation of the best of US retail, and you have many good reasons to attend.

Isabel Main
Buyer, Kitchen and Cookware
David Jones Pty Limited, Australia



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The Housewares Show in Chicago is truly an International Event, a “must do event”, in addition to fairs in Europe & Asia. Even if it does take us 24 hours to reach, it’s worth our annual visit!

We get enough time always to see new, innovative suppliers and products as well as to see new ideas from our existing vendors ahead of when things hit Europe/Asia. In addition, the free seminars, especially those on color & market trends are always excellent! One of the few fairs where walking halls is still a great experience!

Mark Ladham
Senior General Manager
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The International Home + Housewares Show in Chicago is always one of the most inspiring fairs that we visit. Increasingly international, there is a real sense of welcome for overseas buyers – the IHA works harder than any other show to achieve this. We find a lot of innovation, interesting design and brands that we haven't seen at the European shows. The opportunity to visit the U.S. retailers and see class-leading merchandising is also time well spent.

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Après ski

Catherine Handfield is living a charmed retail life with Atelier Bouffe, a delightful boutique that caters to the skiers of Mont-Sutton

By Jennifer Cox • Photography by Jacques Frenette



Surrounded by the breathtaking views of this quaint ski town in Quebec, and nestled in the heart of Mont-Sutton, Atelier Bouffe is a charming boutique that carries everything from custom-made tablecloths to ceramic dishes and wooden salad bowls. Catherine Handfield, along with her 3-year-old pup Kerouac (a French Sagniel, pictured with her on page 3) has owned the store for eight years, but she claims she “stumbled accidentally” into the retail world.

“You never know where life will go,” she says when recounting the store’s history. “I had grown up part-time in Sutton because my parents had a chalet there. I had an apartment in Montreal but had always dreamed of living in Sutton full-time. Before buying the store, my main business was designing costumes for the entertainment industry. But when I saw that this store was for sale, I immediately approached the two men who had owned it for six years.”

At the time, the 1800-square-foot store carried only kitchenware and was doing well but the owners had grown tired of managing it.

“I had always enjoyed cooking, and my father was an innkeeper so I grew up in the hospitality business. As an adult, I had studied costume design and I had worked with props, so I was able to visualize the store from that perspective. I’d become very curious

Retail Profile: **Atelier Bouffe**

about the kitchenware side, but had little knowledge about pottery and dinnerware.”

Catherine approached the owners in the March of 2008 and by May it was reopened under her management.

“Once I started buying for the store, it came very naturally and was easy to fill. I love interesting objects and well-designed products, and cooking and kitchenware. I knew what to serve and what pan to use because of my culinary background,” she explains.

In fact, she started buying products while the previous owners were still in charge so the store never really closed. She simply moved in and took over.

The new Atelier Bouffe was well-received by locals as well as visitors. Catherine has always stuck to a basic rule of thumb that she only buys what she likes.

Loosely translated, *Atelier* means “a place to work or experiment”, and *Bouffe* is French slang for “food”.

“I think that is why people come and see what is in the store,” she admits. “I like local and handmade artisan products. It’s the purity of the design that attracts me. I prefer natural materials like wood, and I love ceramic. If the item has a clever use or function, that attracts me. I also enjoy any product that gives me a good laugh.”

She says she gets a lot of inspiration from the beautiful mountains and nature that surrounds her. “I think living in Mont-Sutton allows me the space and clarity to select the best products.”

Catherine travels to Paris regularly to import several exclusive items, which her customers love. She also scours the trade shows in Chicago and Boston and visits the Toronto Gift Fair frequently.

“I also went to Japan last spring and met some new pottery manufacturers, so I have begun to import Japanese dishes,” she says. They also import fabric and make custom-sized tablecloths for customers.

