

# HOMEWORLD<sup>®</sup>

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—Amir Abileah,  
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## Safety Focus Prompts August Inspired Home Show Timing

BY PETER GIANNETTI  
*Editor-in-Chief*

CHICAGO— Vendors and retailers told HOMEWORLD BUSINESS<sup>®</sup> the mid-summer timing of the rescheduled 2021 Inspired Home Show is too late to shape most fourth quarter retail programs next year, but many agreed the move was sensible in light of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic.

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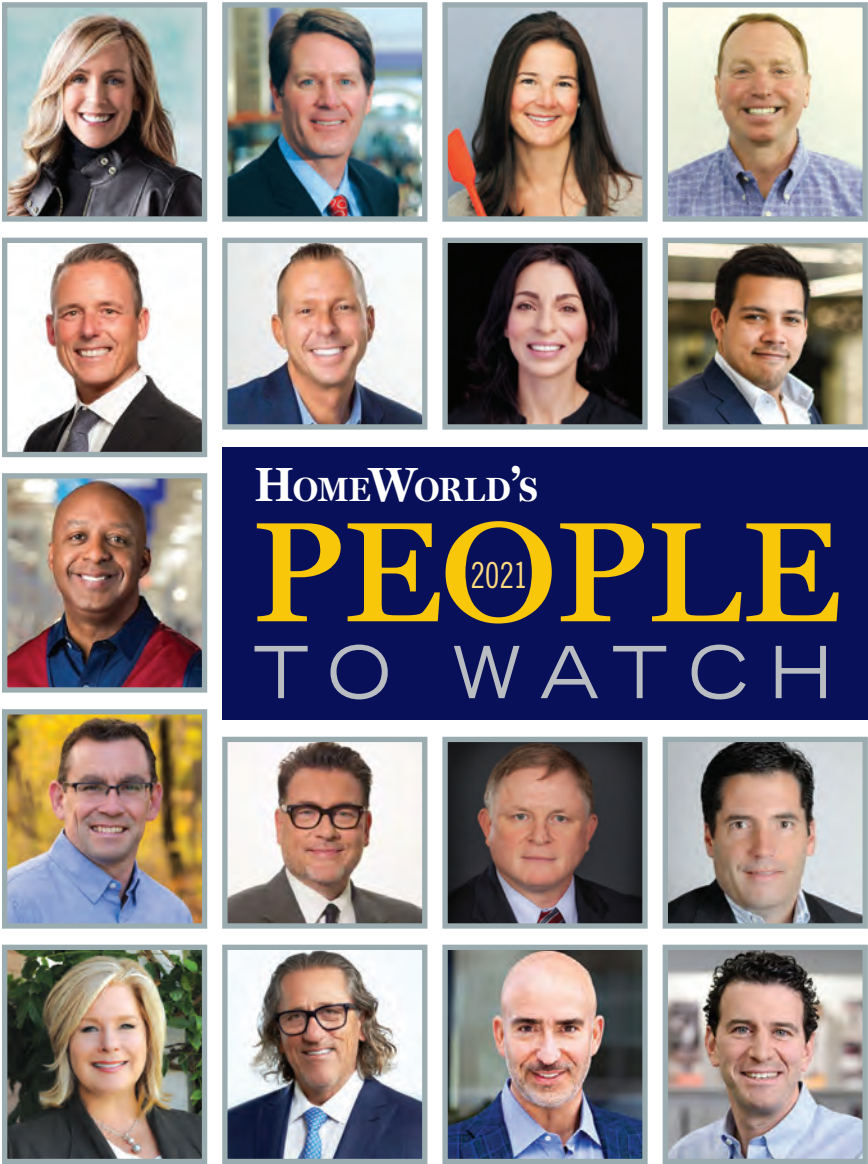
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B U S I N E S S



HomeWorld's 15th annual "People To Watch" issue showcases a diverse group of leaders who are expected to have a significant impact on the housewares industry going forward.

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# Q4 Outlook Seems Bright For Cookware Despite Challenges

BY EMILY CAPPIELLO  
Contributing Editor

NEW YORK— The coronavirus pandemic has fueled cooking and baking at home, giving a boost to the cookware segment as consumers began spending more time in their kitchen. However, there are still several factors— including economic uncertainty— that may hinder that growth going into the fourth quarter of the year, said vendors.

“Consumer demand will be challenged if we do not see unemployment go down and some of the industries hit hardest during this time, do not pivot or reinvent themselves. In my view, supply chain by far will be the most challenging to wrestle and maintain control of during these next 12 months,” said Manny Gaunaud, president of Creative Home and Kitchen, which manages the Victoria brand of cast iron cookware.

James McArdle, interim managing director, Fissler USA, said that the company anticipates a continued demand for cookware going into the fourth quarter of the year, as consumers will be opting to celebrate the holidays at home.

“We expect consumer demand to accelerate through the end of the year. Fourth quarter is usually our peak selling season, and because of the pandemic, more people will be staying closer to home than in any previous holiday period,” he said, noting that consumers will be looking to upgrade their cookware and bakeware for the holiday season now that they have spent months learning new recipes and being less

intimidated in the kitchen.

Gaunaud noted that a possible second wave of the virus— both at home and abroad— has vendors on guard, anticipating further supply chain disruptions.

This disruption, explained David Nicklin, vp/merchandising and licensing for Gibson Overseas, would continue to stunt sales, as the company noted it is already struggling to keep up with the increased demand for cookware.

“At this moment we predict that our biggest challenge will be keeping up with demand, which is definitely a good problem to have considering the state of the economy,” he said.

To combat this, he explained that Gibson is working more closely with buyers than usual, to ensure Gibson is receiving accurate purchase order projections and that the company can provide timely notifications on possible delays or setbacks.

McArdle, too, said that working with the company’s retail partners has been challenging.

“There are many unknowns for the next two quarters, and we will continually monitor and assess the changes. This path will include working with our retail partners to adapt and thrive together, at a time when American consumers are more attuned to better home cooking than ever before,” he said.

Nicklin explained that as far as product goes, the company has seen Oster, Martha Stewart, Kenmore, Cravings by Chrissy Teigen, and Crock-Pot cookware sets become top-sellers during the pandemic.

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Cuckoo offers a broad range of rice cookers and multi-cookers.

## Cuckoo Electronics Growing American Market Presence

BY DONNA BOYLE SCHWARTZ  
Contributing Editor

LOS ANGELES— A South Korean small appliance manufacturer, Cuckoo Electronics, is setting its sights on the American market for kitchen electrics and home environment appliances.

Globally, Cuckoo Electronics is a force to be reckoned with, topping the \$1 billion mark in worldwide sales last year. The company has been the number one rice cooker brand in South Korea for more than a decade with an estimated 74% market share. The company was originally founded in 1978 as Sungkwang Electronics, and formally changed its name in 2002 to take advantage of its major brand recognition throughout the Asian market.

Cuckoo Electronics America, headquartered here, launched in 2016 as an independent business entity and has quickly moved to establish a presence in the small appliance market. The U.S. executive team includes Michael Yi, director of operations; Matt Medlock, director of sales and marketing for North and South America; and Seulki Lee, marketing associate.

“We are a separate company here in the U.S. but we have close ties to the Korean company, which manufactures about 95% of the products we sell in the American market,” said Medlock, who was previously with Zojirushi.

“The brand is a major player in the rice cooker and kitchen electrics market in South Korea, Malaysia, Japan and China,” Medlock said. “Cuckoo entered

the U.S. market three years ago, and has been growing exponentially since then. We are having great success with a wide range of our kitchen appliances, and are developing a number of new items that will launch later this year. We also are expanding into pet products and home environment items.”

Cuckoo’s dominance in the rice cooker market made it a logical starting point for the American market. However, the brand has expanded rapidly into other small appliances, including multi-cookers, air fryers, bread machines and water purifiers. A new line of air purifiers will launch this fall.

“Currently about 80% of our business is in kitchen appliances, but we are placing major emphasis on the air purifier category,” Lee pointed out. “We believe there is very good growth potential in the home environment category.”

Retail customers span a wide range of distribution, including online retailers such as Amazon, Wayfair, Overstock and the brand’s own store Cuckoo Online; as well as Costco, Macy’s, Bed Bath & Beyond, Home Depot and Williams Sonoma.

Retail prices on the company’s small appliances range from \$50 to \$650, with the majority of kitchen items priced at \$100 and under. Some of the more elaborate cookers retail up to \$250, and air purifiers are expected to range from \$100 to \$500 at retail.

A major focus shared by both the international and American companies is quality.

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Fissler USA anticipates that consumer cookware demand will grow in the fourth quarter.





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Parent company L'Oreal  
is discontinuing the  
Clarisonic skin care brand.

## Clarisonic's Exit Creates Skin Care Brand Opportunities

BY DONNA BOYLE SCHWARTZ  
Contributing Editor

NEW YORK— One of the most well-known brands in the skin care category is closing up shop: Parent company L'Oreal is discontinuing the Clarisonic brand by the end of September, and selling off current inventory at sharply discounted prices.

L'Oreal announced the news via posts on Clarisonic's social media pages, stating, "After more than a decade of game-changing innovation and industry-leading technology, the Clarisonic brand will be shutting down on September 30, 2020. This difficult decision was made so that L'Oreal can focus its atten-

tion on its other core business offerings."

As of July, the company was advertising sales of 50% off all products on Clarisonic.com and at authorized retailers, including Amazon, Sephora and Ulta Beauty. L'Oreal declined to comment further on the decision.

Clarisonic was one of the earliest brands in the skin care category since Pacific Bioscience Laboratories debuted its battery-powered facial cleansing brush in 2004. The device allowed consumers to easily and safely remove makeup, dirt, bacteria, dead skin cells and oil from the skin's surface, creating a spa-like experience at home. The brand was acquired by L'Oreal in 2011, with 15 million device-

es sold worldwide to date.

Other firms quickly followed suit with their own competing devices under brand names, including Estee Lauder's Clinique, Johnson & Johnson's Neutrogena and Procter & Gamble's Olay. The competition took a bite out of Clarisonic's business, causing L'Oreal to take a \$270 million write-down in 2016, and prompting Clarisonic to outsource manufacturing and downsize personnel.

Clarisonic's difficulties may have been magnified due to a downturn in the beauty devices market. Sharp decreases in sales due to the COVID-19 pandemic may have been the final straw.

"Based on our research, Clarisonic, which had been at the forefront of popularizing the at-home beauty devices market with their cleansing devices, had not been performing well in recent years, declining at a CAGR of 10.5% since 2014," said Shivani Singh, project lead, consumer products for Kline Group. "The marketer grappled to compete with 'me too' devices that were based on latest innovations, including offering multiple function in a single device, while being made available at a fraction of the price of the sonic cleansing brush."

Thomas Nichols, president of Pretika, said he suspected something was in the works when Clarisonic did not show at the Consumer Electronics Show. "Clarisonic had exhibited at CES

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## Spectrum Grows Foreman Grill Brand

BY DONNA BOYLE SCHWARTZ  
Contributing Editor

MIDDLETON, WI— Boxing legend George Foreman burst out of the ring and into the housewares industry in 1995— and 25 years and some 150 million units later, George Foreman grills are still knocking out fat and calories as a leading indoor grill brand in the U.S.

