

MAY 2007 \$6

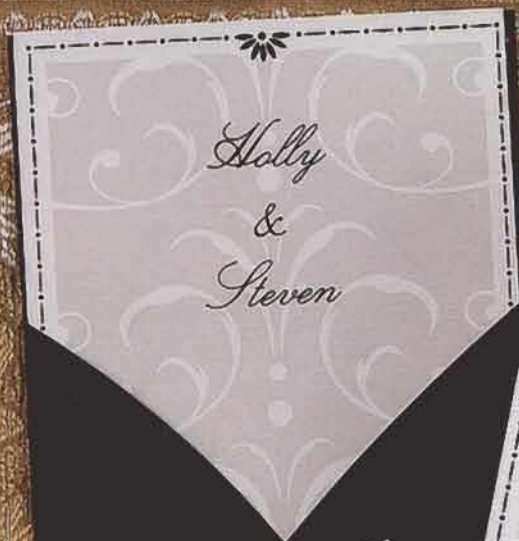
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RETAILER

National
Stationery
Show Issue

THE INFORMED RETAILER'S CHOICE



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**Bridal
Partyware
Home Office**

Green Goes Glam

Eco-friendly takes on a stylish visage

By Sarah Schwartz
Editor at Large

From **Thinkspot**, Table-toss latex-based placemats and accessories are both reusable and ultimately disposable.
(212) 769-2577



Combining two great themes — birds and earth-friendly elements — these note cards from the aptly named **Good On Paper** are printed on 100 percent recycled paper with vegetable-based inks.
(510) 501-3337

"There's so much waste in our economy," said **OOTSI!** Arian Roefs. "Our products are made from 100 percent natural, biodegradable and recycled fibers, seeds and plant material, and can be 'recycled' again, to grow plants." The range includes cards, shapes (shown), bookmarks, gift bags, gift boxes and journals.

(505) 989-7707



Sometimes it's the product itself that is meant to be recycled: Witness these dinner jaquettes from **j hartley designs**, which can mark a special spot again and again.
(757) 238-3606

I devoted my April 2006 Paper Trail column to the question, "Is green the new black?" Over a year later, the answer to that question remains even on the surface a resounding "yes." The shade has lately supplanted blue as the pairing of choice to brown, and a January 2007 article in the cerebral *New Yorker* was devoted to none other than the popularity of wasabi (or a light, yellow-based) green for everything from paint to paper goods.

But the color itself is not the big news. This all-important shade has attained if not quite a new meaning of late, then certainly a renewed significance. In my column, I touched on this when I quoted Margaret Walch, director of the Color Association of the U.S. In explaining green's popularity, she said, "Green connotes an emotional connection to the earth as well as an environmental reference."

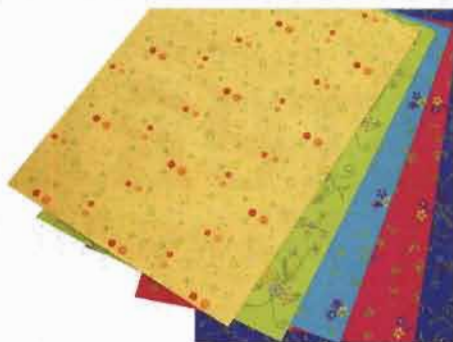
Fast forwarding to several weeks ago, I had the distinct pleasure of going through mounds of submissions sent to me by National Stationery Show exhibitors for possible inclusion in my trends seminar and this spread. And what do I end up predicting will be one of the top trends at the show? Why green, of course — but not exactly in color, rather in regards to our planet.

Yes, as gas prices rise and "An Inconvenient Truth" sets into the American psyche, consumers are slowly beginning to take more responsibility, living a bit simpler, using a bit less, making a difference in myriad small ways.

Perhaps nowhere is the amount of waste generated more apparent than with paper. So several vendors have taken it upon themselves to introduce "green" lines. "I strongly believe that green/eco-friendly design is the way to go," said Lisa Wong Jackson of Good on Paper. "It's a trend that is here to stay. I would like to eventually transition my card line so that all my cards are printed on recycled paper."



Nurturing the very images it highlights, the Natural Brights collection from **Vismara** Invitations of recycled papers and envelopes have a minimum of 30 percent post-consumer fiber. The papers are manufactured with non-polluting wind power and soy-based inks. **(206) 914-1338**



These hand-embroidered papers from **Eco Friendly Papers** are on 100 percent tree-free cotton rag paper. "Beauty with Balance" is the underlying theme for this product," explained the company's Manish Gupta. **(734) 834-7921**



Celebration's Naturally Ever After wedding album has designs that not only depict a love for nature, they also contain 30 percent post-consumer fibers. **(800) 222-1228**



Ecojot, a new line of journals and notebooks from **Mirage**, features 100 percent post-consumer paper and board, certified according to the rules of the Forest Stewardship Council. "This means we are using paper with as much waste fiber as possible while preserving the real forests — no trees were used to make this paper," said the company's Carolyn Gavin. **(800) 836-6669**



Grey's Greetings Designs' line of sassy cards utilize humorous, uplifting quotes plus bold, modern splashes of color — not to mention 100 percent recycled paper with vegetable-based inks. **(856) 287-2752**

Probably the second-best thing about these new collections is they are so stylish. Environmentally friendly paper products are of course nothing new, but they have changed a lot since I first started covering stationery a decade ago, when they had a definite crunchy hippie feel to them and stuck out from other lines. Now, however, as Jackson put it, "Using recycled papers doesn't mean sacrificing style and good design."

"Today there are so many more choices for designers interested in green materials and processes," added Leslie Fenner, founder and creative director for Vismara Invitations. "We're excited to work with vendors and materials for this line that meet the highest standards in sustainability. It's something that's always been important to us and is increasingly requested by our retailers and consumers."

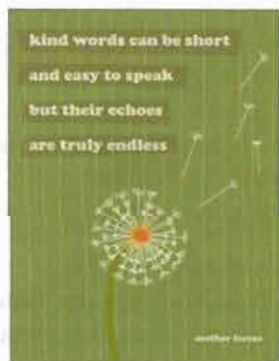
One of Vismara's customers, Cheryl Fuchs, owner of Daisy Notes & Paper in Durham, N.C., confirms this trend. "More and more customers ask me about recycled content and types of ink in the

paper products I offer. It's wonderful to be able to work with companies like Vismara that provide fresh designs meeting these criteria."

One caveat: the eco-friendly industry is not regulated, so if you see a green line on the show floor, ask what it is that makes it so. Solutions greatly vary, so the range of answers will probably surprise you!

For example, to my mind, sometimes being green can just mean being able to reuse something as opposed to tossing it after a single use. That is why I've included offerings from j hartley designs and Thinkspot. Consumers will feel a bit more environmentally conscious if they are given the opportunity to spend a bit more on an item and get a little more wear out of it.

Finally, while this is big news this year, changes aren't going to happen overnight. It will take years for the ripples to settle and behaviors to really change. But if you get in on the first wave, your customers will remember that you were there — and all the while you'll be making a difference by supporting and selling vendors like these. ■



With moderate prices and enduring messages and designs, **it's been said cards** are positioned to strike the middle of the market. They also have an earth-friendly angle — they're on 100 percent recycled stock with soy-based inks. **(646) 238-9152**