Catherine explains that her customers

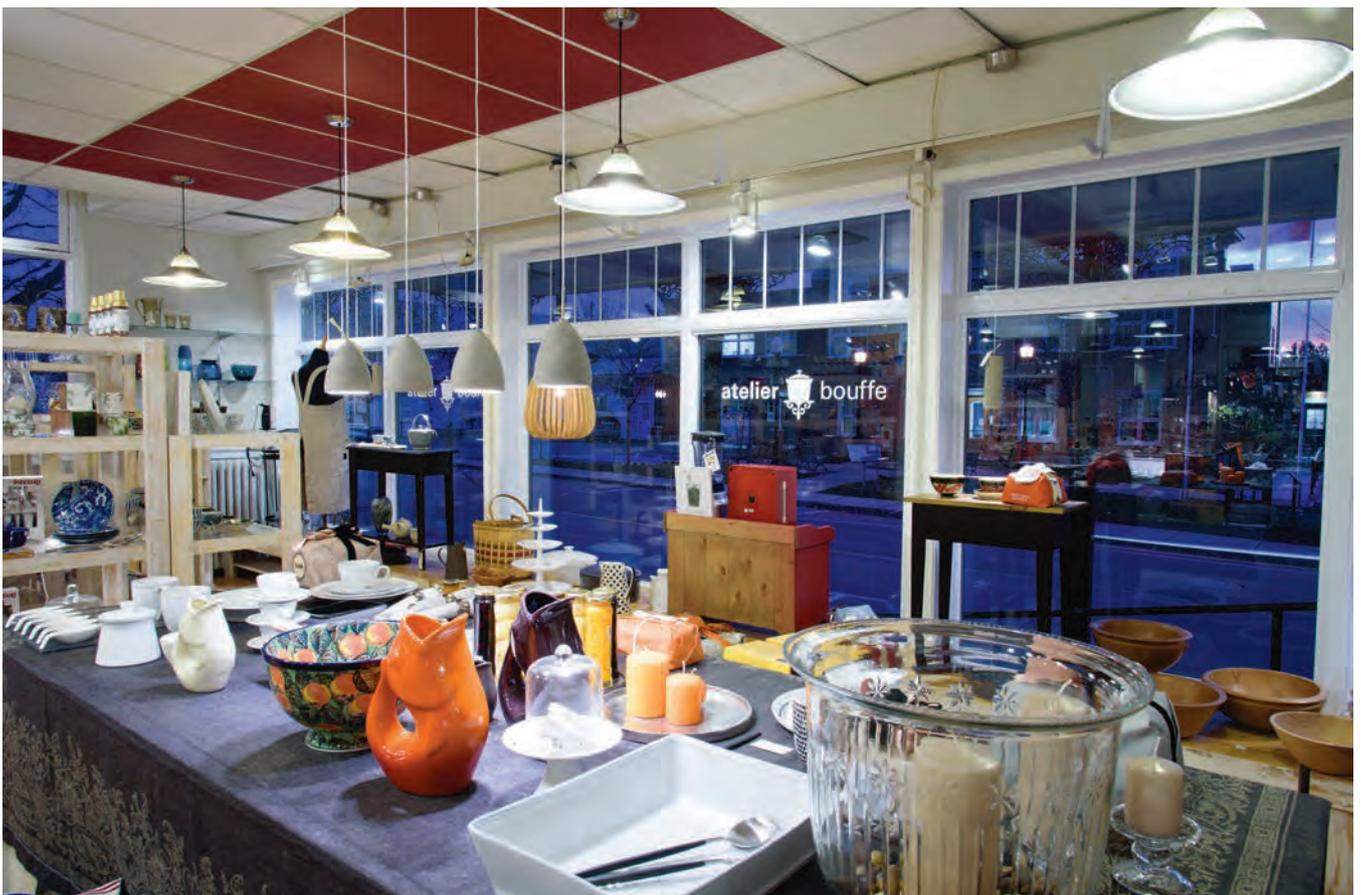


are varied. Given that the store is located in a popular ski town just minutes from the American border, she has regular local clientele as well as tourists frequenting the boutique.

“Most people who come in want to find a beautiful gift, and they want to buy something that will last. They are looking for quality. There is positive word-of-mouth spreading about the store offering premium quality products, which is very nice,” she says.

Atelier Bouffe is in the process of creating a new, updated website where customers will be able to buy products online. Catherine will also be expanding her social media presence, which she admits she is a little behind on.

“It’s a small store but it’s also a big store, and since I’m the owner and do everything, I haven’t had much time to



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Retail Profile: Atelier Bouffe



Catherine travels to Paris regularly to source exclusive items for the boutique. She prefers natural materials such as wood and ceramic. But she also loves to cook and offers a range of kitchenware products.



spend on social media," she explains.

Catherine does have what she calls a "right-hand man" at the store to help her out, as well as several part-time employees.

The biggest challenge Catherine faces is from local retail competitors. "From the time I opened my store to now, several people have also opened stores. I still have my loyal customers but we're sharing the same pie, and there are only so many pieces. Plus, when the economy is fragile, and people are cautious, they don't shop as much as they used to. But I'm confident they will come back and fortunately I am able to adapt to shifting market conditions. I have confidence in what I'm doing so all I can do is keep looking forward."

In the meantime, Catherine is quite content to spend her days interacting with customers at her store, with her buddy Kerouac by her side. He loves to greet everyone, or sit in the big front window that overlooks the main street outside.

"He's a welcome element in the store," says Catherine. "He's sometimes too affectionate, but animals are a big part of my environment."

Despite the challenges she faces as a solo boutique owner, Catherine is confident in her unique product assortment and overall business strategy.

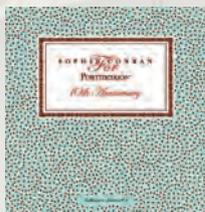
"I cannot please everyone," she says. "But what I can sell is my identity, my artistic vision. Atelier Bouffe has its own distinctive style, and that's what keeps people coming back." 🐾

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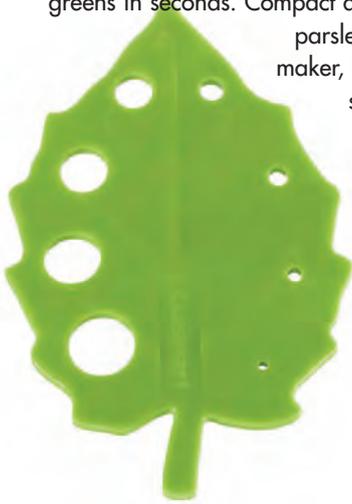
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Gourmet Gadgets

What's new in kitchen tools and food prep utensils

Cuisinart's Kale & Herb Stripper, left, is designed with a series of holes to remove stems from leafy greens in seconds. Compact and easy to use, it instantly strips stems from herbs, like oregano, parsley, and thyme. Also new is the Pop & Serve microwave popcorn maker, below. The 10-cup silicone bowl collapses for storage and has a secure lid to seal in freshness. Rounding off the introductions is a dishwasher-safe spiralizer, shown right. It features three cutting options and has a safe blade lock design.



The Veggie Wedgie from **Microplane** is ideal for everything from carrots to hard boiled eggs. Fun and easy to use, the two-piece unit includes a sturdy base chute with razor-sharp metal blades at the bottom and an innovative top with indented grooves to help guide food into the correct cutting position. Simply place food in the chute, press down and ingredients are cut into precise pieces.



Made in Switzerland, this new peeler from **Swissmar** has a dynamic, ergonomically designed handle. It fits comfortably in the hand to help reduce fatigue when peeling. The new handle design comes in a variety of colours with a classic scalpel blade, a serrated blade for delicate fruits and veggies, a julienne blade for thin julienne sticks and the patented SwissCurve blade which directs peels away.



These adorable Flamingo measuring cups from **WildEye Designs** are cute and user-friendly. Made of ceramic they stack easily for storage.