Part of the Spectrum Brands family for the past decade, the George Foreman franchise continues to grow and evolve, adding inventive features designed to appeal to new generations of hungry do-it-yourself grilling mavens.

"Being the first contact indoor grill in the market for over 25 years, it has

been important that we continue to understand the changing needs of our consumers," said Katie Zagorski, Spectrum Brands marketing manager. "The organization continues to make significant investments into the brand to drive awareness with the launch of the new George Foreman Smokeless Grill Series. This newest line of products pairs the ease and convenience of the traditional George Foreman contact grill with our smokeless technology, allowing for up to 85% less smoke."

The George Foreman Smokeless Grill launched in April, featuring added enhancements including special vents engineered to induce natural airflow while producing up to 85% less smoke, along with dishwasher-safe removable plates and drip tray. There are currently three different models in the series: a "ready grill," featuring a simple plug in to turn on function; the "select a temperature" grill, which offers variable temperature control and heating op-

tions for precise cooking; and the digital smart select grill, which features digital temperature and time controls.

"Over the past 25 years, the brand George Foreman has continued to focus on delivering the best possible cooking experience for consumers," Zagorski said. "From the very first indoor contact grill to our newest smokeless grill innovations, we have put our energies against understanding how we can bring ease and convenience to the

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Spectrum has  
introduced the  
George Foreman smokeless  
grill series this year.



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## BUSINESS

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### EDITORIAL

**Peter Giannetti** Editor-in-Chief  
PeterG@homeworldbusiness.com • 631-297-8100

**Mike Duff** Executive Editor  
MikeD@homeworldbusiness.com • 631-246-9300 x237

**Matthew Kramer** Managing Editor  
MatthewK@homeworldbusiness.com • 631-246-9300 x215

**Lauren DeBellis** Senior Editor  
LaurenD@homeworldbusiness.com • 631-246-9300 x252

**Emily Cappiello** Contributing Editor  
EmilyC@homeworldbusiness.com • 631-246-9300 x211

**Donna Boyle Schwartz** Contributing Editor  
DonnaS@homeworldbusiness.com • 845-298-9365

### ADVERTISING

**Dave Palcek** President/Co-Publisher  
DaveP@homeworldbusiness.com • 847-913-8244

**Cynthia Evans** Senior Vice President/Co-Publisher  
CyndiE@homeworldbusiness.com • 847-913-8251

**Larry Oliver** Business Development  
LarryO@homeworldbusiness.com • 631-246-9300 x246

**Susan McDonald** Classified Advertising  
SusanM@homeworldbusiness.com • 631-246-9300 x224

### DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

**Eliud Custodio** Director of Design & Technology  
EliudC@icdnet.com • 631-297-8106

**Richard Burns** Information Technology Manager  
RichardB@icdnet.com • 631-246-9300 x212

**Renee Alborelli** Senior Artist  
ReneeA@icdnet.com • 631-246-9300 x228

**Anna M. Davidson** Senior Artist  
AnnaD@icdnet.com • 631-246-9300 x220

**Fernando Santos** Senior Artist/Senior Video Editor  
FernandoS@icdnet.com • 631-246-9300 x216

**Erin Helmers** Advertising Operations Coordinator  
ErinH@icdnet.com • 631-246-9300 x250

**Robert Marston** Information Technology Associate  
RobertM@icdnet.com • 631-246-9300 x229

**Jake Gold** Video Editor  
JakeG@icdnet.com • 631-246-9300 x243

### PRODUCTION & CIRCULATION

**Nadine Salogub** Director of Production & Circulation  
NadineS@homeworldbusiness.com • 631-297-8104

**Suzette Schear** Assistant Production Manager  
SuzetteS@homeworldbusiness.com • 631-246-9300 x222

**Denise Moscatel** Circulation Associate  
DeniseM@homeworldbusiness.com • 631-246-9300 x221

### ICD PUBLICATIONS

**Dave Palcek** President/CEO

**Cynthia Evans** Senior Vice President

**Peter Giannetti** VP, Editorial & Publishing Operations

**Eliud Custodio** Director of Design & Technology

**Nadine Salogub** Director of Production & Circulation

### NEW YORK

150 Motor Parkway, Suite 401  
Hauppauge, NY 11788  
Main: (631) 246-9300 • Fax: (631) 246-9496

### CHICAGO

175 Olde Half Day Road, Suite 240  
Lincolnshire, Illinois 60069  
Main: (847) 913-8295 • Fax: (847) 913-9202

E-mail: info@homeworldbusiness.com  
www.homeworldbusiness.com



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# Nothing Cliché About Pursuing New Normal

JOURNALISTS LEARN early in their schooling and careers to avoid clichés. A cliché is a linguistic shortcut, an overused phrase devoid of original thought.

But clichés prevail in all sorts of everyday expression. And, yes, journalists are as guilty of cliché overuse as any profession... except perhaps the business world.

## Unexpected Reset

With that, many of you may be growing tired of the following phrase: “New Normal.”

Yet “New Normal” has reached epic cliché status during this extraordinary, unexpected reset of society, life and business. You can almost sense the guilt in people’s eyes as they are about to say it. They know it’s coming. You know it’s coming. And then it comes: “New Normal.”

People are fascinated by the mystique of the elusive “New Normal.” They want to believe the world closing in on the “New Normal” compared to the chilling uncertainty that slammed us in the immediate aftermath of the societal and economic lockdown earlier this year.

The “New Normal” is shaped by evolving values and behaviors across



all walks of life, work and play.

The “New Normal” embraces surging demand of household products that have proven to be as essential as marketers have always liked to say they were.

The “New Normal” requires realignment with the shifting retail

market share as swaths of outlets ill-equipped, likely, before COVID were shut down for good by the pandemic.

## Face To Face

The “New Normal” is the necessitated acceleration of (cliché warning) omnichannel strategy and execution by retailers and their suppliers.

The “New Normal” is the carefully staged return of trade markets and shows that in the near term will forsake the usual crowd-driving embellishments to help restore the face to face in business to business.

And, yes, the “New Normal” is face coverings and social distancing and hand sanitizing and costly safety measures and uncrowded stores and crowded houses and other previously inconceivable protocols that have landed atop personal and operational priorities and could remain there for some time.

## Worthy Pursuit

There is no concrete, one-size-fits-all “New Normal.” It remains an important, ever-evolving ideal, though. It is a worthy pursuit that can never be reached because, just when you think it’s within reach, it moves again.

There is always risk an overused phrase can become so banal that it marginalizes the legitimacy of the intentions that inspired the words the first time they were uttered.

Of course “New Normal” is cliché.

That’s OK. Go ahead and say it... again and again. Some clichés are difficult to avoid.

Just remember: Actions speak louder than words.

*Peter Giannetti*

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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## Inspired Home

*continued from page 3*

businesses, the health and safety of our industry is our first priority, and moving the event to later in the year allows more time for authorities to successfully manage this crisis."

Howard "Chip" Steidle Jr., CEO of John Ritzenthaler Company and 2020 IHA chair, added, "Given the current trajectory of the pandemic and the ongoing nature of treatment and vaccine development, I can confidently say that this is the best option for our industry right now."

Miller said home and housewares retailers support the postponement of the show until August of 2021. "We spoke to a number of key retailers, both domestic and international," he said. "All of them have been very vocal about their desire to have a face-to-face show in 2021 and are enthusiastic about holding the show later in the year."

Regarding the 2022 show, Miller said IHA will survey exhibitors and buyers in the coming weeks to collect buying pattern data to determine appropriate timing for future shows.

Housewares vendors said they appreciate the extra precaution of the 2021 show postponement by IHA even as some note the August timing mitigates the show's usual role as a key

fourth quarter planning stage.

"I'm happy to see IHA still working hard to have the show in 2021 and continue doing all they possibly can to keep attendees safe and in a position to have a meaningful and productive show," said Jarrod Daughtry, director of trade marketing, Le Creuset of America. "The August timing will be interesting as it relates to showcasing 2021 newness at the show. Most 2021 new product introductions will have already launched, and 2021 holiday plans will already be solidified by most retailers by August. But, it could

be the ideal springboard to reveal 2022 newness."

"With August timing, it will shift the focus to the following year," added Jamie Newman of Rosle. "This gives

more time for planning, development and packaging."

Keith Hamden, svp/sales at Nuwave, said, "August is much too late to impact fall assortments, and most retailers will only tweak their spring assortments, if they make any changes at all."

While the August dates might be too late for the rescheduled show to affect 2021 holiday programs significantly at most chain retailers, independent retailers looking to fill out fourth quarter assortments might find opportunity in the show's mid-summer timing.

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# Supermarket Report



Delivery services have been growing in the supermarket channel, such as Sobey's Voila program.

## Pandemic Accelerates Retail Trends In Supermarket Channel

By MIKE DUFF  
Executive Editor

NEW YORK— COVID-19 has brought the supermarket channel to a crossroads, as a tried-and-true format that has been challenged to fundamentally adapt to a disrupted marketplace that could provide the sector some advantage but could severely penalize those that refuse to adjust to an altered reality.

The acceleration of retail trends has been a theme throughout the coronavirus pandemic in the U.S. Yet it may, at least potentially, push supermarkets further faster than any other segment in retailing. Overall, supermarkets haven't been on the forefront of retail innovation, although many have taken steps to embrace new ideas and fresh approaches.

Among the majors that have made a commitment to significantly reshaping operations, Kroger may be one supermarket operator able to build on the disrupted marketplace, given its embrace of retail technology that helps it more precisely meet shopper needs and preferences, and compete with cross-channel rivals including mass marketers and warehouse clubs, and even restaurants.

Yet innovation doesn't necessarily mean the kind of tech-driven changes Kroger has made. By introducing new, easy-to-shop formats at a time when consumers are stressed by financial and health safety concerns, deep discount grocers are in a position to take market share from traditional supermarkets. It's noteworthy, however, that some supermarket operators have thrived based simply on operational excellence with Wegmans, H-E-B, Publix and Hy-Vee among the standouts.

The supermarket channel's position in the retail marketplace has eroded over the past few decades. When supercenters, warehouse clubs and deep-discount grocers began to proliferate 40 years ago, the overwhelming proportion of supermarket primary grocery shopping trips began to slip. By 2005, according to the Food Marketing Institute, they had fallen to under 70% before stabilizing at about half by 2019. And then came COVID-19.

Suddenly, the relationship between supermarkets and their customers became, at the same time, more tenuous and vital. Social distancing requirements meant consumers could only shop stores deemed vital and necessary to keep open. Still,

supermarkets faced competition from other channels that had developed in-store and curbside pickup as well as delivery options they had not explored. But many supermarkets did something they aren't normally known for doing: They acted fast. They developed curbside pickup and delivery programs, usually tapping third party delivery services that had been growing, including Instacart and Target-owned Shipt, to get to customer households.

The initiatives were needed. According to FMI, before the pandemic, the average household in the U.S. generated about 2.5 shopper trips to a grocery store per week in 2019. As pandemic-related movement restrictions loomed, that number actually increased to 3.6 in late March before declining to 2.7 by mid April. Before COVID-19 began to influence consumer behavior, households shopped 5.1 grocery banners each month across 4.1 retail channels, but that slipped as 40% said they shopped fewer stores under stay-at-home orders.

