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Home Textiles Today

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Bells and Whistles

Trims and treatments bedeck today's dec pillows

■ By Cecile B. Corral

So long, solid color. It's time for trims — and tassels, feathers, beads, embroidery and more.

Today's dec pillows are all about texture, treatments and layers of looks that not only freshen up the merchandise mix but also help it maintain mid-tier retail levels, even trade up.

"People don't want the same old braid anymore," said Rebecca Goeta-Andersen, director of design, HFL. "They want embellishments, trims, embroidery, beadwork. Furs are year-round now — they're not just for the third and fourth quarters anymore. Velvets are also now for every season."

Company C is pairing soft leather and natural cowhide for an "American West meets modern Scandinavia" dimensional look, as seen in the new Tanner pillow collection.

C&F Enterprises calls the phenomenon "mixed media".

"We are responding to these trends in dec pillows with special treatments like crewelwork, stitching and added embellishments," said Colleen Hall, director of marketing. "We're working on more mixed media looks and creating groups that coordinate but don't exactly match."

She added: "Pillows is a standard category for us. It's a steady business for us and we know how to do well. It's one of our strengths."

Indoor dec pillows represent a new category for Jordan Manufacturing, which recently hired industry veteran Amy Bell to head the expansion. Her forte is the decorative component.

At the New York Home Fashions Market in March, the company officially debuted its new program, which encompasses chenille, velvet, jacquard, embroidered and many other constructions and fabrications for a broad offerings from the start.

"Our velvets have been very well received, from solid to embossed, and embroidered printed looks are also strong, and we're expecting a very good third and fourth quarter," Bell said. "We're working with all types of retailers, from dollar stores to luxury department stores, and everyone in between."

Retails have been volatile for the dec pillow category. But Newport has found a way to preserve key price points at the

mid-tier level with two-pack set updates.

"We're bringing more to our styles for that \$24.99 price point," Jessica Camblin, director of design and product development, told HTT. "Instead of everything poly, we are trying to work in some cottons, some cotton-lins, rice fabrications."

Newport's newly developed "designer two-packs" include one textured solid 22-inch style with a coordinating patterned style in an 18-square size. This is a step up from the traditional two packs in poly solid color styles.

"This trades up the packs and offers the custom more fashion and more value," she explained.

Now into its fourth year of offering dec pillows, Kas Rugs has quickly adapted its assortment to suit customers' preferences.

"Dec pillows have become somewhat of a commodity category, so we don't offer any solid colored pillows. We are focused on the higher end of the market, presenting our customers with a lot of color and texture and handcrafted treatments," said Santhi Yarlagadda, vice president, business development and e-commerce. "There's been a lot of trial and error for us, but we have a following for better quality fashion looks, so that is where we are putting our focus."

Dec pillows sales represent about 8% of Surya Inc.'s total business, president Satya Tiwari noted.

"That sounds small, but that is hundreds of thousands of pillows we sell each year. In dollars, that's an eight-figure number."

The category has opened new avenues of customers and retailers, he added. "And that's because it's an impulse item," he noted. "It is an easy way for retailers to freshen up the vignettes at their stores. And dec pillows can go in every room of the home. It's a big category that can offer a lot of variety."

Loloi's in-house design team, which encompasses 10 designers, develops looks across all categories, from rugs to accessories. President Amir Loloi also collaborates — "He gets personally involved in the designs of our collections," noted principal Cyrus Loloi. **HTT**



Justina Blakeney Collection by Loloi



Elephant pillow by Company C



Crescent pillow by Surya