

Bedding ensembles top gainer in home textiles

In the home textiles space, bedding ensembles experienced the highest year-over-year sales growth last year, according to the NPD Group. Sales of bedding ensembles climbed 15% in 2015, based on the global information company's consumer research. Sheets/pillowcases and bath accessories tied for second place with 5% growth each.

The consumer segments that drove the most growth in both soft and hard home last year are evolving in their habits and preferences. Total home textiles sales grew 2% last year, according to NPD. Consumers are concentrating more on fulfilling fundamental needs with their home goods purchases, shifting away from the aspirational trend of recent years. They're also less compelled by newness and innovation.

The two largest generations—millennials and baby boomers—are entering new life stages, and the focus they both have on the basics of their new lifestyles is having a tangible effect on the home industry.

Consumers 55 and up accounted for 66% of the dollar gains in home textiles, while those between the ages of 25 and 34 were responsible for 61% of small appliance dollar sales gains in 2015. Millennials, as a group, have a higher level of awareness into their personal well-being than recent generations, and Boomers are becoming more mindful as they age. ■

Source: NPD



Pantone Reveals 2016/2017 Color Trends

Forecast with Real and Unreal

Pantone's 'Reveal'—colour trends for autumn/winter 2016/2017 for women's and men's fashion, activewear, cosmetics and lifestyle, as well as industrial and graphic design display a contrast between colour that is "real" and "unreal," absent and present and a mixology of what is in between," according to Pantone. The Pantone View Colour Planner contains eight trend palettes:

Black: newly appreciated as a prestige colour, black is the pulsating force behind the forecast and the perfect canvas on which other colours are revealed.



White: appearing in cool and warm guises, white is important because of its properties as opposed to its actual colour.

Grays: essential to the palette, grays stretch across a variety of hues, warm and natural, muted and hard.

Green: this season, greens take two directions: the first is a more yellowish and olive-oil-led direction while the second is cooler, sometimes glassy, but also more mineral, cool and Nordic.

Yellow: reminding us of light and radiance, yellows are important this season because of their warming presence and their effects on surface and texture.

Orange: now suffused with spicy hues, shades in the orange family display influences of caramel, cinnamon and saffron.

Purple: penetrating all levels of design, purples, in a variety of berry colours are now a lifestyle as opposed to a fashion shade and is critical to this season's palette.

Blue: becoming more sophisticated, blues move away from the more classic indigo shades to those that are infused with gray or green.

Brown—from nutmeg and tan to the red-infused winey red browns, the browns continue to be very important across all materials and surfaces.

Red: a safe option for those looking to add bright color, red is a well-received and well-understood pop colour that is being combined in new ways.

Pastels: pastel shades leap from nuanced neutrals to stronger and more assertive colour.

Metallics: metallics remain important; however this season they are as pragmatic as they are decorative, combining with light or texture to enhance, bring movement and textural dimension.

"We find this idea of absence and presence, obscuring and revealing, very relevant not only when it comes to colour, but also in the way we live our everyday lives," said Laurie Pressman, vice president, Pantone Color Institute. "On one hand, there is this wish to return to the simple, honest and unassuming, and on the flip side, a continuing presence of maximalist and a deep desire to stand out and be seen." ■ Source: *Gifts & Decoratives*

The mid-tier customer is well

JCPenney's Q4 performance beats expectations

JCPenney's chief executive made a point of addressing the oft-discussed disappearance of the mid-tier consumer - while touting the company's recent success in winning back more of her business. "Contrary to some of the negative macro data that's been discussed in the marketplace, our data shows that this mid-tier consumer has continued growth possibilities in 2016," CEO, Marvin Ellison told analysts during a Q4 conference call.



JCPenney's business with the mid-tier shopper - whose annual household income Ellison pegged around \$60,000 - climbed 560 basis points in 2015. "We believe we'll see more growth in 2016. It gives up confidence in the health of the mid-tier consumer." That customer also helped JCPenney beat top-line and bottom-line expectations during the fourth quarter. Net loss for the quarter ended Jan. 30 widened to \$131 million from \$35 million due to increased pension expenses. Sales rose 2.6% to \$4 billion, with comp up 4.1%. Top performing departments included home, Sephora shops, footwear and handbags.

JCPenney even drove positive comps in its apparel departments. Most department stores took big hits in apparel during the quarter as unseasonably warm weather in parts of the country reduced demand for winter goods. For the full fiscal year, net loss narrowed to \$513 million from \$717 million. Sales increased 3% to \$12.6 billion, with comp up 4.5%. ■ *Source: Home Textiles Today*

Home Categories

Consumers Get 'Back to Basics'

The home-related categories and consumer segments that drove the most growth in 2015 point to an evolution of more lifestyle-based purchase decisions, and show less emphasis on newness and innovation, according to NPD Group.

"The two largest generations are entering new life stages, and the focus they both have on the basics of their new lifestyles is having a tangible effect on the home industry," said Ms. Lora Morsovillo, President, NPD's home division. The millennials are starting homes of their own, and boomers are creating a new type of home for themselves as they become empty-nesters and enter retirement.

Consumers between the ages of 25 and 34, members of the millennial generation, contributed 61 percent of small appliance dollar sales gains in 2015. Older generations, specifically consumers 55 and up, accounted for 61 percent of the dollar gains in non-electric housewares categories last year, and 66 percent of the home textiles growth.

Sales of small appliances, non-electric housewares and home textiles each grew 2 percent in 2015, compared to 2014, reaching a combined total of \$50.9 billion. Within each of these industries, the categories that contributed the most dollar growth demonstrated a consumer emphasis on fundamental needs, rather than the aspirational trend of recent years, according to NPD.



When it comes to the essentials, personal health and wellness are high on the list and they apply to each of the home categories that drove the most growth in 2015, from cooking and cleaning to sleeping and hydrating on-the-go. Millennials as a group have a higher level of awareness into their personal well-being than recent generations, and Boomers are becoming more mindful as they age. At this moment, in order to appeal to these key consumer segments marketers of home-related products need to keep the basics in mind. ■ *Source: NPD*

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