In a similar timeframe, online grocery spending jumped from 14.5% of the total to 27.9%. FMI reported that 12% of consumers said they purchased fresh produce online for the first time in the pandemic. In an interesting note, before the pandemic struck almost all grocery shoppers said they dined out at least sometimes, but during March and April restaurant closures only 36% of shoppers reported tapping restaurant delivery at least once a week even as 35% reported cooking at home six to seven days a week.

Neil Stern, a senior partner at consultancy McMillan Doolittle, said the changes wrought by the coronavirus pandemic are fundamental and that supermarkets have derived some benefit that they can leverage by assessing and playing to shifts in customer behavior.

"It has been a massive challenge for supermarkets to operate in this environment, from keeping staff and customers safe to dealing with an incredibly volatile supply chain. In general, they have been net gainers but there have been product and mix shifts— prepared foods/bakery down,

*continued on page 18*

## Inspired Home

*continued from page 10*

"Vendors should have their new products in stock. It's a win-win," added KC Lapi-ana, president of HTI Buying Group.

Bob Kratchman, co-owner of the Cherry Hill, NJ-based Kitchen Kapers group of gourmet housewares stores, said, "August is getting late to make things happen. Or will the show be more about 2022? Then again, it's August 2020, and we're still trying to make things happen for this fall."

Janis Johnson, president, GC Group, added, "With the world reeling from the pandemic, and travel concerns looming, the date change makes sense. By August of 2021, we should have a good handle on retail's reentry into the marketplace, and buyers will have a much better idea about shifting consumer behaviors. While we all want things to get back to normal, we know baby steps will be required for us to stay on the right track."

To some, adaptation by vendors and retailers without in-person trade shows during the pandemic underscores the need for show operators to create new, business-driving attractions for exhibitors and buyers.

"With 'remote' being the new normal, [trade shows] have to be very creative on how to bring people together," said Steven Yde, vp/Wahl. "With fears of pandemics now in the minds of everyone, major brands will think twice about investing unless there is something new and engaging that brings them in."

Henry Nading, director of sales and marketing at Chantal, said, "I hate seeing [the 2021 Inspired Home Show] pushed back again, but I understand why it's necessary. The longer we go without a show the more everyone will question if it is needed at all. I for one hope we successfully find a way to safely continue having trade shows, as I find them to be extremely beneficial."

"We have gotten used to Zoom, Skype and WeChat meetings," added Bobby Djavaheeri, president of Yedi Houseware Appliances. "However, I do believe an in-person interaction is always best to close deals. I trust the IHA is making the best decision for the safety of the visitors." **HWB**



# HOMEWORLD's PEOPLE TO WATCH 2021

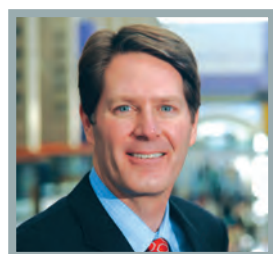


Janet Hayes  
CRATE & BARREL

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**T**he industry figures in this 15th annual “People To Watch” issue are expected to have a significant impact on the housewares industry going forward.

In selecting the “People To Watch,” HOMEWORLD BUSINESS® editors culled the list from a large group of candidates that included suppliers, retailers, designers and industry-affiliated organizations. The group is diverse, not just in the scope of their businesses and responsibilities, but also in their individual experiences and contributions to the industry. All, however, play a role in shaping the housewares industry.



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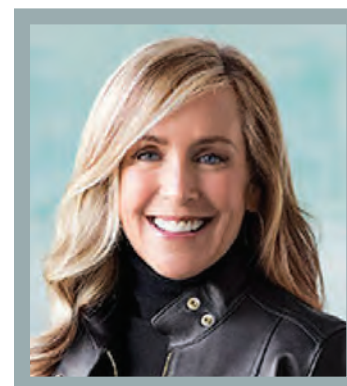
Mark Rosenzweig  
SHARKNINJA

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Mark Barrocas  
SHARKNINJA

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## Janet Hayes

*Crate & Barrel Holdings*  
CEO

**CREDENTIALS:** Janet Hayes officially joined Crate & Barrel Holdings, Inc. on August 1 as its new CEO. A seasoned executive with over 25 years of retail experience, Hayes brings a track record of developing and repositioning brands with deep expertise in the home category.

Hayes was president of the Williams-Sonoma brand from 2013 to 2019. She directed a reposition of the Williams-Sonoma's position as an authority for high-performance and fashionable cooking and dining tools for an emerging generation of consumers by curating key selections of premium nationally branded product complemented by an expanding assortment of exclusive Williams-Sonoma-branded goods. Hayes also presided over Williams-Sonoma's pioneering omnichannel development, which resulted in it being among the first national retail brands to balance digital and brick-and-mortar sales. Prior to William Sonoma, Hayes was president of Pottery Barn Kids and Teen.

**WHAT TO WATCH:** Hayes' reputation as a brand builder suggests an intensification of Crate & Barrel's private label strategy, already prevalent in furniture and historically a hallmark of its imported tableware and kitchenware selections. Expect even more private label development across home and housewares as Crate & Barrel, like other specialty retailers, seeks to cultivate an exclusive, design-driven, lifestyle retailing experience against e-commerce platforms that have gained even more prominence during the COVID pandemic.

The appointment of Cathy Beaudoin, former president of Amazon Fashion, to Crate & Barrel's supervisory board shortly after Hayes was announced as CEO portends a determined move by Otto Group, holder of the Crate & Barrel, CB2, Crate and Kids and Hudson Grace brands, to scale up the group's digital commerce, technology and marketing operations.

**PERSPECTIVE:** “Crate and Barrel has embraced the digital experience for customers with more than 50% of its sales already online... I am delighted to lead Crate & Barrel Holdings and its family of brands at this pivotal time in retail and work alongside an immensely talented team building on over 55 years of experience. My passion for great brands with meaningful heritage makes this an extraordinary opportunity,” said Hayes.

—Peter Giannetti





## Derek Miller

*International Housewares Association  
President*

**CREDENTIALS:** Derek Miller, president of the International Housewares Association since 2018, joined the IHA in 1999 as director of international business development, then was named vp/international services in 2001. He became IHA vp/global marketing in 2014. Miller has been central to the recent move by the IHA to add a stronger consumer lifestyle connection to the association's core role as a B2B bridge between housewares sellers and buyers. That evolution was to be celebrated this past March with the debut of the newly named Inspired Home Show, which was canceled due to the pandemic.

**WHAT TO WATCH:** Miller recently announced the IHA, in expectation of a more contained COVID situation by the middle of next year, is rescheduling the 2021 Inspired Home Show from March to August 7-10. That decision keeps the near-term spotlight on IHA efforts implemented during the pandemic to keep the industry connected through virtual product and trend exhibits, online educational webinars and peer meetings and frequent updates on government programs and assistance during the pandemic.

The inaugural IHA Market Watch Report, released through a recent webinar series, was developed to align with the new consumer lifestyle focus of the IHA and its show. Revised to account for shifting attitudes and behaviors spurred by the pandemic, the report examines how five consumer trends— Time, Space, Experience, Wellness and Responsibility— shape life decisions, home product purchases and the opportunities for housewares developers and retailers.

**PERSPECTIVE:** "The single greatest need by the industry is to have a successful show in 2021. The industry needs this gathering of like-minded professionals to showcase and source new products and innovations," Miller said. "Even though planning for next year's (rescheduled) show continues to be challenging in the midst of the ongoing pandemic, we are dedicated to creating a safe and productive event for the industry. We're taking each day as it comes, solving each problem at hand, while also looking to the future to ensure IHA remains a meaningful partner with and service provider to the home and housewares industry." —Peter Giannetti



## Samantha Rose

*GIR (Get It Right)  
Founder and CEO*

**CREDENTIALS:** In 2012, Samantha Rose began her journey to founding GIR (Get It Right), a silicone-based kitchenware company. In her quest to find a spatula that would stand up to her kitchen needs, she decided to design and create her own prototype. It was her attempt to create a spatula that would "get it right."

The spatula that was once a prototype soon appeared on Kickstarter campaigns which fueled rapid growth thanks to customer feedback. Rose soon found her spatula, and additional silicone kitchen tools such as a spoonula, turner, tongs, ladle and whisk, all in vibrant colors, sold in small independent stores and online. In 2018, the company developed a capsule collection that was launched into 550 Target locations, as well as the retailer's website.

**WHAT TO WATCH:** While Rose grew her business from a direct-to-consumer and specialty store model to one that has a larger omnichannel presence, she remains a strong supporter of the independent and gourmet channels, which she has called the lifeblood of the business. That grass roots, community effort is also part of what prompted Rose and her team to pivot their manufacturing capabilities earlier this year and develop silicone masks in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Rose has said that her company's name is a mission, a core belief that guides the team, adapts and engages customers.

GIR has also kept its new product momentum, introducing kitchenware that goes beyond prep tools and offering solutions such as reusable straws and food storage lids. With the company's brand awareness and openness to share its story and core beliefs, both of which are essential to reach today's consumer, the company is in a unique position to continue its growth and help shape the kitchenware category.

**PERSPECTIVE:** "I think what's resonating about GIR are our core beliefs: one, that kitchens should be colorful— not just in the food we eat, but with the tools we use to prepare— and two, that the things we make should be beautiful but also sustainable and built to last a lifetime," said Rose. "We want to meet our customers where they already are, whether that's online or at their local gourmet store or at a hardware store. It's an omnichannel approach that boils down to: we'll come to you." —Lauren DeBellis



## Jay Zilinskas

*Legacy Companies  
Consumer Division, President*

**CREDENTIALS:** Jay Zilinskas, a 30-year housewares industry veteran, assumed Legacy's newly created consumer products leadership post in August 2019.

Zilinskas previously was president and CEO of cookware manufacturer and marketer Columbian Home Products. Prior to that, Zilinskas was COO at Buddy Valastro Entertainment, heading new business development, licensing and merchandising for the popular "Cake Boss" franchise.

Zilinskas previously spent 19 years with cookware and kitchenware developer, producer and marketer Meyer Corp., serving in a variety of senior leadership positions with responsibility for strategic planning, business expansion, product development, marketing, e-commerce, operations and profitability improvement. Zilinskas helped expand Meyer's business and brand portfolio, increasing revenue and driving market share gains.

**WHAT TO WATCH:** Zilinskas is tasked with growing a stable of consumer appliance and housewares brands that through successive acquisitions by Legacy in recent years includes West Bend, Omega, Chef's Choice, Avanti, Excalibur, Vinturi and Zeroll. He identified three primary objectives: stronger engagement with key retail customers in multiple channels; a recommitment to new product development across the company's diverse brand offering; and the creation of "A-plus" content to support a widening base of retail e-commerce customers, including pure-play e-com operators and omnichannel retailers.

Noting stronger than initially expected sales during the COVID pandemic to meet the increased appetite for cooking and snacking by homebound consumers, Zilinskas said the pandemic forced an acceleration of the company's e-commerce capabilities and responsiveness.

**PERSPECTIVE:** "We have been a story of acquisitions the past several years," Zilinskas said. "First there are all of things you need to settle during the (post-acquisition) transitions: the systems, the people and other operational concerns. Now we can put the focus on the best way to grow these brands and bring them together in a cohesive, meaningful way. During the next 12 months, our retail customers and consumers will see a dramatically differing look from our brands."

