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May 7th, 2011

California Gift Show® Strengthens Its Brand Development



Press Release

LOS ANGELES, CA – MMPI announces exciting new additions to the California Gift Show (CGS) sales and marketing teams, fueling a fresh perspective and enhanced experience for the West Coast’s largest Gift & Home Market.

Refining the CGS identity, messaging and overall point of differentiation, Jeff Sampson, Vice President of Marketing for MMPI’s L.A. Mart® Design Center, has been tapped to steward the California Gift Show brand, expanding his marketing over-site for MMPI’s L.A. Mart® West Coast operation.

“We owe much of the transformation of the L.A. Mart Design Center over the past ten years to Jeff Sampson’s efforts,” said Mark Furlet, vice president and general manager, L.A. Mart & L.A. Mart Design Center. “Under Jeff’s watch, some of our industry’s best initiatives have been launched. Leveraging his successes as a design and lifestyle marketer, we are confident he will bring to CGS a bright, modern point of view in his newly expanded marketing role.”

A 20-plus year marketing professional specializing in the design, media, fashion and non-profit sectors, Sampson’s progressive skill-set is immediately transferrable to the Gift industry as he works to elevate the energy, style and prominence of the umbrella brand. Already well-respected in the Gift industry, Sampson produced L.A. Mart’s annual Gift for Life benefit from 2003-2007 raising nearly \$200,000 for The Foundation for AIDS Research (amfAR). His honors include the Bert Tonken Gift of Giving award

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presented by Gift for Life and amfAR (January 2007) and the Wallace O. Ollman award presented by MMPI President Christopher G. Kennedy (December 2006).

"Beginning with our July 2011 market, our goal is to define the California Gift Show as a celebration of the creativity and innovation that places Los Angeles at the forefront of international product trends," said Jeff Sampson, vice president marketing California Gift Show/L.A. Mart Design Center/L.A. Mart. "As consumers consistently look to Hollywood and California for inspiration on fashion, home, entertaining and lifestyle, our efforts will focus on harnessing the inherent equity of the state's iconic brand value and its next generation of product manufacturers, thereby creating a relevant, inspired buying experience for the modern retailer."

Sampson plans to give buyers a taste of L.A. with an experiential Market that is California-centric. Vitality, diversity and a unique L.A. attitude underscore new-to-market happenings, including a refreshed brand campaign, curated installations, engaging programming, lifestyle destinations featuring informative and entertaining product/trend demonstrations, live entertainment and local culinary inspirations.

Joining Sampson to lead the CGS marketing and sales effort are a team of respected MMPI professionals who bring their unique brand of expertise to new and expanded roles:

Sara Dahlstrom, managing director of sales, California Gift Show and The Chicago Market

Dahlstrom joins The California Gift Show team with a proven track record in sales and over 12 years of gift industry experience. Most recently, she has led The Chicago Market to four straight sell-out shows; increasing the overall number of exhibitors and square footage sold. Previously, Dahlstrom spent 8 years with The Lang Companies. During her tenure at Lang, she excelled at every aspect of sales, manufacturing and brand management.

Trisha Schultz, director of business development

Schultz joins the California Gift Show in the newly created role of Director of Business Development, charged with advancing retailer relationships, as well as programs, events and opportunities enhancing the buyer, showroom and exhibitor dynamic during and between Markets. From July 2008 to May 2011, Schultz was the Director of Marketing, Chicago Gift Show. Previously she served as Director of Marketing, Market Square from December 2006 to July 2008, and as Buyer Relations Manager from June to November 2006. Her eight years of marketing and retail/wholesale experience, include overseeing key buyer accounts at the Merchandise Mart in Chicago that include retailers such as Crate & Barrel, La-z-Boy, Meijer's, Quality Drug.



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Upcoming Events

SPREE

April 12, 2011
Las Vegas, NV

The National Stationery Show

May 15, 2011
New York, NY

Mississippi Market Wholesale Show

June 02, 2011
Jackson, MS

ACRE Las Vegas

June 03, 2011
Las Vegas, NV

Lefty Tsironis, marketing manager

With more than four years of service as marketing manager for L.A. Mart Design Center, Tsironis brings an intense level of creativity and energy to his expanded role serving the California Gift Show. Tsironis was instrumental in the launch of the California-centric curated product gallery SOURCELA in 2010, and the avant-garde showcase dreamSCAPE in 2009, both developed in partnership with Los Angeles magazine. Tsironis delivered Bravo's Top Design reality series to LAMDC that generated extensive national television exposure for the building in 2008. He also assumed a significant role in co-producing the Gift for Life fundraiser for AmFAR in 2007, securing high-end sponsors including Gucci, Chateau Marmont and The Standard Hotel among others. Prior to joining the LAMDC, Tsironis served at M2B World, Inc. and at The Rose Group Public Relations.

Nicole Rubino, marketing manager

Rubino joined L.A. Mart in 2007 managing marketing, production and event duties for day-to-day, monthly and four quarterly Gift Markets. She established and strengthened relationships with showrooms, exhibitors, manufacturers, industry groups, and local businesses, including California Pizza Kitchen, Border Grill/Ciudad and Patina Restaurant Group, by developing partnership and sponsorship opportunities. Rubino assists with annual marketing plans and overall strategies, and is a key player in the overall production of California Gift Show.

ABOUT L.A. MART and CALIFORNIA GIFT SHOW

L.A. Mart® is a registered trademark of MMPI. The California Gift Show® is a registered trademark of MMPI. Beckman's Handcrafted Gift Show is a registered trademark of MMPI. L.A. Mart is home to nearly 200 permanent year-round, residential, decorative accessory and gift showrooms serving the retail and interior design industries. The California Gift Show Temporaries feature over 800 temporary exhibitors of lifestyle merchandise, home décor and furnishings, in the newly enhanced and expanded Temporaries at L.A. Mart and Los Angeles Convention Center making the California Gift Show the preeminent market for gift and home furnishings products on the West Coast. L.A. Mart is located at 1933 South Broadway, Los Angeles, CA 90007. For more information call 213-763-5800 or visit www.californiagiftshow.com or www.lamart.com.

MMPI is a trade show and property management firm, specializing in managing buildings devoted to wholesale showrooms and commercial office space. MMPI produces more than 300 trade shows, market events and conferences each year.

MMPI manages The Merchandise Mart and 350 W. Mart Center in Chicago; Market Square, the Suites at Market Square, Hamilton Market, Plaza Suites, Furniture Plaza and the National Furniture Mart in High Point, N.C.; the Architects & Designers Building and 7 W New York in New York; the Boston Design Center in Boston; the L.A. Mart in Los Angeles; and the Washington Design Center and Federal Center Southwest in Washington D.C.

Vornado Realty Trust, owner of MMPI, based in New York City, is a fully integrated real estate investment trust. Vornado's common shares are listed on the New York Stock Exchange and are traded under the symbol VNO.

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- [L.A. Mart Design Center Offers CA Designers Exceptional Resources During the California Gift Show](#)
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