

DeWITT (Dewey) KENDALL

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Areas of Expertise

Product Development – Branded, Licensed and Private Label Home, Gift, Tabletop and Entertaining

Creative Management – Led creative teams ranging from 3 to 27 in product, package and surface design.

Sourcing – Lived and worked in China and India. Direct expertise in where and how to GET IT DONE.

Trend Forecasting – Positioning lines in the right trends to make companies the 'go-to' vendors.

Manufacturing & Materials – Expert level in ceramics and metals. Extensive experience in glass and wood and packaging.

Multi-Channel – Held lead product roles in all channels. Wholesale, Retail, Catalog Retail and E-commerce.

Growing Core Business – Repeated 300% increases in key accounts under my product direction.

Developing New Business – Identifying category expansion opportunities that make sense and pay off.

Active Blogger in the Table Top Industry: www.tabletimes.com

Credentials Summary:

- Over 22 years merchandising, product development, creative direction, and sourcing at the wholesale and retail levels including brick and mortar, catalog direct mail and e-commerce sales channels.
- Extensive manufacturing technical knowledge
- Development and sourcing of private label, seasonal and everyday lines for Enesco, Department 56, Macy's, Dillard's, Urban outfitters, Home Shopping Network, Nordstrom and many others.
- Total of 16 years' experience with key suppliers to Target Corporation.
- Expertise includes both 2D and 3D experience with concentration in Entertaining, Tabletop, Seasonal, Home Décor, Gift and Message-driven product.
- Master's Degree in Architecture, Undergraduate Degree in Foreign Language.
- Travel experience includes 2 to 3 months of each year for the past 22 years spent in India and China.
- Hardgoods and Soft Home including in a broad range of materials including Ceramics, Glass, Metals, Wood, Beadwork and home textiles.

Education

- Master of Architecture, Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, Illinois
- 2-year work-study in Austria – History and Design (University of Vienna & University of Salzburg)
- Bachelor of Arts Foreign Language, Wabash

PTS America/Sango, VP Product Development, Merchandising, Sourcing and Branding August 2017 – May 2018

Responsible for repositioning the company's product, branding and sourcing toward casual entertaining across all tabletop categories with the acquisition of the Sango brand while aligning the fine tableware business to more current trends.

Responsible for establishing a new Asia staff team and management structure as well as expanded sourcing, testing, and logistics partnerships in China and India.

- Design Direction and Positioning- Set design direction for the company and work to make sure it's followed.
- Leadership- Lead internal product and marketing design team of 5 and a stable of freelancers.
- Sourcing- Establish sourcing strategies including the expansion of overseas staff and management of all vendor relationships including testing and packaging.
- Branding - Stewardship of all PTS brands, reinvention of the Sango brand and development of new brands and licenses.
- Product Management-Direct category product managers strategy and ensure product stays on trend.
- Personally supervise and inform all private label projects

Godinger, VP Product Development & Merchandising & Sourcing September 2015 – August 2017

Creative Direction and Sourcing Strategy across all the Godinger Group businesses across all materials and categories. Was honored to be the first general Head of Product in the company to follow the founder Arnold Godinger.

- Design Direction and Positioning- Establish design direction for the company and work to make sure it's followed.
- Leadership- Lead internal product and marketing design team of 5 and a stable of freelancers.
- Sourcing- Establish sourcing strategies including the expansion of overseas staff and management of all vendor relationships.
- Branding - Stewardship of all Godinger brands and development of new brands and licenses.
- Product Management-Direct category product managers strategy and on trend.
- Personally oversaw key private label projects

Gibson Overseas, Product Development/Business Director

June 2010 – October 2015

Hybrid Creative Director/Sourcing/Account Lead – TARGET, Nordstrom's, HSN, Nordstrom, Urban Outfitters, Anthropologie, Kohl's, Costco, Bed Bath & Beyond and others.

Full Account and Product Development Responsibility including:

- P & L, Growth, and Strategic Planning
- Product Development - for Target, HSN, Nordstrom, Urban Outfitters and other key accounts.
- Sourcing - Seamless Execution from Sourcing to Shipment
- Stewardship of National Brands licensed by the company within those retailers' environments. (Oster, Sunbeam, Mr. Coffee, Isaac Mizrahi, Peanuts, Campbells Soup, Coca Cola, and other Gibson licenses)
- Turned the TARGET business around from being 'locked out' to capturing 60% of the assortment.

