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Retail buyers talk Holiday 2009



Here are a few more things to think about as the holiday season approaches. The **Dallas Morning News** ran an interesting article entitled, “**For retailer buyers, a tall order for the holidays**” this week. The article discusses how retailer buyers are approaching **Holiday 2009**. Here are few highlights:

Bradley Hilton, buyer for San Francisco-based Gump's, looks for holiday bargains at Dallas Market Center. Buyers are the retail industry's forecasters and risk takers - searching the world for the latest fashion and products.

Preoccupied with the uncertainties of this year's holiday retail season, he keeps asking himself: 'Would I pay this much for that?'

Buyers are the retail industry's eyes and ears; their forecasters and risk takers. They search the world to bring consumers the latest fashion and products. They have to be good with numbers and able to put personal tastes aside to satisfy the spectrum of customers.

As she walks into each showroom, Jo Lynn Powell's first request is, 'Show me what's new and fun.'

Powell, who owns San Antonio's Collector's Gallery, then hammers on price. '**Customers who routinely spent \$50 to \$60 on a gift have dropped into the \$25 to \$30 range,**' she said. '**And the people who were spending \$25 and \$30 are now spending \$12 to \$20.**' (*What will you offer in this price range this holiday season?*)

Powell has been in business 32 years and wasn't sure what she'd find to fill her 15,000-square-foot store in this economy. 'I'm seeing a lot of new product. They're innovating. That's good.'

“The crystal ball needs lots of Windex this year.” said Jill Robinson, vice president of retail development for Dallas Market Center and a former buyer for J.C. Penney and Bag 'n Baggage.

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Kelly Dierke, president of Ron Bauman & Associates Inc., a wholesaler of general gifts and home decor, said buyers have less money to spend but are shopping "more frequently to keep their stores fresh."

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Tracy Mayo, who opened two showrooms in Dallas and Atlanta this year specializing in monogrammed products and other gifts, says the **right price is paramount**. Nothing in her line, called Mainstreet Collection, has a suggested retail price over \$40. **"Price is more important than ever," she said.**

Mayo's customers are mostly independent shop owners. "Six months ago, retailers were complaining more that they were suffering. *The ones here now are more upbeat because they're survivors and the competition has been weeded out.*"

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'The luxury business has some ground to make up,' said Kate Sheldon Dubas, CEO of Plano-based consultancy Fashioneering LLC. After the era of conspicuous consumption, **'we owe our customers a lot.'**

Dubas, who started her business in 2007 after a 10-year career at Neiman Marcus that included the envious job of French couture buyer, said she's never seen more innovation among buyers than this year.

'Creative people are energized and flourishing,' she said.

Stores have to wow their customers even when they're losing money, Dubas said. "When the customer comes back, it's the store that kept her interest that will get her business."

Click here to read the article in its entirety:

http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/bus/stories/DN-Buyers_30bus.ART.State.Edition1.3f68cb0.html

Ed Hoy's thoughts: You have the ability to capture a lot of the holiday gift market if you plan offerings that will speak to this year's holiday needs and price points. 'Creative people are flourishing!' Use that creativity to keep your customers interest.

This summer we launched 'Dye'namix Infusion - A method that draws all types of customers by offering personalization and endless design possibilities. The art produced can be done at a moderate price and still offer you wonderful margin. We know that this can be a means of

increasing sales – your peers have told us so!

Maria,

I wanted to thank everyone at Ed Hoy's for finding this wonderful process. I scheduled a workshop to show how it all works & so far I have 9 people signed up. This is the best response I've had to any class or workshop. People who come in & see my display get so excited when they realize what they can do to create treasured memories for their family & friends. I feel this has been one of the best investments I've made.

Thanks!!

Jo Kaczmarek
Victorian House

Whatever methods you use to increase your sales in the upcoming season, I wish you complete success. I love a good brainstorming session – please call if I can be of help in any way.

Continued Success,
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