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Gourmet Gadgets



This versatile tool set from **All-Clad** is perfect for small spaces. It includes a solid spoon, ladle, fork, turner and a beautiful stainless steel container to store the items. Made with heavy brushed stainless steel, All-Clad's Kitchen Shears, shown below, have finely honed edges and a micro-serrated upper blade to provide precision cutting. The added feature of a bone notch makes cutting small poultry bones an easy task, while the shears pull apart for easy cleaning by hand or dishwasher.



Snipper shears from **Abbott** are designed to handle a variety of different herbs and vegetables. The bright green shears come with a cap and cleaner. Made of food safe plastic and stainless steel, the shears are safe to put in the dishwasher.



Philips has cleverly designed the Viva Multichopper with exclusive ChopDrop technology to allow consumers to chop like a chef. The uniquely designed chamber keeps the onion inside while the three sharp blades are chopping. Once the pieces reach the optimal size, they are dropped neatly into the bowl.



The **Zyliss** Lock 'n Lift opener, above, locks onto the side of the can easily with a support frame. The magnet lifts and releases the lid for safe, easy disposal. The hinged design allows for easy cleaning. A soft touch, non-slip handle for safety and comfort. The Quick Whisk, right, fits the contours of the hand perfectly. It has unique stainless steel beaters that rotate simultaneously around two axes for maximum efficiency. From **Swissmar**.



The Zeroll scoop, made in the U.S., is considered the first modern ice cream scoop. It was patented in 1935. The heat conductive fluid sealed in the handle makes it easier to cut through and scoop cold ice cream. Engineered in one piece design (no springs to replace), it's designed for right or left handed use. From **Legacy Companies**





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Gourmet Gadgets



The Spark Burger Press is available in a regular or party version. The party press makes up to 60 sliders. The ridged pattern allows for grill lines, even when frying. Made of high grade stainless steel and porcelain. Below, the Gefu universal peeler has a razor sharp Japanese blade that is ideal for right or left-handed use. It also features a stainless steel potato eye remover. Both items are from **David Shaw**.



Counseltron's

Travel Tea Infuser by PL8 features an etched ultra-fine stainless steel mesh that keeps tea leaves contained. A foldable handle can remove it from hot water with ease. Users can store the infuser in the lower container. The compact storage chamber holds three tea-spoons of loose-leaf tea.



Maison Trudeau has unveiled a new seafood collection. Attractively packaged, it features everything needed to enjoy crab, lobster and more.

With three blade options and a sturdy handgrip handle, the **Ricardo** spiralizer is ideal for shaping zucchinis, carrots, cucumbers, potatoes and more into ribbons, thin and thick juliennes. The blades are integrated into the dishwasher-safe unit so they never get lost. The non-slip feet provide added stability while legs fold for convenient and easy storage.



The **SALT** collection of kitchen tools from **DanESCO**, left, is available in two natural colours, crystal white and quartz grey. Each is made of four natural beechwood utensils with textured silicone handles, grip tongs and spatula. Also new from Danesco, the Prepara Slice, Dice & Curl kit, below, includes three essential tools: a bagel slicer, a dicer and a spiralizer. The compact spiralizer adds flair to any garnish and is compact for easy storage.





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Time for Tea

There's still heat in electric kettles

by Dave Adamchick, NPD Group

When the temperature drops and the days get shorter, it's time for another season of cozy, hot drinks. Unlike many other small appliance categories that peak during the holidays as gift items, kettle sales are highest in September. I suspect this is driven by both weather, cold and flu season ramping up, and students heading back to school, where you'll likely find a kettle in most dorm rooms.

There is a trend of growth in higher priced kettles with features not available in the lower price points. Different temperature settings to customize the temperature of the water to the type of tea being made, or an infuser basket that automatically lowers tea leaves into the hot water when the temperature is optimal and then removes the leaves to avoid over steeping.

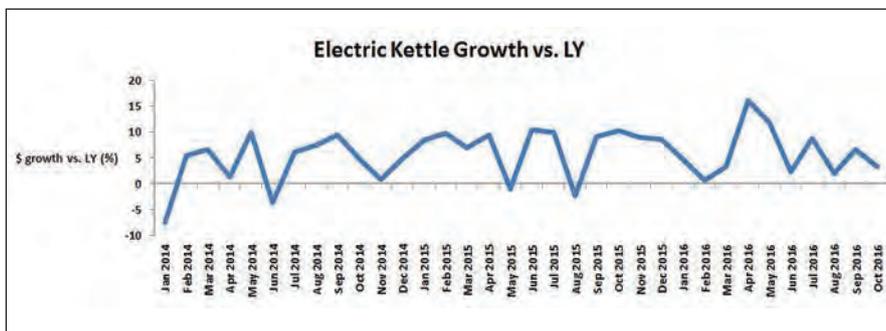
Many of the models driving growth

in kettles have glass vessels. Anecdotally, you can see the growth of tea in consumer mindshare from the growth in prominence of tea shops and chains such as David's Tea or Teavana. Clearly, tea drinkers are having an impact on kettle sales and trends.

Overall, the market for electric kettles grew by 6% for the year ending October 2016. But sales of kettles priced over \$60 grew faster: +41% versus last year. It now accounts for nearly a third of the total dollar share in kettles – the segment with the fastest unit and dollar growth. This, combined with the impact

of currency fluctuations, helped the total kettle category grow by 10% last year. Furthermore, while over 75% of unit volume is driven by kettles priced below \$40, total revenue in this price band declined by 6%.

Growth in the high end is a trend not just isolated to kettles, but is also occurring in other categories in the small appliance space. Consumers seem to be willing to spend more for quality in devices they use every day, even in mature categories like kettles. As a retailer, make sure you have the right mix of the high end feature appliances in store.



Evoking images of a warm cup of tea on a crisp autumn afternoon, the All-Clad stainless steel kettle features a classic stovetop design that creates a striking profile. It boils water quickly and has riveted handles for comfortable pouring.