—Peter Giannetti





## Ed Vlacich

*Lasko Holdings  
CEO*

**CREDENTIALS:** Ed Vlacich was named CEO of Lasko Holdings in December, bringing more than 30 years of consumer products experience. He previously was region head of Henkel Beauty Care North America and president of national brands at private equity-held Sun Products. Vlacich also brings an engineering and operations background to West Chester, PA-based Lasko, which markets products under the Lasko, Air King and B-Air brands and features U.S. manufacturing operations for much of its portable fan lineup.

**WHAT TO WATCH:** Vlacich's diverse consumer product leadership background checks all the boxes for the private equity ownership joint venture led by consumer product management and investment veteran Jerry Levin that in 2016 acquired a Lasko business that had been family owned for more than 100 years. Vlacich said Lasko, with 90% aided brand awareness in home comfort appliances and coming off a strong season supplying consumers during the pandemic, will continue to leverage its retail position in seasonal appliances and its domestic manufacturing capabilities to service retail customers with a wider selection.

After its 2019 acquisition of Intertex, maker of B-Air commercial air movement products for the water/fire damage restoration market, Lasko is exploring cross development that can extend its retail program, which has moved into air cleaners and humidifiers. Vlacich said Lasko also is widening its domestic manufacturing program with a plan to introduce its first-ever U.S.-made heater in time for the 2021 season. And the company is exploring digital marketing advancements— including possible applications that alert people to impending weather— to further support retail customers and consumers.

**PERSPECTIVE:** "Having a CPG mindset, and the agility to react to where demand is, creates more opportunity for Lasko and its leading position (in the retail home comfort market)... We've been able to meet increasing demand through our fast-running (domestic production) lines. We're set up to be even more agile... We help people through bad weather. And as people continue to work from home, the absolute need for our product will grow," said Vlacich.

—Peter Giannetti



## Ben Gadbois

*Corelle Brands  
President and CEO*

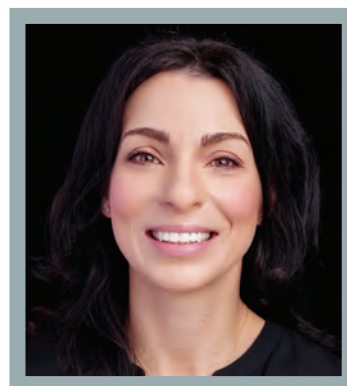
**CREDENTIALS:** Ben Gadbois was named president and CEO of Corelle Brands in June. The company, which is backed by Cornell Capital, is home to the Pyrex, Instant Pot, Corelle and SnapWare housewares brands. Gadbois, who will also sit on the Corelle Brands board of directors, brings to the position more than two decades of experience driving growth for leading consumer brands. He was most recently the global president and COO of Spin Master and previously spent 13 years in various leadership roles at Newell Brands.

**WHAT TO WATCH:** Gadbois will continue to lead Corelle's strategy to more directly reach the Millennial and Gen Z consumers, as both groups are evolving into home ownership. The company has been rolling out more direct-to-consumer programs via the Corelle Brands website in order to engage consumers. The company most recently introduced limited edition licensed glass food storage and tableware goods featuring Mickey Mouse and Star Wars, both available exclusively on the company's website. The pop culture licenses are more relevant than ever with the Millennial and Gen Z consumer.

Gadbois is tasked with leading a company during the continued global pandemic. However, both glass food storage and tabletop have gained attention with consumers as they continue to prep, cook and dine at home. Gadbois is in a unique position to not only lead Corelle Brands to its next level, but also serve the needs of consumers who are open and willing to purchase such goods for the home.

**PERSPECTIVE:** "This year, people are spending more time cooking, baking, serving meals and storing food at home than ever before and our brands are well-positioned to meet consumers' evolving needs," Gadbois said. "The consumer experience is at the heart of everything we do at Corelle Brands. We are always excited to hear from so many new and long-time consumers about how they have been getting creative in the kitchen with our brands over the last few months. As we embrace our next chapter of growth, we will focus on accelerating our consumer-driven innovation. We are all in uncharted territory right now, but we will come out of it and build the future together."

—Lauren DeBellis



## Joana McKenna

*Walker Edison  
President*

**CREDENTIALS:** Walker Edison recently named Joana McKenna president. She reports directly to Brad Bonham, the company's co-founder and CEO and will work with him and the company's other co-founder, Matt Davis, COO, to enhance and drive the company's growth initiatives.

McKenna was most recently vp/growth at Walmart, where she led marketplace business growth strategy, fueled development of its e-commerce business and spearheaded successful advanced initiatives. She also held senior positions at Amazon and Johnson & Johnson, not to mention running her own e-commerce layette and juvenile furniture business. At Amazon, McKenna participated in the strategic development of its marketplace as well as global brands registry and protection.

**WHAT TO WATCH:** Walker Edison hired McKenna to help usher in the company's next decade and generation of growth, which includes building human capital and technology as well as expanding growth channels. She will help the company build private brands, boost international growth, explore a distinct direct-to-consumer element and develop new sourcing. In addition, she will aid in tackling issues such as sustainability and diversity in the context of Walker Edison operations.

**PERSPECTIVE:** "Walker Edison designs furniture for everyone, at every stage of life, no matter where you live," McKenna said. "As we look to the second half of fiscal year '20 and fiscal year '21, our number one focus is our employees and meeting our team wherever they are. From working remote to flexible schedules, benefits that support their health and wellbeing, to the tools and technology they need to be productive and drive innovation. Walker Edison is poised to become the market leader in RTA, and we are focused on driving innovation with new categories and product assortment, exploring direct-to-consumer, and optimizing our supply chain to proactively support our year-over-year growth. This is only possible by building upon an organization that sets the pace for best-in-class employee benefits, career development, and diversity and inclusion. Walker Edison will continue to innovate our designs and produce furniture that meets the trends and demands of our partners and consumers."

—Mike Duff





## Andreas Hansen

*Plum*  
*Global President*

**CREDENTIALS:** Eleven months ago, Andreas Hansen took the reins as global president of Plum and decided to fundamentally transform how consumers enjoy wine. Hansen is a respected executive in the appliances industry, having worked with high-end brands such as Thermador, Gaggenau and Bosch in some 30 markets around the world. He has nearly two decades of experience in strategic planning, product and brand marketing, market intelligence, sales management, distribution and merchandising. Hansen most recently was president of Liebherr Appliances for the Americas for Liebherr Group. Hansen also held leadership roles at BSH Home Appliance Group, Electrolux, Legacy Companies and La Cuisine International.

**WHAT TO WATCH:** Plum is a three-year-old entrepreneurial startup that introduced the first wine appliance that automatically preserves, chills and serves wine by the glass. Hansen's appliance background allows him to build on his relationships, establishing Plum with some 300 retail stores, including Williams Sonoma, Bloomingdale's and Macy's. Wine is a \$72 billion market; 40% of Americans consume wine, and Plum is tapping into this potential. Plum continues to add to its executive team and focus on product innovation, with former Serta Simmons CEO Michael Traub stepping up as CEO; freeing up founder and chairman David Koretz to take on the new post of chief product officer.

**PERSPECTIVE:** Plum features pioneering technology and is "uniquely positioned to become the new 'must have' in the modern home," Hansen said. "There is no other product that combines preservation, dispensation and refrigeration in an all-in-one appliance. Plum is also on the forefront of AI-powered wine recognition that allows for a virtual sommelier, automatically identifying the vintage, varietal, region, winery and wine, connecting to rich content that lets you step into the tasting room without leaving your home. Wine consumption has gone up, online retail is here to stay and we want to be part of both. We are accelerating the shift of wine from bottle to glass, the same way coffee went from pot to cup. We are aiming to become the preferred way to consume wine."

—Donna Boyle Schwartz



## Marvin Ellison

*Lowe's*  
*President and CEO*

**CREDENTIALS:** Marvin Ellison took the president and CEO role at Lowe's two years ago and, at the same time, joined the company's board of directors. He moved to Lowe's from J.C. Penney, where he served as president and chairman of the board. Ellison has more than 30 years of retail experience, much of it with Home Depot and Target.

**WHAT TO WATCH:** Ellison has applied a broad retail experience to Lowe's. In the COVID-19 pandemic, the company boosted its marketing with an emphasis on community and worker-related messaging versus brand, and to some effect, driving store traffic higher at a faster pace than even Home Depot recently. The company also has been focused on boosting small business, including minority owned and rural small businesses. In a conference call, Ellison pointed out that, for this year, Lowe's has pivoted in its direction, updated objectives and created a cross-functional COVID-19 task force, in effect, reshuffling priorities to fulfill its community obligations as an essential retailer operating in the pandemic. As such, he has placed Lowe's in a position to be flexible, which could come with some benefit in navigating the company through the shifting sands of a marketplace dealing with the short- and long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**PERSPECTIVE:** Lowe's has had a reputation of looking at the do-it-yourself customer more broadly than is typical in its retail channel. Whether it is the female customer, or the more casual DIYer, the company, while not neglecting the pro clientele, has looked for ways to make its store experience friendlier without compromising effectiveness. Ellison has taken that a step further, looking at the business in light of opportunities to embrace the full range of talent available in the retail sector while reinforcing the company's ability to serve the community, in part through his emphasis on omnichannel operations, but also as a neighborhood resource that reflects the full range of American demographics, whether it's in an ethnically diverse urban or deeply rural landscape.

—Mike Duff



## Chris McDonough

*Corkcicle*  
*CEO*

**CREDENTIALS:** Corkcicle appointed Chris McDonough as its new CEO in late June. He succeeds Ben Hewitt, Corkcicle's co-founder, who will remain on the company's board of directors. Before joining Corkcicle, McDonough spent the last four years at L.L. Bean as chief sales and brand officer. McDonough helped develop a comprehensive brand relaunch and channel transformation model that led to profit, margin and new customer growth.

**WHAT TO WATCH:** As McDonough succeeds Hewitt, he is faced with the challenge to not only continue the brand's momentum, growth and goals, but also to put his own unique mark on the company.

Corkcicle has differentiated itself in the marketplace not only with the quality of its double walled stainless steel lidded tumblers, canteens and other hydration vessels, but also with its approach to design-focused colors and styles that speak to the modern consumer.

This momentum has helped the company expand its reach as well as its product line, as it recently introduced barware, various totes and backpacks, as well as food storage, in an effort to position itself as a one-stop-shop for a consumer's busy, on-the-go lifestyle. It has also dabbled in mixed mediums, adding tumblers crafted of glass and stainless steel in an effort to bring new technology and innovation to the category and appeal to consumers that prefer glass-based hydration products.

In addition, the company has launched licensed collections such as the Rifle Paper Co. line, and with Vineyard Vines, both strategic partnerships to reach the loyal consumers of those brands.

As the hydration category has turned with more of a focus to capture the attention of outdoor enthusiasts and urban jungle dwellers alike, it will be worthwhile to observe what McDonough can add to Corkcicle from experience at L.L. Bean.

**PERSPECTIVE:** "Sustainability is a key pillar that makes up Corkcicle's brand ethos and DNA," McDonough said. "As a growing part of our ongoing strategy, we'll look to continue amplifying brand awareness through strategic partnerships that reach our core consumer audience, along with large scale events and digital extensions that create an everlasting impact from now and into the future."

