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Welcome to the American Baby Maternity Alliance. Today, the maternity fashion industry stands on the cusp of greatness—realizing market share, profits and customers that exceed expectations. The independents are positioned to thrive and the American Baby Maternity Alliance is here to help this become a reality. You can count on us for the tools you need—this newsletter, our website, use of our mailing list, an opportunity to participate in store-centered promotions, and the distribution of American Baby magazine as a gift to your customers. All this adds up to the start of a long and productive relationship.

Norma S. Blatto

Norma Blatto
Publisher, *American Baby*

JUST ADD BABY Including Juvenile in Your Retail Mix

Katie Tagliavia
Founder, 9 Months

The ongoing challenge in maternity apparel is the constant “turnover” in the customer base. Bringing in layette can be a strategic decision that can extend this base and ultimately increase your sales.

Looking at the average time between pregnancies can help determine the upper end of the infant size carried in the store. On average, pregnancies are two years apart; therefore if the layette group is sized up to 18 months, you can convert your customer base of 6 months to a potential customer of 4 years (1st

pregnancy, 18 months, 2nd pregnancy, 18 months).

The advantage in maternity apparel is the “captive audience” you hold for layette. For 6 months you have an opportunity to consult with your customer on future purchases surrounding their layette. Whether your customer is considering

buying a going home outfit, blankets or classic whites, she is looking at your merchandise first.

Accessories are another important part of the maternity shopping experience.

www.noalily.com



www.teacollection.com



Accessories which complement a traditional layette include nursing products, diaper bags, slings and strollers. All of the accessories are generally higher margin products than your apparel groups. Merchandising these items in combination with your main product lines can help raise your average margin and ultimately will strengthen your bottom line! ❄️

DESIGNER PROFILE

Debbie Ohanian

“Meet Me in Miami” is South Beach based and run by fashion veteran Debbie Ohanian. In business since 1980, MMIM sells to over 150 stores and is well known for fashion forward looks at accessible pricing. The look of MMIM is hot and feminine and celebrates the female form. It is about real fashion in real time, all the time. We spent some time with Debbie in Miami to get the scoop:

Q. Where do you look for inspiration?

A. South Beach is a huge influence—the range of color, texture and fashion is huge and moves me. Also, I am a self professed addict of FTV (Fashion Television Network) as well as the fabric market.

Q. You are one of the few “non moms” in the industry. Why maternity?

A. I made the transition from ready-to-wear at the request of one pregnant customer who “had nothing to wear.” And the rest, as they say, is history.

Q. You are known for working in a non-traditional way with your stores. How does this work? How does this benefit the retailer?

A. I don’t produce a collection two times a year. Rather I produce new items on a weekly basis. The stores that “get it” really benefit. They are part of a constant flow of fresh, new merchandise with very current trends reflected in the all the garments. We help the stores to maximize sales by keeping that short window of pregnancy. One that is filled with tempting fashion. It is all about the impulse factor.

Q. What does the future hold for MMIM?

A. Continued global expansion is big on the list. And of course, continued, hot, South Beach-inspired maternity fashion. ❄



www.meetmeinmiami.com

Hot tip

63% of first-time new moms have changed brands of personal care products used in the last 6 months.

New American Mom Study 2005



PAMPERING FOR DOLLARS

Refresh and Re-energize Your Boutique’s Beauty Regimen

Jennifer Holfelder, Founder, Bella Essentials

Beauty is now featured in every pregnancy magazine on the market. Expecting mothers and, now, even mainstream media have finally realized that feeling good is as important as looking good during pregnancy.

Since pregnancy beauty items are getting the broad support that they deserve, a full scope of those items should be considered for placement in your boutique. Two open stock lines of skincare are recommended in order to give the client a choice. Lines that focus on different aspects of skincare such as aromatherapy, unscented products, creams and oils will better serve your customers, as well as increase your ticket average.

Not only should all maternity shops offer pregnancy skincare, it is also a perfect item to round out the gift area in all boutiques. Variety in this category is optimal, but avoid overwhelming the customer. There are gifts based on the stage of pregnancy, functional gifts, and pampering spa gifts, something available for every type of gift buyer. The pregnant woman deserves a gift as much as the baby does! ❄



www.bellaessentials.com

IT'S IN THE BAG

Diaper Bags Make for Profit

Ellen Diamant and Michael Diamant
 Founders, Skip*Hop

The transition to motherhood is a time of increased consumer awareness to a whole category of new products and brands available to the new mother. New moms—especially first-time moms—are first exposed to these new brands when buying maternity clothes. The first time they walk into a maternity store, they're faced with a world of new products and brands that, although well-established in their categories, are nonetheless new to these shoppers.

