

Tabletop Decor

FOCUS ON FUNCTION AND ORIGINALITY

The decorative accessories category is the largest in the home accents universe at 35%, with an estimated \$21.4 billion in sales last year. This catch-all category includes myriad products from vases and candleholders to sculpture and collectibles, and its scope makes it the most difficult home accents category to measure. But vendors of tabletop products such as serveware, dinnerware, vases, candleholders and decorative boxes say that segment of the category remains consistently reliable, and business is strong overall in 2015 as home entertaining thrives and consumers demand décor that is uniquely their own.

The way we operate is we work through colour stories and/or trends, so we try to create lifestyles, says a manufacturer and adds that every lifestyle is going to have a mixture of tabletop, accent furniture, wall décor and lighting. Every major trend they introduce has tabletop in it and usually ends up being about 30% to 40% of that lifestyle. It has been strong and there is no reason why that shouldn't continue. Another vendor sees continued growth in its decorative and functional tabletop products this year.

A retailer says, "for us, top of the table is really about decorative accessories, about dinnerware, about serving pieces, and it's very hard to categorize it as a percentage of the company."

In many homes, kitchens are extensions of homes, and people want to integrate the décor element beyond classic tabletop pieces. Customers are gravitating toward more functional pieces, such as tabletop trays or covered boxes. There is also a demand for fewer, larger-scale accessories over



many smaller items. The old days of cluttered décor are pretty much gone. For Millennials, less is better, so that statement piece to really accent the room is where many vendors continue to trend.

Some see a lot of metallics, really strong with gold—everybody's been snapping up everything that's gold, silver, shiny. People are really looking for something that's not flashy but a bit opulent. They are feeling more confident with the economy, and they want big pieces. There is also a trend toward warmer metallics in particular, such as gold and brass. Copper has also made a strong debut in accessories and its reddish-orange colour mixes well with contemporary styles. Many love an understated, hammered stainless steel and its properties continue to drive businesses that are into clean, white metal. In response to the colour trend, collections incorporate the use of coloured metal with copper, brass or black nickel plating over stainless steel. Besides, there is a noticeable resurgence in colour and pattern in tabletop design. In fact, colour seems to be coming back; lovely bright greens and patterns that were popular in the '60s and '70s are reappearing. At the international markets, coppers had a very strong presence. One is seeing a lot of gold and silver leaf in ceramics and glassware, and the organic look using natural materials is still a very hot trend in the market.

Many vendors cite independent brick-and-mortar specialty retailers as a significant portion of their tabletop business. Some also note growth in the interior design channel, e-commerce and even full-line furniture stores that are using tabletop accessories to heighten their displays and achieve add-on sales. High-end specialty stores are good for business for some where the bridal market remains a significant sales driver. That thirst for originality presents challenges for vendors as they strive to differentiate themselves within a broad category. ■

Source: *Home Accents Today*

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