The new OXO On line of intelligent kitchen appliances feature innovative digital controls, intuitive interfaces and backlit LED displays. The Clarity cordless kettle, below, offers stainless steel construction with crystal-clear borosilicate glass that lets users watch the water as it boils. The kettle has auto shut-off, a stay-cool handles, easy-to-read measurement markings and a soft-open lid.





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Tea Time

The sleek new **Hamilton Beach** stainless steel electric kettle has a powerful rapid-boil system so water is ready for everything from tea to instant soup within minutes. Cord-free with an easy-pour spout and 1.7-litre capacity, the kettles come in chrome, red or black with a convenient viewing window. The automatic shutoff feature with boil dry protection keeps the kettle from scorching. A push-button lid opens wide for easy filling.



The **Final Touch Tea Infusion Roller** from **Product Specialties** can quickly infuse loose or bagged teas with a 360° motion. Rolling the infusion ball agitates and tumbles the tea for a quick, even release. The glass has a split finger handle for a secure grip while the shape holds the stainless steel infusion ball in place.

Created in 1953, the **Salam teapot** is a reference for tea lovers worldwide. Featuring a unique design, the teapot has an ingenious lid doubled by lightweight felt which helps maintain perfect tea temperature. Distributed in Canada by **Intercontinental Mercantile**, this iconic teapot with white accents is available gift boxed. There is a wide range of radiant coloured aluminum lids to choose from.



Tea Time is part of the new **Burleigh Dove Grey** collection from **Denby**. Made in the U.K., the range is offered in a new, lighter colour that unites three of the previous collections. The line features dinnerware, mugs, serving accessories, tea pots and pantry items.



Counseltron is excited to launch a new **Insulating Tea Cover** by **PL8**. It preserves the temperature longer with a double-walled tea cover. After steeping their favourite brew, consumers can use the notches in the cover to secure tea bag strings and then flip the cover over to neatly remove the tea bag from hot water. The cover doubles as a saucer.





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RIBBONS



SPIRALS



GRATES

Tea Time



Danesoo's collection of CH'A tea accessories has evolved and expanded over the years. The line now has a new look that's reflected in the new packaging and a brand new logo that is easily recognizable. The spring collection includes two bamboo tea boxes and a beechwood honey dipper, shown right, that's available in a 24-piece countertop display unit.



This stylish 1.7-litre glass kettle and tea steeper from **Salton** can be used to simply boil water or to steep tea perfectly. The four pre-set temperatures adapt to a variety of teas, from oolong to chai, herbal to black. It's easy to use with a simple press of a button.



Nature lovers will enjoy a cup of tea in these deer mugs by **WildEye Designs**. The 16-ounce hand painted ceramic mugs are available in mint, cream, gray and ecru.



This new clip tea infuser from **Trudeau** eliminates mess when making tea. Just clip and infuse. The handle is made of 'spring' stainless steel that allows users to clip the infuser to any mug. When ready, simply rest it on the integrated drip catcher. A tight silicone ring ensures a perfect seal every time.



Abbott introduces this adorable Lamb Chop acrylic sheep teapot cozy, left. It covers a white ceramic teapot that is dishwasher safe.

Also new is the Love heart-shaped cup and saucer, right.

Made of food safe bone china, it comes in white with gold trim.



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This insulated, padded tote from **Picnic Time** is specially designed to hold a variety of bar accessories. It includes 16 essential bar tools and room for three large bottles. It also features a removable bar tools organizer. Made of waxed cotton canvas.



Also from Picnic Time, this insulated double wine tote offers deluxe service for two. It includes a portable acacia table and secured side load wine storage. Made of waxed cotton canvas. Picnic Time products are distributed by Don Schacter + Assoc.



Q Squared NYC has released four new collections of melamine tableware for spring 2017. The Ruffle collection is a refreshing revival of classic tableware designs. Each eight-piece set – Limonata, Captiva and Porto Chale – includes a dinner plate, salad plate, bread and butter plate, dip bowl, cereal bowl, serving bowl, serving platter and spoon rest.



The Artland Garden Terrace Collection includes a range of serveware designed to compliment any table. Inspired by the natural warmth of hand woven artistry, the collection of woven water hyacinth serveware is perfect for everyday and outdoor entertaining. Distributed by **DanESCO**.



The new Prizm collection from **Abbott** includes a highball glass, iced tea glass, tumbler and shot glass with tray. Each piece is made of a clear/rainbow acrylic blend that is food safe.



Ventures International is the exclusive Canadian distributor of the Smokin' BBQ range of planks, wraps and flavour bombs. The line offers several 'Drop, Soak & Smoke' products along with Smoke Bombs and the company's popular Smoked Cedar Wraps. Smokin' BBQ is unlike anything else on the market. The interlocking construction of the plank provides a much larger variety of cooking sizes and shapes that consumers can mix and match to get just the right flavour, from a beer butt chicken plank to a salmon plank gift set, shown left.



Sistema's Cutlery To Go set contains an easy to assemble knife, fork, spoon and chopsticks in a hygienic BPA-free carry case.



This colourful 3-pack of "Sauce to Go" bottles from Sistema, above, are made for consumers on the go. Perfect for lunch or picnics.

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Kids in the kitchen



The Lékué puzzle hearts cookie cutter lets bakers create a variety of hearts quickly and easily. Distributed by **Intercontinental Mercantile**, the single mould features 12 heart figures that only require one cut of the dough. Safe for the dishwasher, microwave and oven, the mould is made of BPA-free, 100% platinum silicone.



Trudeau Maison has launched a new mealtime and snacktime collection designed for kids aged three and up. The line includes a sipping cup, shown above, and a dinnerware/flatware assortment. All items are attractively packaged and feature the company's new logo and "the little blue monster" Leon, below.



Paderno's solid stainless steel children's flatware makes lunch time easy. The flatware features fun designs that kids will love and the durability that mom will appreciate.



