

Home Furnishings Business[®]

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STRATEGY FOR THE FURNITURE INDUSTRY

JUST BECAUSE YOU CAN DOESN'T MEAN YOU SHOULD!

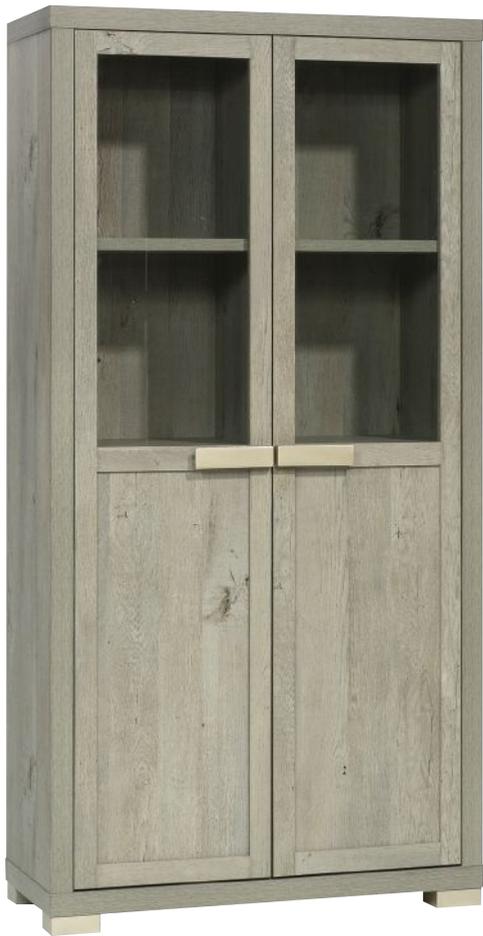


Style Directions:
Coastal Cool

What Sells:
Occasional Furniture



Currey & Company



Sauder

COASTAL COOL

Whether they live by the water, vacation there or just dream of it, consumers are drawn to the casual coolness of coastal-inspired design. No seashell or fish motifs are required to create this aesthetic. It's a look characterized by relaxed silhouettes, organic materials, lighter wood tones, salty finishes and understated fabrics.

BY TRISHA MCBRIDE FERGUSON



BDI



Broyhill



A.R.T. Furniture

WHAT SELLS



For Your Viewing Pleasure by Caracole

At 100-inches wide, there couldn't be a more dramatic centerpiece for both entertainment and design enthusiasts. Used with or without the largest plasma screen, the face of this cabinet is sure to capture everyone's attention. The cabinet case is made of fumed Eucalyptus veneers and hardwoods finished in a dark French Roast. If the movie isn't anything to talk about, this entertainment center will keep the conversation going. MSRP: \$9,425

On this Happy Occasion

BY ALANA HERRERA

If you are looking for a piece of furniture that is fun, functional, and flexible in its use around the home, look no further than the Occasional category. There is a piece for every style, every room, and certainly, for every occasion.

The category is broad and covers a range of items from coffee tables, bars, and chairs, to small writing desks (think laptop tables in the digital age) and more. These pieces may only be used occasionally, but that hardly diminishes their importance in the home and on the sales floor. It will come as no surprise that the category performs well for retailers, who have a wide range of options to choose from for their product assortment as manufacturers continue to ramp up their SKU count.

As the function of occasional pieces tend to be obvious, designers and manufacturers can afford to have a bit of fun in their product designs. Based on a FurnitureCore, LLC, industry model developed by Impact Consulting Services, parent company to *Home Furnishings Business*, it is clear that style and function are the yin and yang of the category. Those surveyed on their perception of the rank regarding style vs. function of occasional pieces reported a near 50/50 split between them (49.49% vs. 50.51%). BDI's Bill Becker, CEO and Design Director, honed in on the importance of both the style and functionality of one of the company's leading products, the



Becker

Milo Laptop Table, saying, "While Milo is designed to serve a very functional purpose as a laptop table, it also incorporates architectural lines that make it a very beautiful design."

