

What's the retail climate for fashion accessories and children's products? What's hot and what's not? We went straight to the experts to find out.



CHIC & CHEAP

At **Bejeweled Accessories** in Winnipeg customers are hot for reasonably priced accessories. In light of the recession, "There is pressure on women to be more thrifty and frugal with their spending," says Tammy Zechoval, store owner.

Since opening in 2004, Tammy has seen an increase in demand for accessories. "They've become such a large part of fashion. Designers are now coming out with jewellery, handbags, clutches and belts to complement their collections. Scarves are the rage right now."

Costume jewellery is also popular at her store.

"Turquoise, apple green, coral and yellow appear to be strong colour trends for the spring and summer."

AFFORDABLE WEARABLES

The recession isn't hurting business at **Eye2i**, a supplier of fashion eyewear and accessories. In fact, it's partly responsible for the company's sales growth.

"Our attractive, high-quality products retail from \$15 to \$30," says director Philip Sethi. "Well-educated customers realize that even if the economy is gloomy, they can still look good with affordable eyewear."

WWW.EYE2I.CA

TRAVEL COMPANIONS

With the successful launch of their Rosette textile collection in 2003, **Pottery Lane Imports'** foray into the fashion accessories business was cemented, prompting the creation of ladies jackets and scarves.

"The collection was so hot, our customers requested more apparel and accessories, so we designed our first shoe collection, which eventually led to casual bags, evening bags and an extensive line of jewellery," says Josee Tom, company president.

"As of today, we are up 45.8 per cent in year-to-date sales. We're expecting to be up 75 per cent by the end of December.

"In this economic environment, it's difficult for most businesses. But if you make goals and work towards them, you can find some interesting solutions to stimulate the market."

Current top sellers at Pottery Lane include carry-on bags, handbags, wallets, laptop bags, scarves and jewellery.

Josee's hot colour picks? Turquoise, tomato red, coral and yellow.

"Violet will also be present, but won't take centre stage this season."

WWW.POTTERYLANEIMPORTS.COM

BOUTIQUE COLLECTIONS

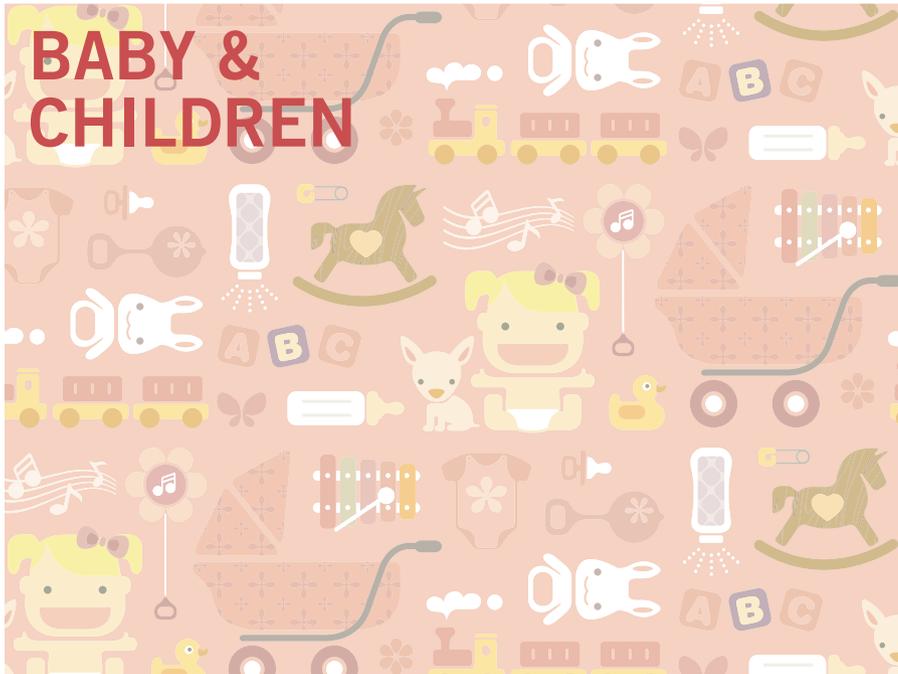
Through the course of running **Venduto Manufacturers' Representatives** for the past seven years, Laura Manderson and Heather Tyre have built a knowledge base of what people are looking for in jewellery. They represent a variety of manufacturers and designers and launched their own jewellery line last year. Called Mar&Tini, the collection, was originally sourced in India.

"But what people want changes quickly," says Laura. "With less demand for low-cost imported jewellery, we're morphing Mar&Tini into an 'artisan collective' of handmade jewellery."

Among the jewellery lines the company distributes, top sellers include White Lotus, contemporary silver jewellery handmade in Canada, and Far Fetched, a fairtrade line of inspirational jewellery from California.

"Purse organizers are a hot item overall," adds Laura. "The ones we carry by Cherry Brand are fantastic."

WWW.VENDUTO.CA



BABY & CHILDREN

WHOLESDOME INGREDIENTS

In the children's products category, eco-friendly toys and products are the driving force behind the success of many companies, including **Stortz & Associates**.

"Our most popular items are Green Toys made in the USA from recycled milk jugs and Sprig Toys made in North America and Europe from recycled plastic and sawdust," says Linda Stortz, vice-president of sales.

"There's no doubt this market has been affected by the education of consumers, mainly parents, regarding the products they select for their children and the risks and repercussions of them. They're no longer buying the cheapest toys, but instead are more concerned about safety issues, healthy choices and the carbon footprint of the items. They're choosing to invest in fewer toys of higher quality and better values, rather than buy items that end up in landfill sites. Our year-to-date sales are up in most categories due to the overwhelming demand for eco-friendly products."

WWW.STORTZ.CA

MADE-BY-MOMS

In 2005, Calgary mom and entrepreneur Rea Cymbol founded the **Goo-Goo Baby** line of safe, non-toxic accessories for babies, toddlers and young children. Top sellers include the company's Pocket Bibs and the G2 Wave Stainless Steel Bottle System.

"Product trends {in this market} are about buying one or two good quality products that work instead of a bunch of inexpensive toxic junk that only lasts a week," says Rea.

Goo-Goo Baby's sales figures support that assertion.

"We are up over 60 per cent from last year," says Rea.

WWW.GOO-GOOBABY.COM

GREEN & GOOD FOR YOU

Kidcentral Supply is another distributor of children's products which has found success with high-quality and eco-friendly brands including Snack Trap, Baby Cubes, RazBaby and Baby Banz.

"Green in every sense of the word is in high demand," says company president and CEO Tammy Zilberberg. "The emphasis in 2010 will certainly be on environmentally friendly, safe and price-conscious products in the baby and kid's market." ■

WWW.KIDCENTRAL.CA



3 Cool New Items!

New styles of glasses from Eye2i confirm the manufacturer's status as a trend-setting purveyor of eyewear. SRP: \$15 to \$30.

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— Erica Kirkland

Dial into the latest fashion accessories and children's products in our Product Guide, page 39.