

## THE MARKETS | Market Report

# Busy Markets Bode Well for the Year

## ATLANTA

It may have been snowing in Atlanta and cars piled up on icy Georgia highways, but at the Atlanta International Gift & Home Furnishings Market, it was raining buyers who piled onto escalators and into showrooms. AmericasMart reported the market was a “non-stop run of robust buying ... [which] affirms the confidence of retailers and designers ... and signals the



▲ Pillows by Elaine Smith

promise and potential of 2010 consumer demand for new value and selection.” With vendors reporting record days, 2010 couldn’t have gotten off to a better start for the gift industry.

AmericasMart president and COO, Jeff Portman remarked to *Gifts & Decorative Accessories*: “The 2010 edition of AmericasMart’s Home, Gift and Rug shows was a great example of how important and transformational it is to work with exhibitors to promote and aggressively pursue buyers from all over the United States and all over the world. We are flattered and honored that so many retailers chose AmericasMart to spend their open-to-buy.”

Turquoise is the hot color. Pantone has been touting its rise and many vendors seemed to have gotten the word. Among those showcasing this bright hue for Spring 2010 are Vera Bradley, Elaine Smith, Peking Handicraft, Midwest-CBK, Murval, Urban Trends Collection, Andrea by Sadek and Anna Griffin.

## DALLAS

The good mood continued on at the Dallas Total Home & Gift Market. Buyers were buying and vendors were happy. First time exhibitor Doni Langlois of Artful Life said she was having a really good first show, as did Phyllis Palmer of Transformations by Phyllis. It seems that 2010 is getting off to a great start. Many told *Gifts & Decorative Accessories* that they were ready to get out of the doom and gloom attitude of 2009 and move on to brighter days. “Market is fabulous. Everyone is commenting that business is good and that December was great,” said Peggy Nagel showroom manager, 18 Karat. ...



▲ Don McEvoy with his daughter Laura

There was plenty of new to see in Dallas this winter. Children’s lines included Loralin Design, Mogo, Decaf Plush and Eebies. Global Views showcased orange front and center. And Imax highlighted four different looks, simplifying and bringing them together in a comprehensive way.

On Saturday, industry insiders gathered in the Grand Pavilion at the Trade Mart for the 21st Annual ARTS Awards. Bill Winsor, DMC president and CEO, and Cindy Morris, DMC COO, gave the opening remarks. Don McEvoy, founder of the Don McEvoy and Associates showroom, was honored with the Academy of Achievement Award. His children, John and Laura, presented him with the award.

## LOS ANGELES

The California Gift Show at the LA Mart and the Los Angeles Convention Center is showing signs of revitalization and growth, both in the number of buyers and exhibitors. In spite of the continuing economic difficulties in California, Mark Furlet, VP/general manager for the LA Mart, reported a very positive sign — the parking lots at the LA Mart were filled to capacity on Friday and mart management had to contract for additional parking to accommodate the influx of buyers coming to spend their open-to-buy in the showrooms and with the temporary exhibitors.

There was a lot of new to see too, and that helped to re-energize the buyers,



whose complaints in '09 were that there was nothing new to get excited about. Interactive happenings also energized the market and got buyers involved. The Shop Small Stores campaign built additional momentum and awareness.

MMPI’s plan to breathe new life into the temporary section at the LA Convention Center was immediately evident upon entering the exhibit hall. And the new Beckman’s West show section also added another fresh element and about 100 small artisan exhibitors.