Jascor Housewares introduces a new kids dinnerware set by Placematix. The interlocking pieces, including a bowl, plate, fork and spoon, allow children to play and learn at mealtime. The learning bricks are available in an animal theme and are designed to fit most brick toys for versatility. Packaged as a 4-piece set.



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One stop shopping in Toronto

It's the best place in this country to re-connect, to reach out to new suppliers, and to see all that's bright and beautiful in kitchenware and giftware for the coming year. Presented by the Canadian Gift Association (CanGift), the Toronto Gift Fair will be held **Sunday January 29th to Thursday, February 2nd.**

Held at both the Toronto International Centre and the Congress, the fair will present hot new consumer trends as well as new opportunities for professional development to the more than 25,000 retail buyers expected to attend.

Brand ambassadors Glen Peloso and Jamie Alex, known for their design work on HGTV, have created a line-up of seminar and feature areas to inspire and educate visitors.

In the main hall of the Toronto Congress Centre South retailers will find the Boulevard of Dreams, with a selection of the newest products carefully curated.

In Hall 10 of the Toronto Congress Centre North visitors will find the Main Street Shops showcasing the latest in baby and spa products plus those created in celebration of Canada's 150th. And at the main entrance, Glen and Jamie have prepared a sneak peak at their 40 Fabulous Finds.

On Sunday morning at 8:30, the designers will present the seminar "Merchandising with Trends" in the Toronto Congress Centre South Pinsent Room. Guests will learn how to identify trends and work them effectively into your retail space.

On Sunday evening, CanGift will present the annual "Salute to Excellence" gala at Sketch Restaurant from 6:30 to 8:30. Tickets are \$28.25 and include an evening of light refreshments and festivity to honour 2016 Retailer, Supplier and Sales Rep of the Year award winners.

The retailer of the year being honoured is Pharmasave Broadmead from Victoria, B.C. The suppliers of the year are Giftcraft (large), Grand International Trading (medium) and House of Koopslië (small). The 2016 sales reps of the year include Larry Deszcz (independent) and Frances Windsor Hicks of Bella Flor Canada.

The summer edition of the fair will be held August 13th to 17th.

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Exhibitor Round-Up

Home Style asked housewares exhibitors:

Why is the Toronto Gift Fair important to your retail customers, to your business, and to the housewares industry in general?

Brian Schachter, Counseltron

It is important for us to present our offerings to our customers in person at the Toronto Gift fair. I'm afraid the show's importance is diminishing, however, due to a lack of retailer support. We must help customers see the value of the fair, and encourage them to attend.

The show has suffered from fewer small electrics and cookware exhibitors but it has always been the main connection to our Canadian industry. It offers many educational benefits to the retailer such as improved product knowledge, merchandising concepts, ideas for how to better sell products, the ability to join or recognize the competition in the omni-channel presence created with e-commerce and brick and mortar stores.

Diana Arn, PSP Canada (Peugeot)

The Toronto Gift Fair is extremely important to our business and our relationships with customers. Not only do we get to present our newest collections and sales programs, we also get to visit and see many retailers face to face. We learn about the latest trends, industry news and competition.

The show is extremely important to the Canadian housewares industry. Without the show, our industry will never maximize its potential. But, we (suppliers, retailers, media and association members) all have to support it, attend it and invest in it. We will only be stronger together.

I hope that retailers learn that there is more to a show than just shopping the aisles and looking at products. The intangible benefits that it offers are invaluable

and often overlooked. I think we need to talk to as many people as possible and learn first-hand what is going on in the industry and with brands. It is at this show that we all learn about new products, great promotions, industry trends and my favourite: 'little secrets.'

Derek Marcotte Wüsthof Canada

The Toronto Gift Fair has been an integral part of our business for many years. It's a centralized event that brings together Canadian centric vendors and retailers from coast to coast, under one roof, to meet and discuss all things Canadian housewares-related.

Despite a dramatic reduction in traffic, we continue to exhibit because it's the only show catering to Canadian retailers. We use all the tools at our disposal to attract our retail partners to the booth during the show. As much as we enjoy meeting our clients in Chicago, we prefer to meet in Canada, at our own booth, where the product assortments are geared for the Canadian market.

For Wüsthof Canada, the independent retailer is our greatest asset in terms of getting the brand into the hands of the Canadian consumer and expressing our message. The number of independent retailers has certainly declined but those who have survived are thriving. We are encouraged by their innovation to stay not only relevant but lead.

Two things make a show a success. We spend time showcasing our newest products and marketing initiatives but what we truly hope is that our retail partners leave our booth with new ideas and a renewed passion for the business.

The world is moving at an unprecedented rate which means we must always stay relevant and part of our job is to share thoughts and ideas with our colleagues and customers.

Harvey Rachman, Port-Style

I still think the show is very important. There is nothing better than holding a new product rather than looking at a photo on a computer. We still write decent orders at the show and I would not like to take the chance and make up these sales simply with reps calling on the customers.

Other than Chicago, there is no other venue for retailers that do not have the budget to travel to international shows. I think the Toronto show revitalizes them. They come away hyped about the new products they see.

We must also realize there are parts of the country that reps do not reach or it might be late spring or early summer before they get there. This way they get to see the new products right away.

The big negative with the show is the length – five days is too long. But as with most situations, we tend to focus on the negatives not the positives. We usually have a good Sunday and Monday and occasionally Tuesday morning. We forget that by complaining about no traffic on Wednesday and Thursday.

Brigitte Roy, Danesco

The Toronto fair (TGF) is very important to Danesco and our industry in so many ways. The independent retailers continue to represent an important part of our business. We make a lot of brand and

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products decisions based on the sales potential for Independent retailers. The TGF is where we bring it all to life and get real time feedback. We can build assortments on paper and plan merchandising stories in our heads, but we are all passionate 'product' people and nothing can replace seeing, touching and hopefully inspiring our customers.

