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News BRIEFS

RETAIL SALES for September decreased 0.7% as economic pressure continued to hinder consumer spending, the National Retail Federation reported. The figures from NRF exclude automobiles, gas stations and restaurants. "With economic concerns weighing down consumers, retailers are facing incredible challenges heading into the fourth quarter," said NRF Chief Economist Rosalind Wells. "Retailers are cutting operating costs by whittling back inventory levels and trimming labor costs, but it is nearly impossible for companies to fully counteract a complete pullback in consumer spending."

LnT's Closing Could Signal New Era In Retail



News ANALYSIS

BY BILL MCLOUGHLIN
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

CLIFTON, NJ— The planned liquidation of Linens 'n Things, the housewares industry's first major retail victim of the current economic downturn, may signal a change in the historic retail channel paradigm that has enabled most channels to support multiple key players.

Historically, consolidation of retail channels— office superstores, electronic and home goods category killers and warehouse clubs to

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Fall Vegas Dates Close Gap With High Point

BY GREG SLETER
SENIOR MANAGING EDITOR

LAS VEGAS— The shift of the Las Vegas Market's fall dates from summer to early fall beginning in 2009 puts the west-coast market's timing in close proximity to the fall High Point Market and could force retailers and suppliers to choose attending one market over another.

Persistent rumors that World Market Center officials were considering a shift in its Market

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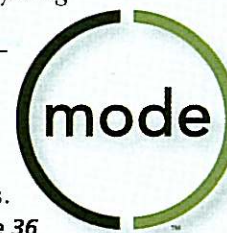
Kahn Group Launches Verde Home Debuts Recycling Centers Under Mode Brand

BY GREG SLETER
SENIOR MANAGING EDITOR

NEWTON, MA— Verde Home Products, a new company with deep roots in the housewares industry, has entered the market with a trio of items under its Mode brand designed to help consumers simplify recycling and trash removal in their homes.

Verde Home Products is the latest venture of The Kahn Group, a private-equity investment and startup platform launched in early 2007 by former Holmes Group chief executive Jerry Kahn and his sons, Larry and Kris.

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Verde Home Debuts Mode Recycling Centers

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Larry Kahn is president of Verde Home Products, and Kris is president of the Fulham Group, which debuted this year with a collection of upscale Cuisinart-licensed grilling tools and accessories.

The initial products in Verde's Mode collection are designed to allow retailers to offer consumers recycling/trash receptacles in a good/better/best assortment. The new items include the Premium Recycling Center, Deluxe Recycling Center and Premium Kitchen Bin.

"Today's typical suburban consumers are focused on being more eco-friendly," Larry Kahn told HOMEWORLD BUSINESS®. "Our new products are designed to help them simplify how they recycle in their homes."

Kahn said response from high-end retailers to the products has been "strong," and he noted that upscale retailers including Bloomingdale's, Williams-Sonoma catalog and Frontgate are planning to debut the items soon. He also noted that other specialty chains are looking to test the items.

Kahn said Verde is also ramping up its brand-building efforts for Mode. While packaging and point-of-sale material will tell the company's story at retail, Verde is embarking on an aggressive PR campaign and also considering Internet and print advertising in the coming year.

Prior to the development of the two new recycling centers, Verde did extensive consumer research to get a clear picture of consumer challenges when recycling at home.

They found that about 75% of consumers surveyed currently recycle. Of those, 57% said separating recyclables was a problem and 46% said they don't recycle more be-

cause of space constraints and unsightly storage. Also, 71% said they transport recyclables from inside to outside the house several times a week, with 19% reporting they complete the task daily.

Kahn noted that feedback from consumers led the company to develop the multiple features built into the Mode recycling cen-

Verde's Mode Premium Recycling Center (left).



"Today's typical suburban consumers are focused on being more eco-friendly."