Celebrate Express, Inc. Kirkland Washington. 2009 (World's largest online party supplies retailer)

Vice President of Merchandising (Interim during the sale of the company)

Transitional position during the sale of the company

- Instituted Assortment Planning Discipline
- Expanded Direct Sourcing
- Brought the company into CPSIA and Prop 65 compliance

THT Designs, Inc./Tender Heart Treasures, Omaha Nebraska Director of Product Development and Merchandising

November 2005 to 2009

THT Designs / Tender Heart Treasures was a multi-channel merchant in the home décor and gift industry. THT Designs was the Wholesale Division which sold to nearly all consumer catalogs, independent specialty retail stores, as well as a select group of mass merchant partners. The company sold through permanent showrooms in the Atlanta Mart and the Dallas Gift Mart, direct mail wholesale catalogs and online.

Tender Heart Treasures is the company's retail division which sells through a widely-distributed mail-order catalog and internet sales channel. The majority of the company's direct-to-consumer sales come through the internet.

Corporate Turn-around Strategy: Took a lead role in director-level corporate decisions regarding all company strategies and directions including marketing and sales, customer service, inventory, distribution, IT, and national accounts.

Leadership: Lead and managed a team of 26 across 2 departments. Directly supervised 2 Buyers, 1 Senior Product Planner, 1 Merchandise Analyst, 1 Design Studio Manager, 2 Product Developers. Indirect reports are an additional 6 administrative staff and 12 designers.

Product: Was responsible for product vision, motivation toward that vision, and for all final decisions about all product, product sourcing and initial order quantities.

Strategic and Category Planning: Used company historical, trend, demographic, customer and competitor analysis to determine which categories we can "OWN" as a company. Set strategies for being the BEST in the businesses we determined we could own. Constantly monitored and analyzed sales to benchmark and evaluate positioning strategies.

Corporate Communication: Served as the company's spokesperson to the trade press on matters of company branding, product direction and industry trends.

Sourcing Strategy: Fully integrated sourcing into the product development process to close the gap between concept and execution allowing the following:

- Take advantage of supplier innovations and efficiencies in building ideas.
- Cultivate suppliers that can preserve the “freshness” of the original design concept in the final product.
- Shorten lead times to get ideas to market faster and reduce inventory investments/risks
- Opening Order Strategy: Supervises a team of buyers and analysts to determine opening order levels for all products maximizing sales and minimizing inventory investment.

Product Development Leadership –Supervised a team of analysts, product developers, and designers to create an energetic, collaborative environment for generating new product ideas. The process is informed with weekly team presentations on market influences, sales history, current sales, supplier issues and competitor analysis.

Major Accomplishments:

- Re-Organization: Devised and executed a broad-sweeping multi-departmental re-organization to increase ownership and level of accountability in the product development, design, sourcing, purchasing and merchandising areas. Kept merchandising and product development costs in line with sales (% of cost of goods sold). Reduced complication and redundancy in the organization through two separate 20% reductions in force.
- Product Realignment: Let a team to analyze sales trends which resulted in a redirection of the company’s product lines toward warmer, more emotion-engaging products especially seasonal, message-driven and celebratory product lines and away from general home décor.
- Budget Reduction: Simplified processes to reduce expenses in the Product Development, Purchasing and Design areas by 40% as a proportion of Cost of Goods Sold continually keeping costs in-line with sales.
- Established of a product vision to capitalize on our unique strengths in the marketplace.
- Inspired and motivated the team members to contribute to that vision.
- New sourcing and product development initiatives, with vendors fully integrated in the process.

Hallmark Cards, Inc. Kansas City, Missouri

August 2004 - November 2005

Creative Director –Gifts and Promotions – Mass Channel Gift & Hardgoods

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Product Development and Design Leadership – Led a team of designers, technical artists, engineers and packaging specialists to develop promotional and brand-building product for major Hallmark Mass Channel seasonal programs.

Brand Building and Stewardship – Delivered the product and tools needed to assert stewardship over the Hallmark brand in the Mass environment.