—Lauren DeBellis





## Mark Tritton

*Bed Bath & Beyond  
President and CEO*

**CREDENTIALS:** Mark Tritton became Bed Bath & Beyond's new president and CEO late last year and immediately faced the challenge of extending a turnaround strategy initiated by the board of directors but under the influence of new executives he brought on board soon after arriving. Tritton arrived at the retailer with more than 30 years of experience in the retail industry, including most recently as evp/chief merchandising officer at Target, with other executive stints at Nordstrom and Nike.

**WHAT TO WATCH:** Bed Bath & Beyond had launched a turnaround strategy before hiring Tritton based on specific elements: stabilizing and driving top-line growth, resetting the cost structure, and reviewing and optimizing the asset base. As to the asset base, the company has already spun off the One Kings Lane business and Tritton will be evaluating additional asset sales. Since his hiring, Tritton has overseen a range of major executive appointments including, for example, former Avon CFO Gustavo Arnal as evp/CFO and treasurer.

Essentially, Tritton has been charged with taking what has been a viable if declining retailer, one that had become stale in merchandising execution while, at the same time, running adrift in the digital function and unable to execute on often good ideas on the operations side, and narrowing focus to leverage its position as a go-to housewares retailer. Tritton has to run down various set priorities to return Bed Bath & Beyond back to its former prominence in housewares retailing. COVID-19 and related store closing have complicated matters but also created opportunities for the retailer to reconnect with a more home-centric consumer.

**PERSPECTIVE:** "We redefined our purpose: to make it easy to feel at home," Tritton said in a first quarter conference call. "This is a defining role of our business place for our customers, the North-star that guides all our actions. To achieve this purpose, our mission is to reestablish our authority and be the preferred home destination driven by teams consistently delivering balanced, durable growth. We believe this mission is more relevant today than ever when home is everything and being safe at home with family is essential."

—Mike Duff



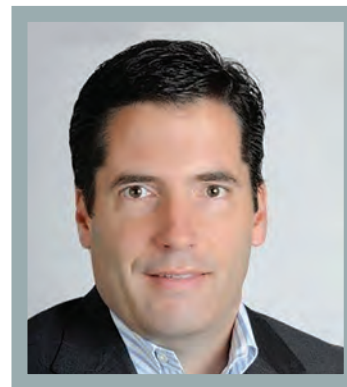
## Mike Evans

*Bestar-Bush  
President and CEO*

**CREDENTIALS:** Mike Evans has enjoyed a long career at ready-to-assemble furniture maker Bush Industries during which time he assumed multiple executive roles including supervising the company's product leadership and global sourcing, and business development functions. In 2014, he and three other Bush executives purchased the company, at which time Evans became chief marketing officer. In 2018, the group sold the company to Lorraine Capital and Evans became Bush president and CEO. Early this year, Bush was acquired by Novacap, a Canadian private equity firm, through its portfolio company Bestar, an RTA furniture manufacturer with plants in Quebec. Evans then became president and CEO of Bestar-Bush.

**WHAT TO WATCH:** Bestar-Bush continues consolidating its various functions while at the same time responding to demand for its furniture prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic and consumers doing more at home, including office furniture but also in other product segments. The company has been working hard to simply keep pace with demand. The company is building out product segments that it has been entering over the past couple of years from office seating to fireplace furniture. And the company is building off of and refreshing best-selling lines to continually extend market success, all of which means that Bush will push hard to gain traction across its expanding product portfolio.

**PERSPECTIVE:** "Bestar-Bush is having another fantastic year with continued growth across all categories with a recent surge in sales in the home office category," said Evans. "We have added more new products in the first six months of 2020 versus 2019 as a whole. We are continuing to drive our category expansion plans with several exciting new introductions in universal storage, bathroom collections and a modular entryway program. Our biggest hurdle is ramping up domestic and import inventories to keep up with demand and replenish our inventory base. We are continuing the integration of our two companies and have begun cross-selling products between the portfolio of brands. Over the next 12 months, we will be merging our distribution network to improve efficiencies and delivery dates. We will also be focusing on key acquisition opportunities." —Mike Duff



## Greg Cairo

*Le Creuset Of America  
CEO*

**CREDENTIALS:** Greg Cairo spent 14 years at Groupe SEB, USA, in a variety of roles, including high-ranking positions as vp/sales as well as president. In 2019, Cairo was tapped to lead Le Creuset of America after the retirement of long-time CEO Faye Gooding. Cairo brought his knowledge of brand development and distribution channel strategy, looking to take Le Creuset to the next level.

**WHAT TO WATCH:** The coronavirus pandemic spurred sales of cookware as more consumers were spending time at home. These consumers were taking the time to invest in their kitchens and, in conjunction with the breadmaking boom, Dutch ovens were seeing high sales across the U.S.

However, there is still an issue brewing in the background— U.S.-imposed tariffs on French goods. While the company has gone to great lengths to fight against the potential business threat, the Trump Administration announced on July 10, 2020, that it will impose a 25% tariff on some French goods. Wine, cheeses and cookware are seemingly off the docket, for now, but it could shift.

In the meantime, Cairo will continue leading through innovation. Le Creuset has taken on various partnerships in the last year, including one between the brand and wedding registry site Zola, and has pushed the brand to continue to work on its durability and quality story with the release of its latest non-stick cookware line. Cairo understands the heritage and nostalgia that Le Creuset has with consumers and is continuing to strike the balance between the company's traditions and new initiatives.

**PERSPECTIVE:** Cairo has an admiration for the quality and design of Le Creuset products, especially the beloved Dutch ovens that have become a staple in the kitchen of home cooks. He explained that in his role, he will continue to deliver exceptional products in all categories that are well positioned in the marketplace. However, he said that a thorough and aligned brand will bring increased value to the consumer.

"When buying Le Creuset, you are buying into more than just a product," Cairo said.

—Emily Cappiello





## Pamela Stafford

*Hestan Culinary  
Director*

**CREDENTIALS:** A long-time veteran of the housewares industry and brand building, while working for Brady Marketing, Pamela Stafford was tapped by Stanley Cheng, founder of Hestan Smart Cooking and Hestan Culinary, to bring this new cookware brand to the market

**WHAT TO WATCH:** Stafford is continuing to grow the brand two ways— using its boutique, high-end story while working to create a true partnership between Hestan and the channels of distribution that carry the brand.

In addition, Stafford is also navigating new consumer shopping preferences. She was instrumental in the launch of Hestan's newest technology, the Cookware Concierge program. The service works by allowing consumers the ability to browse Hestan's selection of products online, while choosing a convenient time to be contacted by a brand representative. During the appointed time, Hestan's cookware specialist will contact the consumer by phone to review questions and help him or her determine what's best for their cooking needs and lifestyle.

The company has plans for expansion as well, and is looking to debut complementary housewares lines under the Hestan Culinary umbrella.

**PERSPECTIVE:** Stafford is planning to continue opening up doors for Hestan, like its latest partnership with Food52, and finding new avenues to bring the brand to the serious home cook. Stafford feels strongly that Hestan's personal touch, combined with the intricately designed cookware, is what will really help create loyalty from the top of the supply chain down. Stafford often sends personally-written "thank you" cards, bottles of wine from Hestan Vineyards, and is always looking to coordinate efforts for launch events or in-store initiatives. The effort of the brand to make things as personal as possible is designed to come through all of its omnichannel outlets, even in the digital world where no one expects it.

—Emily Cappiello



## Bob Maricich

*International Market Centers  
Chairman and CEO*

**CREDENTIALS:** Bob Maricich has a long history in the furnishings business including a stint as president and CEO of Century Furniture. Prior to that, he was president of American Drew and American of Martinsville after holding senior positions at companies such as Flexsteel and Texaco. He took over Internationals Market Centers leadership in 2008.

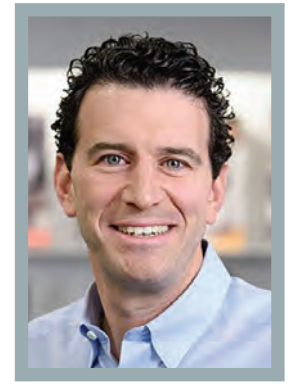
**WHAT TO WATCH:** Maricich has taken IMC and its trade show enterprises forward through the purchase of buildings in High Point, NC, that serve a critical role at the High Point Market, the acquisition of AmericasMart, home of the Atlanta Market and other shows, and that of the Atlanta Decorative Arts Center. In doing so, he helped position the company as the foremost trade show player in the home furnishings industry and a significant one in other sectors. At the same time, he has overseen material upgrades to properties and strategic extensions of products including into the gift business at the IMC's Las Vegas Market. The main challenge he faces now is navigating through the COVID-19 pandemic, which has shut down or forced the repositioning of trade shows and has constrained the company's operations.

**PERSPECTIVE:** "In the short term, we are rising to the occasion by reengineering our physical markets, introducing new 'Together Safely' health and safety guidelines and protocols for in-person gatherings and pivoting to provide digital programming that maintains industry connection and community," Maricich said. "Buyers want physical markets, and we are doing all we can to be imaginative and evolutionary and to be flexible as the current situation changes. Digital is an important enhancement to physical. Our development of IMC's new digital innovation division has enabled us to provide our customers with interim technology to help them weather current disruption to physical markets. Ultimately, we are focused on making commerce more efficient, effective and compelling for our customers. Despite the pandemic, we are moving forward with capital projects such as the opening of the Expo at World Market Center Las Vegas and the Atlanta Next renovation and remerchandising that will improve the physical market experience in Las Vegas and Atlanta." —Mike Duff



## Mark Rosenzweig

*Shark Ninja  
Founder*



## Mark Barrocas

*Shark Ninja  
President*

**CREDENTIALS:** Mark Rosenzweig and Mark Barrocas have teamed to steer SharkNinja into a floor care and countertop kitchen appliance powerhouse with annual sales of around \$2 billion. Rosenzweig founded Euro-Pro in 1994, and he scored a major breakthrough with Shark-branded steam cleaners and upright vacuum cleaners using what would become the company's trademark formula of inventive, high-performance product at competitive pricepoints and backed by a vast TV ad spend showcasing infomercials. Barrocas arrived in 2009 with a deep corporate leadership background to support the surging growth of the company, which changed its name to SharkNinja in 2015 after an aggressive expansion using the same TV-driven approach into food prep and more recently cooking electrics under the Ninja brand. Barrocas previously was president of the WearGuard division of Aramark Uniform Services and before that of Broder Bros. sportswear.

**WHAT TO WATCH:** While Shark Ninja continues to advance its floor care program, including moves into robotic vacs, the kitchen electrics business has seen even more action in the past couple of years through the escalating rollout of the Ninja Foodi collection of multi-cookers, grills, air fryers, ovens and blenders. This has set the stage for an extension by SharkNinja into non-stick cookware under the Ninja Foodi brand, the approaching launch of which recently was previewed briefly on the SharkNinja website with few details. The company earlier signaled a potential cookware play by bringing in former Meyer Corp. managing director Darrin Johnston, whose LinkedIn profile indicates he joined SharkNinja in January as global general manager.

**PERSPECTIVE:** If the SharkNinja marketing history is a guide, expect the company to deploy an aggressive media strategy, led by infomercials, to support a Ninja Foodi cookware rollout, possibly in time for the 2020 holidays.

—Peter Giannetti



## Supermarkets

*continued from page 11*

packaged foods up— that have longer term implications,” he said.

Supermarkets gained as other channels that competed with them in at least some categories closed down.