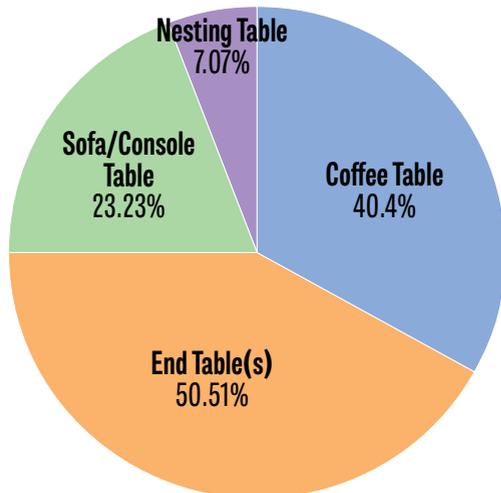
Most often, the industry immediately thinks of the variety of tables in this product category. There is a traditional option for occasional tables that

regularly serves as a great selling point for retailers—the three-pack table group. Manufacturers are able to bundle these tables and, in the end, customers walk away feeling satisfied that they got a great deal. While this is a useful strategy to utilize on the sales floor, only an average of 3.66% of consumers rated this selling point as "very important." Clearly, it is a perk, but not a consumer demand.

The same survey honed in on what type of tables consumers most recently purchased. A majority of consumers purchased end tables at 50.51%, followed by coffee tables at 40.40%, sofa/console tables at 23.23%, and nesting tables (tables that provide additional seating) at just 7.07%. Multiple answers were allowed.

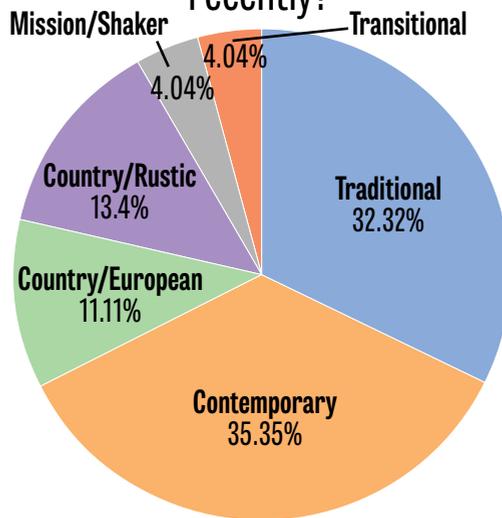
Now that we have a better idea of the product type demand from a consumer perspective, we can dive deeper into the style directions that influence these purchases. By creating

What type of occasional tables did you most recently purchase?

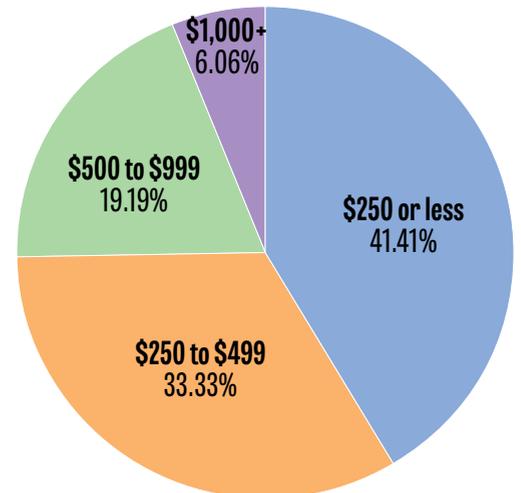


Multiple answers accepted.

What is the style of the occasional tables that you bought most recently?



How much would you expect to spend pay for a grouping of occasional tables?



pieces that are available in multiple finishes to give the impression of a customizable product suitable to consumer tastes on an individual level, manufacturers can stay on trend and ahead of the curve. When asked about his company's best-selling occasional



Simpson

pieces, Luke Simpson, President and CEO of Durham Furniture, said of the Cascata Collection, "The modern style and elegant finishes have proven to resonate well with consumers who stay on top of design trends, yet are looking to invest in timeless pieces they can appreciate for years to come."

Consumers polled on their most recent occasional table style purchase reported the most popular selection was contemporary (35.35%) with traditional closely behind at 32.32%. Country/Rustic followed at 13.14% and Country/European at 11.11%. Mission/Shaker and Transitional trailed the pack, both with a reported 4.04%.

There is truly a style (and finish) for everyone in this category. ■



Milo Laptop Table by BDI

BDI introduces a new favorite sidekick with the Milo Laptop Table. Designed by Louis A. Lara as a perfect table for laptop use or as a side table next to a sofa or chair, Milo is a highly versatile companion for any space. At less than 10 lbs., Milo is light enough to be moved to any room it is needed. Plus, it's angled powder-coated steel column and v-shaped base make it perfect for sliding under a chair or couch for close-up use. Beyond its practical applications, Milo is also designed with an architectural aesthetic that makes it an elegant addition to the room. MSRP: \$379