—Larry Kahn
Verde Home Products



ters. The Premium model, which carries a \$299.99 suggested retail price, includes a manual compaction system that crushes most sizes of plastic bottles and cans; an all-in-one center allowing for the separation of materials such as bottles, cans, and paper; and 8-gallon and 5-gallon bins that nest for easy transport to outside recycling bins.

In addition, the Premium model also includes the Eco-Track system that allows consumer to track how much they recycle, and a Recycling Day Reminder that illuminates to remind consumers about pick-up day.

While the Premium item is the company's top-of-the-line mode, the Deluxe Recycling Center also includes multiple features and carries a suggested retail of \$199.99. It fea-

tures a 10-gallon bin and a 5-gallon bin for sorting that nest for easy transport, a 2-gallon bin for storage of smaller recyclables and the Recycling Day Reminder.

"Despite the challenges of recycling, many people still work around these problems," said Kahn. "We feel our recycling centers address the issue of cluttered countertops in the kitchen and ease the process of sorting and removal.

The Premium Kitchen Bin features an Easy-Release Bin System that allow the inner bin to expand for easier removal of full trash bin liners, 10-gallon capacity, bag locking system, and Trash Day Reminder. Suggested retail price is \$179.99 for the stainless unit and \$149.99 for the high-gloss black finish.

All three products are finished in black or silver to match popular kitchen styles and the two recycling centers are sold with recyclable bin liners that are made from #4 LDPE plastic. Verde is also offering retailers packs of these bin liners as an add-on sales opportunity.

Noting plans to widen Verde's housewares product portfolio, Kahn stressed the strong financial backing of the Kahn Group and the housewares sales, marketing and manufacturing experience of the Verde team in developing innovative products and comprehensive programs. Verde's management includes vp/sales Paul McGladrigan, formerly with Keurig; director/marketing Laura Marseglia, formerly with Rowenta; and engineering chief Rich McDuffy, formerly with Holmes.

What's In Stores

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\$5; 41-quart underbed tote for \$7; 6-quart tote, eight for \$10; 18-gallon tote for \$5; 10-gallon tote for \$4; 30-gallon tote for \$10; and 45-gallon wheeled tote for \$15. **Sterilite** storage carts on sale included a three-drawer storage cart for \$14, five-drawer cart for \$17 and four-drawer wide cart for \$19. Storage drawers from Sterilite included a 20-quart drawer for \$10, 16-quart drawer for \$8 and 45-quart drawer for \$12.

Week of October 5

Fred Meyer promoted its home organization assortment this week as "solutions for your space and your wallet." **Sterilite** modular storage on sale included a 25-quart shelf tote for \$6.99, 50-quart shelf tote for \$8.99, five-shelf shelving unit for \$44.99 and four-drawer unit for \$59.99.

Also seen was a **Sterilite** 66-quart latch box for \$8.99, **Suncast** Hopper bin for \$9.99 and **HyLoft** ceiling-mounted shelf for \$49.99. **Rubbermaid** items on sale included an 18-gallon tote for \$5.99, 12-quart tote for \$3.99, 50-quart tote for \$6.99 and 95-quart tote for \$12.99. **Pamida** this week featured the **Sterilite** four-drawer storage unit for \$49.99 and **Sterilite** four-shelf/two-door cabinet for \$69.99, "the lowest prices of the season." Other **Sterilite** items on sale included a 15-quart latch-top tote for \$4.99, 35-quart latch-top tote for \$6.99, 66-quart latch-top tote for \$7.99 and 88-quart tote with wheels for \$12.99. Also seen were two items from **Homz**: a three-drawer rolling cart for \$17.99 and four-drawer rolling cart for \$24.99. **Target** this week features the **itsu** modular storage line. Seen was a single wood laminate cube for \$19.99, double cube with door or two-drawer cube for \$34.99 and large fabric bin for \$8.99. Also seen was a 66-quart storage box from **Rubbermaid** for \$7.99 and five-pack **Huggable Hangers** for \$3.99.



Fred Meyer offered an array of home organization items.



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