“Here is something really tangible and powerful that comes with being an essential provider of goods for a community,” Stern said. “While this has always been the case, it becomes visceral during the pandemic. My sense is that they will hold onto to some of that even when conditions normalize.”

Ethan Chernofsky, vp/marketing at traffic tracker Placer.ai, said store visit data indicated that the trend in the pandemic was one toward fewer store visits of longer duration that favored retailers, including supermarkets, that could satisfy a wide range of consumers needs during a single shopping trip. A consequence of that, he said, was supermarket visitors taking in the whole store rather than keeping their noses buried in a shopping list.

As the coronavirus crisis plays out, supermarkets that don’t learn from their experience in the pandemic, are likely to suffer as consumer perceptions and behaviors change.

“Unquestionably, retailers who had built stronger online capabilities pre-pandemic were bigger beneficiaries during this time,” Stern said. “Walmart, Amazon and Instacart are net winners. E-commerce in food was fairly small, let’s say 3% to 4%, pre-pandemic and is over 10% today. A significant amount of that business will remain. Most retailers were ill-equipped to handle the extra demand and all will have to quickly build better capabilities, whether through third party partners, dark stores or dedicated fulfillment centers.”

Kroger’s capabilities have lifted it in the pandemic, Chernofsky said.

“Kroger didn’t have a great 2019 but was among the strongest performers in the pandemic,” he said.

Kroger is an example of a supermarket retailer that has been investing in capabilities they can build on further in the post-pandemic environment.

Kroger has partnered with U.K.-based company, Ocado, to establish robotic warehouses and a technologically enhanced consumer delivery system, a deal that should shortly begin testing with consumers. The Ocado relationship can potentially expand Kroger service capabilities



Aldi has been expanding across the country, while Raley’s (right) has introduced new store concepts.

beyond those defined by stores and the market areas they command. Ocado specializes in urban grocery delivery, a market that Kroger has not yet explored. The company hasn’t yet initiated Ocado operations, so how those will work out is speculative. But Kroger isn’t the first supermarket chain in North America to launch an Ocado-supported delivery business.

In Canada, Nova Scotia-based Sobeys has launched a delivery service dubbed Voila in the Toronto market supported by an Ocado customer fulfillment center located in Vaughn, Ontario. The service is said to deliver just what customers want and even addresses issues that might worry consumers when it comes to drop off services.

The facility, said Sobeys’s spokesperson Jessica Spremo, “was designed specifically for grocery e-commerce, it is fully equipped with AI ‘smart’ technology and robots that help pick and pack groceries with minimal product handling. From there, teammates will safely deliver the order to customers. Voilà by Sobeys works closely with suppliers to ensure you are getting the freshest product. Since launching in June, the delivery service radius has quickly grown beyond Toronto, and is now offered to customers in north, east and west of the city. In 2021, we look forward to offering the service in Montreal.”

Technology, though, isn’t the only way for supermarkets to become more competitive in the marketplace. Supermarkets have emerged as leaders in addressing concerns about health



and wellbeing that are likely to become even more important to consumers shaken by the pandemic. Supermarkets are acting by providing products that address specific and general wellness concerns, including those such as food purity, transparency, sustainability and fair trade. In Truckee, CA, Raley’s just introduced a concept store and testing ground, O-N-E Market, comprehensively designed to address those considerations.

A study conducted by market researcher IRI determined that most consumers expected that the pandemic would change their shopping behavior. In fact, only about a quarter of consumers expressed a belief that they would return to their old spending habits when the coronavirus-prompted economic downturn reverses. In early April, the great majority of consumers surveyed, about 85%, believed the health crisis would last less than six months, although 65% stated that they expected the economic downturn to last longer.

Now, with the health crisis to continue through the fall, and likely longer, consumers who already expected to change their behavior are conditioning themselves to shop differently.

Stern characterized speculation into just how much consumer shopping behavior might change in the pandemic as “the billion dollar question.”

Duration is a critical factor. The longer COVID-19 disrupts consumer behavior, the more likely supermarkets will face a shopper who demands more.

“It all depends on how long we need to live with the virus and how many changes to the shopping behavior are permanent. And this is dependent on when consumers will really feel safe—vaccines, treatments— and return to their old lifestyles. If this continues for a while, new behaviors will likely become ingrained,” Stern said. **HWB**



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# Dine & Entertain

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Corkcicle is teaming with lifestyle brand Vineyard Vines for a licensed beverage assortment.



## Corkcicle Taps Fashion, Lifestyle Trends With New Drinkware

BY LAUREN DeBELLIS  
Senior Editor

ORLANDO, FL— Corkcicle has released a wide array of new summer/fall beverageware and hydration designs that speak to the on-the-go consumer lifestyle.

In an effort to expand its consumer reach, the company also recently launched a licensed hydration assortment with Vineyard Vines, which is inspired by that brand's signature look.

The Westport, CT-based clothing and lifestyle brand is known for its nautical, East Coast style, for which it has many consumer brand loyalists. The licensed line will help further broaden Corkcicle's reach to those consumers interested in capturing that fashion style with its personal hydration products.

The new collection includes a variety of lidded 12-ounce wine tumblers, tumblers and canteens in Vineyard Vines-driven patterns that include Pink Tropical Flower, Mint Julep, Whales Repeat and Blue Camo. The collection

is available for a suggested retail price of \$29.95 to \$39.95.

In addition to the Vineyard Vines licensed line, Corkcicle has also tapped into the canned hard seltzer trend and debuted the Slim Arctican, which is designed to keep cans cold for up to three hours.

The beverage holder's cooling core base can be frozen for three hours. Then, a consumer can twist it on to the holder and drop in the cold beverage. The Arcticans are available in Unicorn Magic, Snowdrift, Rose Quartz, Turquoise and Matte Black colors, and have a suggested retail price of \$19.95 each.

In addition to new drinkware, Corkcicle has added a backpack and sling, both designed for those living an active lifestyle. The Sling is designed to fit a Corkcicle Canteen, plus necessities like cash, credit cards and

keys, the company noted.

The padded Corkcicle branded strap is included for maximum comfort while on a hike, ride, or walk, and can be worn snugly across the chest or over the shoulder. It has a suggested retail price of \$39.95 and is available in turquoise, olive and black.

As it broadens its lifestyle focus, the company has also rolled out the Brantley Backpack. The company said the classic backpack design has been reworked into a cooler bag to keep beverages cold all day long.

The new Brantley backpack holds 24 cans or 16 cans and two wine bottles. It features reinforced synthetic leather handles, vegan leather base, padded adjustable shoulder straps, a zippered accessory pocket, and side pocket bottle sleeves. Also available in turquoise, olive and black, it has a suggested retail price of \$129.95. **HWB**



Corkcicle is tapping into the hard seltzer trend with its Slim Arctican.

## Vietri Bridging Tabletop And E-Commerce Services

HILLSBOROUGH, NC— As retailers continue to navigate the ebb and flow of servicing consumers amid the global pandemic and ramp up their fourth quarter holiday planning, Vietri, importer of tabletop from Italy, recently cast a spotlight on its partnership with Bridge and its Smart Brand e-commerce service.

Vietri, which has been working with Bridge for years, recently launched a new program designed to support independent specialty retailers both online and in-store.

According to the company, it has agreed to offer its authorized retailers a credit of \$150 towards future purchases by opening a free account with the e-commerce community Bridge. In addition to the credit, the company noted that authorized retailers will not be charged for its product syncing service.

"Vietri is fully dedicated to our specialty stores," said Hali Vradelis, national sales director for Vietri. "We've been a partner with Bridge for years now and with how quickly the retail world is changing right now, we knew we needed to place more emphasis on the platform and encourage retailers to consider

Vietri's holiday offerings include the Old St. Nick tabletop assortment.





Bridge as they explore bringing their business online.”

In addition, Vradelis said that given the current retail environment, it is crucial to have an online presence, and Bridge is now making that possible for small specialty stores across the country.

“Many do not have the resources to devote to building and managing a website themselves,” she said. “Bridge offers them a maintenance free platform and registry program which could be unattainable otherwise. The more visibility our retail partners gain online, the better their business will be and, in turn, the better the brands they carry will do.”

Bridge’s Smart Brand, an e-commerce service, is designed to help independent retail stores show and sell 72,000 products from 118 home goods brands including Vietri, which now shares 2,311 products with more than 150 retailers via Bridge’s Smart Products service.

Vradelis also noted that the company’s retail customers are focused on placing their fall and holiday orders and are thinking through their third quarter and fourth quarter strategies.

“Many are bringing in holiday earlier this year and are already starting to sell through some of it,” she said. “We have all of our newest fall and holiday product uploaded on Bridge and ready to go already. We expect a strong holiday season—after all, I think everyone needs some holiday cheer this year.”

Some of the 2020 holiday offerings from Vietri include the new Old St. Nick tableware that features a nostalgic depiction of Babbo Natale, Italy’s Santa Claus. The assortment is made from Terra Bianca earthenware and handpainted in Italy. Included in the range is a handled round and large shallow bowls; jumbo cup; trivet; celebration bucket; cachepot; shallow bowl; a

variety of pasta bowls; and a limited edition salad plate.

In addition, Vietri has also introduced Festa, a holiday-inspired assortment of handblown glass tableware. The design weaves streaks

of gold with red and the assortment includes dinner plates, salad plates and a large round platter. **HWB**

Vietri’s holiday lineup features the Festa glass tableware collection.



# Signature 2020

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## Atlanta Market's Shop The Show Reflects On Home

ATLANTA— In the latest Atlanta Market “Shop The Show” program, 12 designers share their market picks, while exploring five relevant design themes, all from the comfort of their home. As the pandemic led International Market Centers to present the summer 2020 edition of the Atlanta Market in a new way, the influencers of Shop The Show are participating in a comprehensive online and social media program, available for would-be attendees to watch from home.

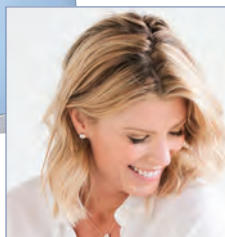
Collectively, the Shop The Show alumni have prepared Q&As, market picks and various webinars, all of

which have been rolling out online. New this summer, the influencers focused on five themes that reflect current and emerging trends surrounding the pandemic, culminating into a presentation that underscores where consumers are now and where they hope to be through these uncertain times.

HOMEWORLD BUSINESS® spoke with Tiffani Thiessen, Landyn Hutchinson, Kelsey Nixon, Monika Hibbs and Annette Joseph about what they are seeking most for their own homes as they shop the Atlanta Market from home. **HWB**



Smeg's electric tea kettle in Pastel Blue.



“Since people are now spending more time in their home, we want our home to be a place where we enjoy spending our time, and that’s why I believe we will be making purchases to ensure our home is our happy place.”

—Landyn Hutchinson



The Contour Bowl from Now Designs in matte black.

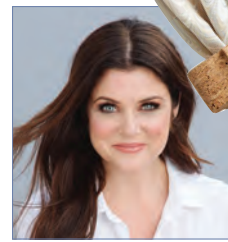
“Strangely, as anxious as people are to get back to normal, I think they will cherish this time for themselves. I believe that they will look on these days fondly. I really do.”

—Annette Joseph



“I’ve really embraced the Scandinavian philosophy of hygge, the idea of working with what you have to create coziness and comfort in your own space. Think oversized blankets, candles burning, and of course, something that smells incredible cooking in the kitchen.”

