



AmericasMart®Atlanta

The Atlanta International Gift & Home Furnishings Market®
Showrooms: January 8-15, 2019 Temporaries: January 9-13, 2019
and The Atlanta International Area Rug Market®
January 9-13, 2019

MEDIA CONTACTS

Chelsea Peabody Bohannon
cpeabody@americasmart.com
404.220.2141

Cathy Steel
cathysteel@cathysteelassociates.com
203.340.9251

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**THE ATLANTA INTERNATIONAL GIFT
AND HOME FURNISHINGS MARKET®
KICKS OFF WINTER 2019 TRADE SHOW SEASON
WITH ENERGY AND OPTIMISM**

ATLANTA – January 17, 2019 – A strong holiday season and a positive outlook for 2019 drove significant buying at The Atlanta International Gift and Home Furnishings Market® and The Atlanta International Area Rug Market® according to International Market Centers (IMC). Held January 8-15, 2019, the markets showcased more than 9,000 brands across more than 1,400 showrooms — 70 of which were new and expanded — and 3,300 temporary booths — more than 10 percent of which were new-to-Atlanta. Buyers from all 50 states and 66 countries visited, with upticks in attendance from the northeast and southeast regions in particular.

“All things are indicating that our industry is poised for a strong and bright start to 2019,” said Bob Maricich, IMC chief executive officer. “Excitement and steady order writing from buyers, innovation and increased investment from exhibitors and the expertise of the now combined IMC team are fueling positive momentum.”

The January 2019 Market was its first staging under IMC. Commenting on AmericasMart’s merger with IMC, Jason Kachan, CEO of Sagebrook Home said “the benefit of having IMC own Atlanta, Las Vegas and High Point is that each is different in so many ways, whether it is the customer base or the product lines. Being at each market helps us to become a big player in the industry.” Kachan saw new and returning accounts including domestic buyers

-MORE-

ATLANTA MARKET KICKS OFF 2019 WITH ENERGY AND OPTIMISM 2/4

from across the country and international buyers representing big chain stores and small independent boutiques.

“The Market was way beyond expectations,” said Molly Wilson, founder of Best of Show who opened its first east coast showroom this winter. “Being in Atlanta and Las Vegas as well as online gives us an open marketplace to complete our mission: a utopia for buyers and brands.” Wilson reported that buyers from major department stores, trend-driven multi-location retailers, independent boutiques, spas, gourmet specialty shops and online merchants placed orders.

Buyers were in Atlanta to see what is new and next across the gift and home décor spectrum.

“The Atlanta market is a great place to get a feel for where the industry is headed,” said Kathleen Sharkey, Global Sourcing manager for Pier 1 Imports. “I love that it is always such an open and exciting environment. You get a feel for the industry’s pulse.”

Growth in design buyers, including interior designers, contract / hospitality specifiers and architects, points to success in IMC’s continued expansion of design-driven home décor resources in Atlanta, and sets an optimistic tone for future initiatives in the home décor and the contract/hospitality sectors. In January, the home décor and commercial design collections had 23 new and expanded showrooms including Ashley Furniture, Wildwood and Chelsea House.

Design thought leaders used the Market to showcase their collaborations with top manufacturers. Among designers presenting their lines this January were Mark D. Sikes for Made Goods, Anna Bond of Rifle Paper Company for Loloi, Denise McGaha for Design Legacy by Kelly O’Neal, Jason Oliver Nixon and John Loecke from Madcap Cottage for Port 68 and Genevieve Gorder for Capel.

The best of the area rug industry was celebrated at America’s Magnificent Carpets® Awards where Amer Rugs, Inc., Eliko Antique and Decorative Rugs, Inc., Jaipur Living, Kalaty Rug Corp., Kaleen Rugs, Loloi, Nourison Rug Company, Orian Rugs, Inc. and Surya Rugs and Home Accessories took home top honors.

Interactive programs such as Shop the Show, where design, lifestyle and culinary influencers explored the market, drew buyers into sponsor showrooms as the tastemakers shared their favorite finds. Buyers also explored new products in places including the Eco Lounge and the

ATLANTA MARKET KICKS OFF 2019 WITH ENERGY AND OPTIMISM 3/4

Wellness & Rejuvenation Lounge, which featured a significantly expanded product presentation this winter.

Programming highlights included celebrity chefs Paula Deen and Nancy Fuller plus local chefs and beverage experts in the Fiesta Dinnerware Demonstration Kitchen, presentations from top retailers, social media experts and PANTONE trend forecasters, as well as interactive workshops and industry celebrations.

Exhibitors upped their commitments to the market through new and expanded showroom presentations and tradeshow debuts, as well as major showroom renovations.

“We have never heard so much joy in the showroom,” said Elisa Palefsky, vice president of Sales for Accent Décor about the Shop the Show event it hosted in its newly renovated space. “We were so honored to be the host showroom for the event. The more we invest in our space and the market experience, the more the buyers buy. This was a record-breaking show in both volume of sales and number of customers.”

Positive reactions to the Market extended beyond AmericasMart’s three buildings. Conversations and engagement across digital and social media platforms resulted in more than 1 million impressions. “To say we found some gems at [the Atlanta Market] is an understatement,” posted Nicole Noonan and Morgan Mackintosh of Beige & Bleu in Boston, Mass.. “We’re excited to come back and share them all with [our clients]. Exciting things to come.”

During the market, IMC marked its commitment to the gift, home furnishings and apparel industries with its announcement of a three-year, \$280 million-dollar investment in new initiatives to enhance its markets in Atlanta, High Point, N.C and Las Vegas. In Atlanta, the first element of a multi-stage plan calls for completion by year-end of both an enhanced arrival experience and the creation of a unified CRM system that will allow for better capture, management and analyzation of audience data and an improved digital experience. “These initiatives are just the beginning of our plans to enhance our markets for buyers and sellers alike,” said Maricich. “They are yet another signal of IMC’s commitment to producing markets that are efficient, effective and compelling for the entire home furnishings and gift industry.”

ATLANTA MARKET KICKS OFF 2019 WITH ENERGY AND OPTIMISM 4/4

AmericasMart® Atlanta is a leading wholesale marketplace housing the nation's largest gift product mix complemented by a broad selection of home accents, décor, tabletop, gourmet, area rug and fashion apparel merchandise. Its 16 annual markets and shows serve specialty retailers, designers and major buying groups from every U.S. state and nearly 70 countries. The summer edition of The Atlanta International Gift and Home Furnishings Market will run July 9 - 15, 2019. For more information, visit AmericasMart.com.

About International Market Centers, L.P.: International Market Centers, L.P. (IMC is the world's largest operator of premier showroom space for furniture, gift, home décor, rug, and apparel industries. International Market Centers owns and operates nearly 20 million square feet of world-class exhibition space in High Point, N.C., Las Vegas and Atlanta. IMC's mission is to build and operate an innovative, sustainable, profitable and scalable platform for the furniture, gift, home décor, rug, and apparel industries. For more information on IMC, visit <http://imcenters.com/>

###