Collection Building – Developed and maintained a collection of market-ready product for review on demand by Hallmark Mass Channel retailers and other Hallmark Business Unit partners.

Sourcing Strategy – Developed new sourcing strategies to provide Hallmark-Branded product at price parity with Mass Retailers’ overall assortment.

Process Improvements – Established both internal processes to respond quicker to customer requests and eliminate waste in the product development process.

Totem/Swat Product Design, Chicago, Illinois

November 1997 - August 2004

Principal Partner

Totem / Swat Product Design was a full-service product development, design, sourcing, and import services firm in Chicago from December 1996 to November 2004. Clients included Target Corporation, Department 56, Enesco Corporation, Westfair / Loblaws Canada, Paragon Company Catalog and others. Totem/Swat Product design developed products based on basic direction from its clients and then sourced those products in India, China and Thailand then provided the import logistics support services needed to get them to their client’s distribution centers.

Strategic Planning – Examined market and supplier conditions to determine the range of most profitable product categories and import services to offer. Laid out short and long-term strategies.

Trends Forecasting - Developed trend forecasts to define product development priorities.

New Product development –Developed trend-accurate product specific to our supplier strengths and customer needs and price-point requirements. Responsible for all aspects of product development including drawings, supervising model makers and outside artists, developing concepts and artwork from vintage items, interpreting customer-provided style guides and licensed images into full ranges of product including “Festivities” for Enesco, Trim-a-Tree, Valentines and Easter for Target and various seasonal programs for Department 56.

Market Goods – Filled in lines with carefully curated market goods as-is or tweaked to succeed.

Supplier Sourcing – Determined best source country and factory for each item based on factory’s capabilities, shipping rate, duty rates, and required ETA of shipment. Oversaw sample production.

Purchase Negotiations – Used industry knowledge to enforce fair pricing from suppliers, with clear agreements for on-time shipments, quality expectations, packing requirements, and item and carton labeling. Instituted deterrents for late shipments.

Sales Negotiations – Negotiated terms, pricing, and payment methods for direct-import sales.

New Customer Development – Used Trade Shows and on-site presentations to identify and pursue new customers.

New Technology Development – Developed custom database technology for storage and search of all samples entering the office. Developed a computer database of market goods.

Major Accomplishments:

- Designed and developed some of Target’s and Enesco’s most successful programs ever.
- Increased Sales 20 –30% each year during the last 5 years, with \$1.8 million in sales for 2003.
- Maintained our position as a vendor even after TARGET’s purchase of AMC.
- Made marginally profitable customers profitable. Eliminated customers that proved unprofitable.
- Developed technologies to make it easier for customers and cheaper for us to select and show merchandise.

Experience Prior to 1996

- **Practicing Architect** – Commercial, Residential and Interiors.
- **2D Advertising and Corporate Graphics** – Ligature, Inc, Killian & Wallace Advertising, Ogilvy and Mather Direct
- **Awards** - Over a dozen national and international awards.

Other Relevant Experience, Skills and Certifications

- **Asia Travel**- I’ve spent 2 – 3 months a year for the past 10 years in Asia. My time was usually spent in India and China.
- **LEAN Process certification including LEAN Product Development training.**
- **Antique/Flea Market Knowledge** – Brought up in the family antique business with extensive knowledge of antiques.
- **Drawing Skills** – Good drawing skills. Can draw quickly when at a factory or in meetings to clarify product ideas.
- **Quality, Health, Safety, and Environmental Responsibility** – CCIB, Prop 65, Child Safety, and code of conduct.
- **Freelance Commercial Design** – Numerous national and international awards in 2D and 3D design.
- **Market Knowledge** – Well informed about past and present product offerings of most retailers.
- **Production Knowledge** – Very strong knowledge of metal casting and forming, textiles, glass, leather, ceramics etc.
- **Product Packaging and Testing Knowledge** – Familiarity with SGS, and MTL testing, item labeling, and packaging.
- **Product Sales Knowledge** – Knowledge of the sales results of a large variety of products over the past 11 years in a variety of environments and circumstances.
- **Computer Skills** – Proficient in all MS office applications, Oracle, QuickBase and to a lesser-extent Photoshop, Great Plains, and Microsoft Access and Endeca.