This important biannual event punctuates our planning cycle and launches new seasons. It is the culmination of a big team effort to continuously improve and impress. We relish the opportunity to meet with our customers and spend time with our sales reps. Without it, I don't think we would be as good as we can be. We would lose an important connection between all the forces that make this industry strong.

Our reps do a fantastic job with our customers on a daily basis but when we have the opportunity to get sales, marketing and customers together to look and talk about product, great things happen. We regroup, we reenergize, we learn and we continue to grow.

Daniel Oehy, Swissmar

As both a distributor and manufacturer we carry a broad assortment of product. While our catalogue does a good job of showcasing it, there is something to be gained by retailers having the opportunity to see those products in person. Retailers can get a true tangible feel for it before buying, and have the opportunity to make comparisons. We use the

shows as the platform to launch new items to the market.

The shows provide us with the opportunity to see key retailers in person and work with them on their specific marketing needs. Many long standing relationships have started and are maintained at the shows.

From an order standpoint, the fair is still a strong writing show for us. Retailers like the fact they can see a lot of supplier sin a couple of days. They would never go and visit 50 showrooms.

The Toronto fair is the only show left in Canada with a strong housewares focus/ I think it is crucial to maintain at least one show a year on Canadian soil.

The IHA Show in Chicago is important for us, and many Canadians do attend, but for smaller retailers and distributors, it is not feasible. And the aspect of Canadian-made and 'Canadiana' would be lost if we didn't have a show on home soil.

The Toronto show gives retailers the opportunity to see a broad range of products first hand. They are able to discuss programs and marketing opportunities with sales representatives and company principals to maximize their business efforts. Retailers also have the opportunity to network with other retailers to gain insight into mutual opportunities and trends.

Even though the airport location may not be the most inviting destination, we as an industry must make a greater effort to use this show as an opportunity

to bring the housewares community together. We exhibitors should work closely together to organize specific educational and social events and facilitate productive networking for the housewares industry. We are only successful if we all work together. Many exhibitors and retailers who no longer support this will only realize what has been lost when it is gone.

Chris Shipton, Jascor Housewares

The gift show has gone through lots of change over the years and while globalization of our industry continues, there is still a benefit to attending and participating in a local trade show.

Being a proud Canadian company, we still find value in the Toronto show. As with many companies, however, we have had to look at the ROI and adapt to the current market conditions we face.

As we have evolved so has the industry. With so much business done without personal contact now we find the show to be a great vehicle to share – in person – what products we have to offer. For customers open to new ideas and finding that next great item, the show offers those opportunities.

Does our industry really need this show? I think so. It is a place to gather, talk, share, and most of all, conduct good business. For the show to succeed, we all need to work together. We have to remember that we are partners in this industry and we all have similar goals at the end of the day. 🐦

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Toronto Gift Fair Product Preview



Abbott will introduce the innovative new Trulite candle collection at the Toronto fair. Shown left, they appear to be pillar candles but they are actually holders for Maxilight tea lights. Available in white or ivory in three sizes, the new 'candles' will last 8-9 hours. Also being launched by Abbot are two large planks, right. Made of Acacia wood, the boards are available in a large or slim size with an attractive burned edge. Ideal for serving appetizers or bread and rolls.



Canitra will show two new collections this spring. The Lapidar line, above, includes a clean and sophisticated serving ware collection made of lead free crystal and stainless steel. Functional for use everyday yet elegant enough for entertaining. Below, the Luce collection includes serving ware and office accessories. All items are made of stainless steel and are available in black and white for a fresh look.



Daphne Feather Moss is the name of the latest fragrance line by **Calmea**. Available from **Edenborough**, the beautiful collection includes room spray, candles, hand lotion and soaps with striking forest green packaging.



Counseltron is launching the Care Kit by Lodge. This set features all the essentials for using and caring for cast iron cookware, including six-ounce seasoning spray, pan scraper, silicone handle holder and scrub brush. The seasoning spray oil is made in Canada and packed in the USA.

Visit the **Cuisivin** exhibit to see this new Whisky Tasting Glass made from fine German made lead free crystalline. The short stemmed, tulip-shaped glass perfectly presents the fine complexities and nuances of any whisky. It's specially designed for nosing with a semi-flattened bottom.



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Toronto Gift Fair Product Preview



Danesco will focus on one of the hottest trends in home decor – the pineapple, a symbol of warmth and hospitality. The Pineapple Crush line, above, includes an acacia wood and marble serving board, ceramic jar with lids, set of wine charms, wine stopper, ceramic dish and salt and pepper shakers.



Featuring a Micro-Carbide MC66 powered steel core, wrapped with 132 layers of steel and honed to a flower Damask pattern, the MIYABI 5000MCD 67 black collection from **Zwilling**, above, is handcrafted in Seki, Japan. The black ash wood handle has a striking mosaic print and steel end cap. Also new, the multi-purpose Zwilling PLUS 32cm wok with steamer insert, left, lets users steam food on top and cook on bottom at the same time to save time and energy.

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Toronto Gift Fair Product Preview



The new **OXO On** smart appliance line will be a highlight of the **DanESCO** exhibit in January. In addition to the kettle shown on the cover, it includes the Up to You toaster, left, in four or two slice models, each with nine digital settings and a countdown feature. The Barista Brain coffee maker features intelligent controls to extract all the rich flavours and aromas from coffee beans.



Swissmar will be launching more than 50 new mills at the gift fair this January. Shown left is the Twist mill made from beechwood with a unique spiral design. It's available in three finishes with a ceramic multipurpose grinder. Shown right, the new Harmony chocolate fondue and butter warmer set includes two ceramic dipping bowls, two ceramic bases, four wooden forks and two tealight candles.



The ta da counter organizer system from **Jascor Housewares** begins with a silicone DrySmart mat with built-in nibs to support wet dishes and elevated ridges to promote airflow. It rolls and folds away for easy storage. The mats come with ta da folding or compact dish racks.