—Kelsey Nixon



The Quinta Natural Cork napkin ring from Juliska.



“During this time, setting a beautiful table has been more about being easy and quick. So now, my go-to pick for a beautiful table at home is flowers from our garden.”

—Tiffani Thiessen

The Corkcicle Mod stemless tumbler is a vibrant way to freshen things up at home.



“I’m hearing many people updating their kitchens, bedrooms and gardens. Purging is a great place to start. Simply switching out lighting, pillows, throws, even a new rug will give your space the refresh it needs.”

—Monika Hibbs



The Lodge 6-quart enameled cast iron oven in Oyster.



## Las Vegas Market Curates Family-Focused Trends

LAS VEGAS— While International Market Centers has shifted the 2020 summer session of Las Vegas Market to a showroom-only event, due to continued concerns and safety precautions surrounding the coronavirus, the market will once again present its First Look Trends program, curated by trend expert Julie Smith Vincenti. However, this time, it will be presented virtually.

The First Look Trends will have an exclusive multi-media, on-line presence that will include a webinar dedicated to the gift, housewares, textiles and tabletop categories, which will take place from 1 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. on August 5, as well as a companion digital flipbook that highlights the themes and corresponding exhibitor product selections following each webinar.

“The virtual presentation will help set a course for buyers looking to have an efficient experience, and what they can expect to find that is new at market,” said Vincenti. “It includes debuts as well as product that still has some relevance with its bigger moments this summer and moving into the fall as well.”

Trends include: Traditional-ish; Prints, Charming; Floral Trends; Screen Time; Gathered Together; and Take Care.

Vinenti said she took the opportunity to look closer at how families are spending more time together at home now. This includes time spent in the kitchen cooking and baking; planning for how they will entertain and give gifts this holiday season, as well as the increase in screen time with families and those working from home.

“Anytime our focus shifts to family, we are in a unique position in housewares, home furnishings and gift and we are never not relevant as consumers look to make purchases,” she said. **HWB**



### Take Care

ABOVE: The Ankarsrum stand mixer in green speaks to the increase of home baking that is forecasted to continue as the holidays approach.

BELOW: As kids are helping more in the kitchen, Handstand Kitchens' baking tools sets provide parents with a safe, fun solution.



### Traditional-ish

With a modern aesthetic, tall bowls from albert L. (punkt) taps into the Traditional-ish trend as Millennials seek to refine their personal home style.



### Gathered Together

ABOVE: Capresso's EC Select coffee machine is an example of the easy-to-ship gifts that consumers will be looking for this holiday.

LEFT: With holiday entertaining predicted to be highlighted by Zoom family gatherings, Design Imports' Thanksgiving-themed napkin ring holders provide a special attention to detail.



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# Cook & Bake



LEFT: Gibson said it has seen strong sales for its cookware brands, such as its Crock-Pot assortment.

BELOW: Creative Home's Victoria cookware brand forecasts an increase in holiday entertaining.

comfortable with," he said.

While the fourth quarter may come and go, Gaunard predicts that the interest in cookware piqued by the consumer during the COVID-19 pandemic will probably not go by the wayside at year's end. Instead, he sees the industry riding out the wave until early 2021.

"The coronavirus has created a demand that I don't think any company or industry leader could have predicted from the onset of the pandemic. The trends on niche items is telling and I think that housewares will enjoy this growth through next spring," he said.

Nicklin, too, predicts that cookware will continue to see expanded sales growth going into the new year, as pandemic lessons learned in the kitchen will only add fuel to the fire.

"Cooking and sharing food with loved ones has become a joyful experience that will likely continue beyond the pandemic. The new normal consists of more people actually enjoying their time at home and cooking more often, which translates to more demand for cookware and bakeware into the fourth quarter and beyond," he said. **HWB**

## Cookware Weighs Supply Chain, Consumer Demand Into Q4

*continued from page 7*

"These cookware sets have been moving quicker than we had anticipated. Retailers are consistently placing reorders for our cookware sets, frying pans, Dutch ovens and bakeware," Nicklin said, adding that he feels these will continue to trend well into the fourth quarter of the year.

Gaunard acknowledged that while cookware sets are having their time in the sun, the in-demand cookware products that will be bright spots in the fourth quarter will continue to be those products that are typical for that time of year— roasters, stock pots and decorative cookware and bakeware vessels. However, sales of these products are anticipated to be at the same level. While home cooks and hosts are planning to cook for less people, Gaunard said there may be an opportunity for more get togethers, which will allow friends and family to see each other in smaller and more controlled settings.

"Nobody can predict how November

and December will be like right now due to social distancing. I believe holiday entertaining will have less people, but more gatherings over the holidays with close family and friends one feels



Smithey Ironware's Farmhouse oval cast iron roaster.



## Smithey Ironware Crafts Farmhouse Oval Roaster

CHARLESTON, SC— Smithey Ironware is adding to its Farmhouse line of cookware with the introduction of its new Farmhouse Oval Roaster.

Made from hand-forged carbon steel cookware, the roaster was inspired by the American blacksmith technique of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Smithey took that inspiration and updated it to modern times, designing the new oven-to-table roaster in collaboration with renowned Charleston blacksmith Robert Thomas.

This is the second time Smithey teamed up with Thomas— the first was for the 2019 release of the brand's Farmhouse skillet.

According to Smithey, the cookware has a pre-seasoned natural finish that is free of any chemical coatings. It is designed to cook on all types of surfaces, including induction and open flame. And, its carbon steel makeup offers the same style of cooking performance as cast iron, albeit at a lighter weight, the company said.

While functional, the cookware is also designed to be a stylish kitchen accessory. Each one of these hand-forged, limited edition roasters is unique— from the hand-hammered handles to the highly polished interior.

Available in September, the Farmhouse Oval Roaster carries a suggested retail price of \$275. **HWB**



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# Kitchen Electrics



LEFT: Cuckoo is launching a line of air purifiers this fall.  
BELOW: Cuckoo is expanding its appliance line with new water purifiers.

## Cuckoo Expanding Appliance Reach In U.S. Market

*continued from page 7*

“One of the things that sets us apart in a very competitive industry is our quality,” Medlock asserted. “Quality control is the single most important factor for our manufacturing operation, starting with research and development and testing, all the way up to when it goes into the container.”

Like other kitchen appliance suppliers, Cuckoo has seen an increase in demand during the COVID-19 crisis, as quarantining consumers cook more at home. “We have seen a surge in online sales of kitchen appliances,” Med-

lock said. “Sales on kitchen appliances doubled— and in some cases, tripled—from the same time last year. We have done especially well with our six-cup pressure rice cooker.”

One of the challenges in penetrating the U.S. market is product development, according to Lee. “We have to develop more products that are specifically geared to the U.S. consumer,” she said. “We are focusing not just on rice cookers, but on multi-cookers.”

Medlock added, “Versatility is really a big concern— blenders, for example, now have soup and other settings. Our



programmable cookers now have settings for meat, soups, stews, chili, baby food, steaming, slow cook and sauces. We are creating a lot of recipe-based digital content for social media to appeal to American consumers, and also working with our retail customers on so-

cial media marketing, email blasts and other programming.”

Another issue that has come up in the U.S. is the company’s name—which has a very different connotation for Americans brought up with television cartoon characters.

“Coo is the CEO’s last name, so it makes sense in South Korea,” Lee explained. “When we explained to them what it means in America, everyone thought it was very funny. So we are sticking with it. We actually hope to develop some funny social media programming around the name ‘Cuckoo.’” **HWB**

## George Foreman

*continued from page 8*

kitchen so that anyone can feel confident about mastering mealtime.”

Spectrum executives noted earlier this year that they were making investments in the George Foreman brand in 2020, including the launch of new technologies and new marketing programs.

“We are continuing to support the George Foreman brand through investment in marketing to continue building awareness and new innovation that will revolutionize the cooking experience,” Zagorski said. “The new strategic marketing campaign positions the brand and new product line as a solution to help consumers ‘Meal for Real,’ providing the product they need to help get dinner on the table easily.”

While the new Smokeless Grill Series is expected to generate the most buzz at retail, the core George Foreman products continue to sell well. Sales of George Foreman grills have increased sharply during the global pandemic as consumers explore more cooking options and experiment with new recipes at home.

“As consumers have been staying at home more often, our indoor grills have offered a potential solution to quicker and less fuss meals,” Zagorski said. **HWB**



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# Furnish

## Home & Workspace



Bush has added a natural maple finish for its Cabot furniture collection.

## Bestar-Bush Driving Furniture Product Development

BY MIKE DUFF  
Executive Editor

JAMESTOWN, NY— Bestar-Bush is advancing new product initiatives at a time when trade show participation is limited by the pandemic, counting on its e-commerce operations to keep product flowing through to consumers.

The summer Las Vegas Market will rise again as a full blown trade show, in contrast to the showroom-based event now slotted for an August 30 opening and reconfigured to address health considerations, but until then Bestar-Bush will remain busy creating and updating top-selling designs in response to market demand that, right now, is being driven by consumers spending more work and leisure time at home.

The company is pursuing a two-fold strategy of introducing new collections in core and new furniture categories even as it continually updates best-selling lines with fresh finishes and touches applied to ensure merchandise that has demonstrated consumer appeal

remains vital in the marketplace.

Mike Evans, president and CEO of the newly combined Bestar-Bush, pointed out that the company is expanding furniture segments that it has launched over the past several quarters, which include office seating, bathroom, bedroom, storage, upholstery, dining and fireplace, even as it has developed new collections in its core product categories. The company has developed a specific approach to new collection development, which is consistently evident at its Las Vegas Market showroom, introducing prototype product groups for review and feedback. It then revisits the feedback to revise products as appropriate, then rolls out the collection.

Even as it does so, Best-Bush also applies its analysis of sales and trends to offer new looks in established product groups. This summer, Bestar-Bush added new finishes for many Bush Furniture division's most popular collections including Cabot, Salinas, Somerset and Key West. The move is part of

the ongoing Bush strategy of providing consumers with a greater range of color choice as they continually reconsider their homes.

Bush keeps on refining and refreshing the finishes it adds to its collections. For example, one new Somerset finish is simply called white while another is dubbed platinum gray. Cabot gained the new finishes natural maple and ash gray.

Bush is driving production in the new product segments it has entered and Evans said Mark Weppner, evp/marketing, engineering and design, has been making good on the company's promise of producing a wider range of winning furniture, with bedroom, upholstery and storage among those segments getting attention. Then, Bush's ability to get products to customers helps assure consumer satisfaction.

"A reason we're having success is we can drop ship so quickly and damage free," Evans said.

He added that Bush will continue to drive new product development and, as it does so, expand its production capacities, both in North America, where it is planning to add 100 or more employees in Jamestown, NY, and Quebec, while expanding capabilities overseas, where it works with factories in China but also is expanding sourcing in Malaysia and Vietnam. **HWB**

Bush has added a platinum gray finish for its Somerset collection.



Walker Edison's Ophelia book shelf features open metal work sides.



## Walker Edison Assembles New Furniture For Summer

WEST JORDAN, UT— Walker Edison has been a busy company over the past year, with new investor J.W. Childs entering the picture, the opening of a new headquarters and Joana McKenna coming on as president to join executive leadership headed by company founders Brad Bonham, CEO, and Matt Davis, COO.