This presents an excellent opportunity for maternity stores to introduce a wider variety of these new products to expecting mothers. Along with maternity clothing, the other fashionable item that moms consider buying—and is designed for moms instead of babies—is the diaper bag.

Diaper bags have changed significantly over the past few years. It wasn't too long ago when diaper bags were not considered a fashion accessory. That began to change when a bunch of new and innovative companies began creating bags that catered to the hip, fashion-forward mother providing well-designed, stylish products.

The perfect time to introduce these products to moms is right before they give birth. In fact, it makes the most sense for a mom to make this purchase

prior to going to the hospital than after the baby is born, when she starts shopping in baby apparel and gear stores. Maternity stores that take advantage of this can do very well by adding fashionable diaper bags to their offering. And with the wide selection of great product out there from companies like Fleurville, Kate Spade, Petunia Pickle Bottom and Skip*Hop, stores can tailor a collection that really speaks to their individual customer. ❄



www.skip-hop.com



www.petuniapicklebottom.com

Hot tip
 Grandparents spend
\$30 billion
 a year on their
 grandchildren, more
 than double the amount
 spent 10 years ago.
AARP estimate

American Baby Maternity Alliance

Wishes to thank the advisory board members

- Armanda Texidor *A New View Maternity*
- Amy Coe *Amy Coe, Inc.*
- Laurie McCartney *babystyle*
- Jennifer Hohlfedler *Bella Essentials*
- Patty Fagan *Belly Maternity*
- Allyson Kassie *Bloom Maternité*
- Emilia Fabricant *Cadeau*
- Julie Khoury/Dori Rhoades . . *Conception Showroom*
- Pat Gillespie *Duet Designs*
- Shannon DiPadova *Due Maternity*

- Hope Green *Hope Green Associates*
- Barbie White *Japanese Weekend*
- Liz Lange *Liz Lange Maternity*
- Debbie Ohanian *Meet Me In Miami*
- Katie Tagliavia *9 Months*
- Lily Alentado *Olian Maternity*
- Song Pardue *Pickles & Ice Cream*
- Ellen Diamant *Skip*Hop*
- Trine Etoll *Two Generations*

FALL FORECAST 2005

A Royal Season

Armanda Texidor, President, A New View Maternity

Designers scour the market for new fabrics, trends, and colors to entice your precious budgets. If only we could look into a crystal ball and find the answers to these questions:

What trends will continue for fall 2005?

What style will scream "I bought it this season"?

What will your customer think is trendy but wearable?

We have called around and here is what you can expect in fall 2005:

It's no surprise to find that bouclé, ribbed knits, and corduroy will rule this season, but bohemian inspired styles will dictate a blending of these fabrics with netting, printed mesh and lace.

Colors will be vibrant, but pink and brown will continue to be important as part of the basic color palette. Jewel tones are new this fall with purple being the boldest...perfect for novelty items and accessories. Green is already selling at retail and will continue to sell in a mélange of olive, emerald, and lime.

Classic plaids both small and large will look modern in pleated skirts and cuffed pants, paired with layers of lace-trimmed tees and chunky sweaters. A rebirth of the mini hounds tooth and herringbone will lead in the career separates category. Edgy flood length pants designed for boots are cropping up.

Skirts are either very short, or very long, but the newest versions are tiered or pleated.

For the trendy and city chic, message tee shirts are all the rage to sell with your expensive jeans. Jeans are always in style. Offer a range of fit and prices to satisfy as many women you can.

Tops with interest are selling very well. Ruching, twin prints, knotting and eclectic hemlines will continue. The poncho has evolved to the draped sweater look.

Belly-hugging looks are here to stay but top lengths are getting a bit longer and waistbands are rising!

Have a great season!



www.cadeau.com



www.japaneseweekend.com



www.dueandsprout.com

Hot

**Swarovski crystals,
SATIN RIBBONS &
embroidered trims
are finishing touches
to the fall collections**



www.noppies.com

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Mom to mom. Woman to woman.™