Danica's new stamped baking dishes feature organic and abstract patterns with enticing colours. Available in three sizes, they are safe for the oven and dishwasher.

This citrus juicer is part of the exciting new **Trudeau Maison** seafood collection. It extracts maximum juice from individual slices. It is easy to press while keeping fingers clean. For best results, place the lemon slice with the skin facing upwards. It also has a dripless pour spout.



Toronto Gift Fair Product Preview



The Gefu bread bin from **David Shaw** has an elegant stainless design and safe, convenient lid mechanism, above. Small vent slots guarantee optimum air circulation. The darkened glass is scratch-resistant.

Also from David Shaw, the Gefu Kitchen Torch reaches a professional flame temperature up to 1300°C with stepless flame regulation. It is easily filled with a standard butane cartridge for continuous use.



Tahiti Seasons duo mill gift sets by **Peugeot** come in monochrome hues to match the natural cycle of the four seasons. The mills have a lacquered wood matte finish. The French-made grinding mechanisms are guaranteed for life.



This Bloody Mary set from **Product Specialties** includes four glasses, a stainless steel rimmer tray and a plastic rimmer lid. The 15-ounce glasses are extra thick and have a 'Bloody Mary' graphic on the front. Also new is this hand-cut On The Rock glass. The bottom creates a natural liquid motion to increase the nosing of aromas. Each glass has a Japanese-inspired Yarai pattern that is hand-polished.

Intercontinental Mercantile will showcase two new floor display units created for the popular Tossware line of stackable beer glasses and tumblers.



Also from Peugeot (PSP Canada) is the Baltaz lightweight corkscrew. Made of sturdy plastic, it is available in light gun-metal or basalt with an ergonomically designed lever and cast metal handle. Presented in a gift box with foil cutter.

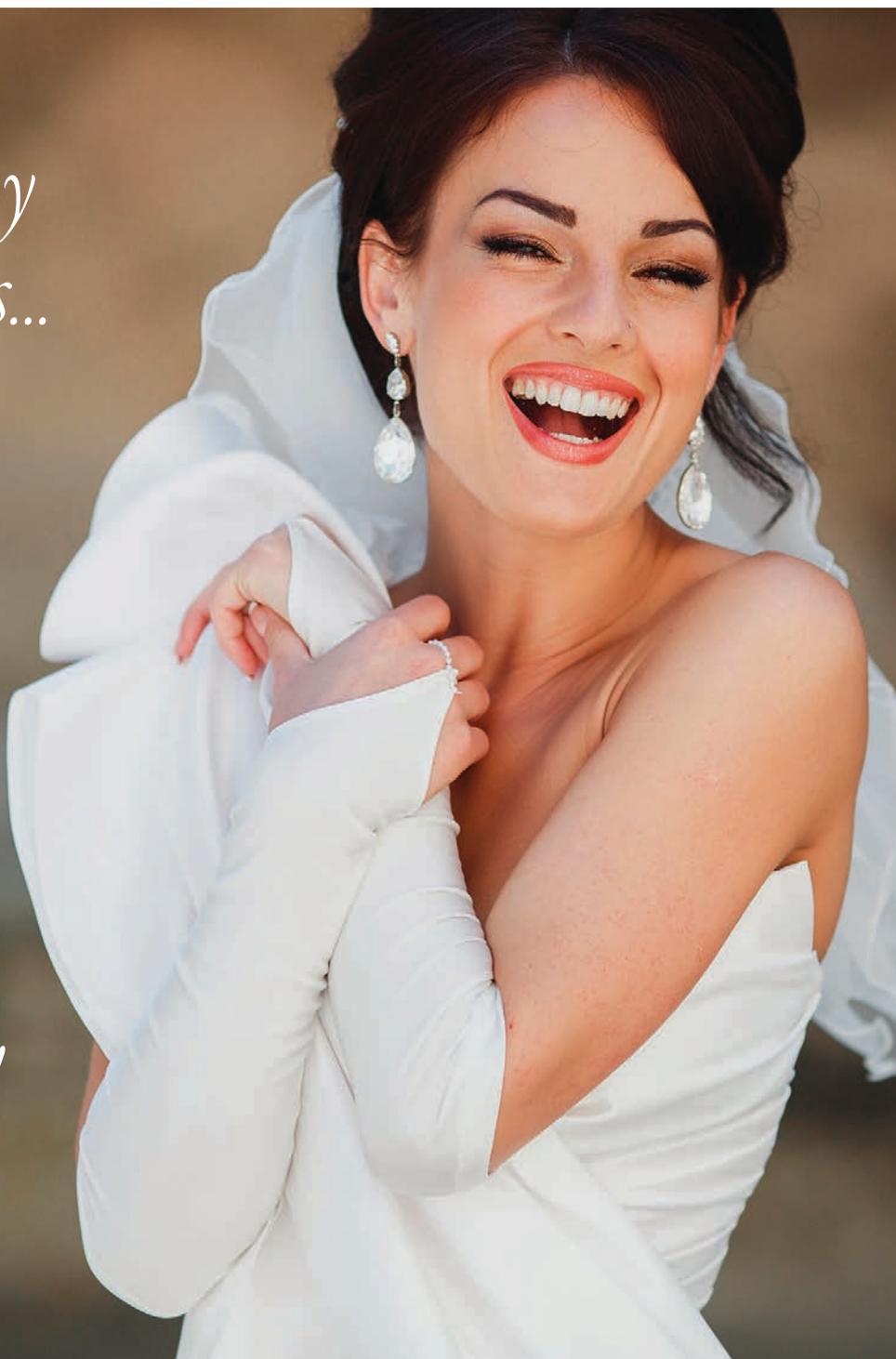


Visit **Chef's Choice** to see the new Omega Juice Cube and Nutrition System. It extracts fresh juice from fruits, vegetables and leafy greens. The machine operates at low speeds of 80 rpms and features a dual stage masticating extraction for optimum yield. It automatically ejects pulp into a separate container for easy, continuous juicing. It features a square footprint and cube form factor plus a convenient cavity in the back to store end caps, the juice screen and the homogenizing cone.