Products developed for introduction at the Summer Las Vegas Market time-frame include the Ophelia Bookshelf, an enclosed transitional 52-inch-long piece that features open metal work on the sides and a lower and adjustable middle shelf. Its low-profile design allows the enclosed bookshelves to house artwork, plants or other display pieces, Walker Edison indicated. The Ophelia Bookshelf is made of warp-resistant MDF, a high-quality laminate and durable powder-coated metal. Suggested retail price is \$269.

The Vetti 2-Drawer Desk with Hutch is a 44-inch long writing desk with a complementary hutch. An eclectic, mixed material silhouette is part of a stylish look. The two drawers operate on smooth telescoping metal glides to provide closed storage while the hutch incorporates open cubbies where

*continued on page 30*



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## LumiSource Enhances Home Office With Modern Looks

ELK GROVE, IL— The summer Las Vegas Market may be different this year, but ready to assemble furniture vendors such as LumiSource continue to develop and feature products that address trends driving the marketplace.

The company has been known for combining style trends in specific ways, with modern looks enhanced by glam elements among its initiatives in design. It also has been keeping function in mind for consumers who are living in small spaces or trying to develop home offices, for example, in limited dimensions. The desire to keep things compact is often important as stay-at-home families want to do more within their homes and need to apportion space accordingly.

With the COVID-19 pandemic requiring more people to live and learn at home, consumers also confront the challenges of creating work spaces for multiple family members. Still, with functionality kept in mind, the addition of colorful, trendy furniture can enliven a room.

In another sort of functionality, this budgetary, LumiSource also emphasizes affordability.

In the Folia collection, LumiSource is featuring two desks. The Folia Contemporary Desk in Gold Metal and White Wood by LumiSource combines clean lines and bright tones. With a geometric metal frame in a gold finish topped by white wood, the desk is 22-inches long by 45-inches wide by 30-inches high. LumiSource designed the piece to suit not only a dedicated office space but a bedroom or living room as well, providing flexibility in placement. Suggested retail price is \$149.99.

For consumers who want every space in the home to count, the company offers the Folia Contemporary Corner Desk in Gold Metal and White Wood. It also combines clean lines, bright tones and a geometric pattern through the frame, and is appropriate for multiple rooms in a home, but in a top and frame design that takes on more triangular proportions. SRP is \$169.99.

As a complement to either desk, or a stand-alone piece, the Folia Contemporary Bookcase in Gold Metal and White Wood shares design qualities with the desks and provides a storage capacity that can make a work space more functional. SRP is \$150. **HWB**

## Walker Edison

*continued from page 28*

purchasers can store items they want at hand. The Vetti desk also combines MDF, laminate and powder-coated metal in its formulation. SRP is \$269.

The country-inspired Sliding Barn Door Sideboard offers three drawers with telescoping metal glides beside an adjustable shelf. The decorative door, with exposed hardware, allows purchasers to display one interior half or the other. The 56-inch sideboard is also made of MDF, laminate, and powder-coated metal. SRP is \$419.

The 58-inch long Emilene Highboy Fireplace TV Console, in modern transitional design, has two open storage cubbies and two enclosed cabinets with a central and lower interior shelf that can house electronics and other items that purchasers might want to store at hand. The cabinet doors have sophisticated mold details, and unique square handles. With the flip of one switch, the 18-inch fireplace insert generates LED flames and, with the flip of the other switch, generates heat. Durable laminate and powder-coated steel complement the MDF wood construction. SRP is \$499.

The 44-inch long Mateo 2-Drawer Modern Entry Table takes a welcoming stance with mid-century modern two-tone styling. The entry table establishes a retro feel with the angled, bridge legs and box frame. Two drawers on smooth wood runners can secure items such as keys, purses and sunglasses within a solid wood and MDF construction. Developed as an entry table, the Mateo is an accent table with possibilities in other areas of the home, including behind the sofa. SRP \$209.

In addition, the Arlington Mid Century Modern Bar Cabinet stands as a veneer-finished mid-century modern piece. A sturdy solid wood base is the starting point for an all-around luxurious frame, while a two-door cabinet at the bottom and a drop-down door at the top create storage space for bottles and glasses. SRP is \$299. **HWB**

**Walker Edison's Vetti desk features two drawers and a hutch for storage.**



**Twin Star's Wilder TV stand with electric fireplace (top) and Galileo TV stand with electric fireplace (bottom).**



## Twin Star Expands Electric Fireplace Assortment

DELRAY BEACH, FL— As Summer Las Vegas Market season approached, Twin Star Home prepared to feature a range of new electric fireplace furniture to keep it cruising atop marketplace design trends.

For example, the Wilder Bluetooth Compatible TV Stand with ClassicFlame Electric Fireplace is a piece that combines rustic and modern elements. An optional Bluetooth compatible speaker kit allows wireless audio streaming. A canyon lake pine finish and old iron hardware look complement the Spectrafire flame effects, which can be operated with or without the heat for year-round enjoyment.

The Melissa TV Stand with ClassicFlame Electric Fireplace arrives in a fresh, rustic style consistent with modern farmhouse, coastal cottage or related looks, the company noted. The Bluetooth compatible TV stand comes clad in an old white finish on pine veneer and antique black finish hardware add to the ambiance provided by the Spectrafire flame effects the TV stand offers and that consumers can engage with or without the heat.

In a more contemporary look, the Galileo TV Stand with ClassicFlame Electric Fireplace can support TVs up to 65 inches or 90 pounds. Its adds warmth in terms of ambiance and heat that can take the chill off over 1,000 square feet. The buxton brown on birch veneer finish and black glass top play against the Spectrafire flame effects that work with or without heat. **HWB**



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Panorama L-Desk 60"w x 66"d x 30"h (above)  
Panorama 32" Bookcase 32"w x 16"d x 75"h (left)



- Bookcase provides added storage and display space
- Smooth gliding ball bearing drawer slides





# Comfort, Wellness & Beauty

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### Air Purifiers Gain Sales Traction As Pandemic Fuels Awareness

BY DONNA BOYLE SCHWARTZ  
Contributing Editor

NEW YORK— Sales of portable air purifiers have been rising steadily in recent years, elevated by consumer concerns about indoor air quality, increasing awareness of allergies and respiratory ailments, and the overall health and wellness trend. Sales skyrocketed this year due to the ongoing global pandemic and reports from the World Health Organization that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted via airborne droplets.

Suppliers and industry analysts expect air purifier sales will continue to climb, with annual growth rates of more than 12%. According to a report by Allied Market Research, “The global portable air purifier market garnered \$8.27 billion in 2019, and is estimated to reach \$13.75 billion by 2027.”

Manufacturers are responding with a variety of air purifiers, including whole home standalone units, room-size models and increasingly small personal purifiers that users can take with them.

“In June, LG launched our newest air purifier, LG PuriCare Mini, that can remove 99% ultra-fine dust and reduces allergens and irritants,” said Dan Hayes, senior product leader of emerging prod-

ucts, LG Electronics. “At just 1.2 pounds, it’s the lightest air purifier we’ve made, and the first portable.”

“The increased desire to control one’s immediate indoor environment has significantly driven a heightened sense of awareness, consideration, and conversion in air purification,” Hayes noted. “With this new interest in air purification, LG is taking the opportunity to educate about the category, environmental monitoring, and what the best solutions are. We are expecting growth in the purification categories for whole rooms, desktop purifiers, personal and portable, as well as filter replacements.”

Kristen Lawson, vp/marketing and e-commerce, GreenTech Environmental, said, “While we’ve always been passionate about helping people breathe naturally-cleaned air, COVID-19 has made everyone more aware of various pathogens and viruses in the air and people are more cognizant of the fact that they can get really sick from the air. We recently launched our pureAir Solo, a wearable air purifier that creates a safe personal breathing zone by repelling particles from your breathing space. Already, we’ve seen this unit embraced by medical professionals in hospitals during the pandemic, and we expect it to be important for teachers and students in schools.”

Source Pro Direct, the supplier of Westinghouse branded air purifiers, unveiled its portable NCCO 1804 air purifier earlier this year, building on the technology used for its room-size units.

“There was a growing consumer interest in cleaner air before the pandemic,” said Andrew Bandremer, evp/Source Pro Direct. “Consumers are looking for products to be used in multiple rooms and portable units that work in cars that can be taken with you for hotel stays and for work. We will be offering a new product for fourth



LEFT: LG leverages the portable trend with its new mini air cleaner.

BELOW LEFT: Source Pro Direct is growing its Westinghouse air purifier lineup.

quarter and working on a new design with WiFi and air quality monitors that we hope to be in stock by year end.”

Consumer education remains a critical factor. “In the past, we had to ex-

plain to people about the importance of purifying and disinfecting the air in indoor spaces like their offices or homes,” said Aviad Shnaiderman, co-founder and CEO of Aura Air. “Today, it is a primary consumer product. The awareness for air quality has increased significantly. From our point of view, there is a jump of hundreds of percent in product orders.”

“We will soon be launching Aura Mini, a portable private air freshener that can be put on tables in restaurants, inside planes or trains, or even at meetings outside the office,” Shnaiderman added. “At the same time, we are working on an outdoor measurement unit that will detect, monitor and analyze the outdoor air quality.”

Katie Sotor, Crane vp/marketing and sales, said, “In the past, air purifiers were difficult to sell because there was a lot of confusion on what they actually did. Due to COVID-19 and the concern for healthy indoor air we have definitely seen a rise in demand, especially as schools and businesses reopen.”

Suppliers are developing multiple air purification technologies. Dyson, for example, also uses combination technologies.

“The Pure Humidify+Cool is Dyson’s first three-in-one purifying humidifying fan that is engineered to automatically purify and hygienically humidify for a healthier environment,” said a company spokesperson. **HWB**

### Clarisonic

*continued from page 8*

for years, and they were not there this year,” he recalled.

Nichols pointed to intense overseas competition in the facial and beauty devices business as a likely culprit in Clarisonic’s demise. “Unfortunately, Chinese companies and companies from other countries have been allowed to set up accounts online and sell directly to U.S. consumers, sidestepping any tariffs or industry standards,” he said.

Singh said the brand’s demise could have a chilling effect. “Clarisonic’s exit will definitely have a negative impact,” she said. “The brand was synonymous with their cleansing brushes and it was still the go-to brand for new consumers. Its exit will leave a wide space.”

Still, brand recognition might make Clarisonic desirable to a potential buyer. “It is very possible that someone could purchase Clarisonic and resurrect the brand. They invested heavily in intellectual property and that could be very valuable,” Nichols speculated.

“This will definitely open up shelf space for other brands, in stores that were carrying Clarisonic,” Nichols said. “There is also a lot of opportunity with retailers who were not carrying Clarisonic, retailers who are looking for new product areas and high-tech products for a wide range of skin and hair care solutions. This is where Pretika has an amazing opportunity, with our connected skin care technology, our unique hair care technology, and other products that we are developing to tap into the growing consumer interest in personal care.”

Amir Abileah, vp/EpiladyUSA, added, “Clarisonic will leave a gaping hole. This hole will eventually be filled by other major brands, but in the meantime, smaller and swifter companies have the advantage of speed to market. The race is on, and we are there with a few developments and new products arriving this year and next. Patented products of high quality are sure bets. We are investing in that.” **HWB**





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