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ICM unveils cutlery collection at Linen Chest



Intercontinental Mercantile (ICM) launched the beautiful new Guy DeGrenne cutlery collection for the bridal market at four Linen Chest locations last December. Shown above is the gift section at the Rockland store in Montreal with Judith Schwartz of ICM on the right, next to store manager Hourig Tanachian and her staff.

E-summit let retailers share online ideas

Some of North America's leading eRetailers gathered in one room last week for the first-ever Home Improvement eRetailer Summit. Held October 26 to 28 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, the invitation-only event was a ground-breaking forum for cutting-edge eRetailers to meet, share ideas, and connect with forward-thinking suppliers eager to increase their online business. The Home Improvement eRetailer Summit is the first of its kind to focus specifically on hardware, housewares, home storage and organization, furnishings, and building materials.

The eRetailer Summit also featured a powerful roster of retail experts, who provided valuable insights into the future of e-commerce, and how it will integrate with bricks and mortar. The program started with retail expert Robert Howard of Kurt Salmon, who outlined how the retail experience is being disrupted and described the digital experience gap.

Deborah Shearer, Founder of TableandDine.com, found the entire event beneficial. "It was a great few days of meeting, networking, learning and sharing ideas with some really fabulous industry colleagues," she says. "The event was insightful, filled with interesting topics, relaxed, and intimate."

But important insights came from fellow eRetailers, as well. Jeff Golden from TheShops.tv talked about the importance of "telling a story around the product," while Mike Hargrave of Sears.com and Kmart.com shared that "personalized experiences is where everyone is going." Jessica Jay of ATGStores.com told potential new vendors, "Our most successful partners are the ones who aren't afraid to try new processes."

The date and location of next year's Home Improvement eRetailer Summit will be announced soon. Home Improvement vendors interested in expanding their online presence can contact Sonya Ruff Jarvis: sonya@eretailersummit.com.

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Retailer beware

The Canadian Government is being pressured to increase the maximum value of goods a foreign online store can ship into Canada without paying taxes from \$20 to \$200, leaving retailers of all sizes in Canada at a huge disadvantage

As a merchant in Canada, you might not know the meaning of the term 'de Minimis', but once you read the facts you'll never forget it.

Today consumers in Canada can purchase products online from foreign retailers and not pay duties or taxes for their purchase shipped to Canada if the order value is under \$20 (the so-called De Minimis). However, a powerful group of foreign companies, including eBay, Amazon and a group acting under the name of the Canadian American Business Council (CABA), have been fiercely lobbying the federal government to increase this limit to \$200.

Imagine the number of purchases that happen in your store(s) and/or on your web site under \$200, and then imagine the advantage a foreign-based competitor has if your customers don't have to pay sales taxes or duties when buying from them.

CABA recently issued a press release telling politicians that 76% of Canadians support the De Minimis level being raised to \$200. Of course they do! We're sure they would also support the re-

moval of sales taxes from products sold here in Canada if offered. Many consumers would not want to pay taxes.

But not only is this position irresponsible, it gives foreign sellers an unfair advantage over retailers in Canada who, by law, must charge sales taxes (and pay duties on imported goods) both in stores and online.

Foreign online retailers would gain a price advantage of up to 15% (sales tax) over retailers in Canada and up to 30% when import duties (which you have to pay) are taken into account.

The United States has long had a far higher de Minimis rate than Canada. It was at the \$200 USD level until March 2016, when it was raised to \$800 USD.

There is no comparison between Canada and the U.S. First, the United States does not have a federal sales tax, so there is no tax advantage created for inbound shipments. The U.S. also does not collect state and local sales taxes at the border or for interstate shipments, so the playing field is far more level between inbound and local sales.

Secondly, the United States utterly



dominates its own online retail space, with only 22% of American customers reporting having made a purchase from a non-U.S. seller. By contrast, 67% of Canadians report having made online cross-border purchases.

The scale of U.S. warehouse operations is such that they can easily afford to offer a high de Minimis level, while pushing other countries to raise their own levels. It should be noted that the de Minimis level in the EU and in the U.K. is very similar in size to ours.

These foreign businesses are very well funded, and are very focused on bringing their message to politicians (and consumers) across the country. They have gained, in some cases, media support (which I'm sure you would agree is deeply flawed) plus television coverage. And while we continue to fight for retailers in Canada, we need your help.

Make your voice heard and bring an important retail message to Ottawa by sending a letter to your MP now. Just visit the Retail Council of Canada at <http://www.retailcouncil.org/levelplayingfield> and click on the word 'letter' and type in your postal code.

We don't understand why Canadian policy makers would ever give a tax advantage to a U.S. warehouse seller, who employs few, if any, people here, at the cost of those who do create jobs and economic activity. Why would policymakers who use these revenues to fund public programs want to give up a very substantial amount to pad the bottom lines of U.S. online sellers?

Join your fellow merchants at Retail Council of Canada in this important letter campaign. Let's make sure we protect our jobs, investments and create a level playing field.

*Diane J. Brisebois, President & CEO
Retail Council of Canada*

What is de Minimis?

Under Canada's Postal Imports Remission Order and the Courier Imports Remission Order, the de Minimis level is currently set at \$20 Canadian. The term de Minimis is derived from a legal maxim: de Minimis non curat lex (the law does not concern itself with trivial things). In this context, de Minimis regimes are supposed to provide streamlined border clearance. The rationale is that the administrative burden and processing cost does not justify collecting taxes or duties on very small individual shipments, which (below \$20) would typically yield amounts below \$3 each in tax and duty. It is also expected that these purchases will face shipping and handling costs that could exceed the savings in tax and duty, so there is not a big incentive to online shop cross-border at the sub-\$20 price level.

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