

# Notes from New York Home Fashions Market

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Among developments we saw during the during last week's New York Home Fashions Market:

- Peking Handicraft launched its makersconnection.com direct-to-consumer business featuring licensed designs from social media personalities Elizabeth Olwen, Justina Blakeney, Kendra Dandy (Bouffants and Broken Hearts brand) and Bonnie Christine. Each brings a sizeable following – Blakeney has 2.1 million Pinterest followers and another 200,000 Instagram – and regional designs with Blakeney hailing from Los Angeles and Olwen from Toronto. “There will be a regional strategy to it and we have talked to some retailers in the southeast about Christine’s products because there is a local angle there,” says Peking’s Randy Smith, noting Christine’s North Carolina roots. Peking plans to rotate in new designers to the site based on the seasons. Meanwhile, Peking also took the wraps off a new Vera Bradley bedding collection that will be sold through many of the same retailers that carry the brand’s handbags, including Bon Ton Stores and Bed Bath & Beyond, says Smith.
- American Textile Co. will launch Tempur-Pedic sheets, mattress pads, pillow protectors and blankets/comforters late this year as the mattress brand enters licensing for the first time. American Textile has been selling Sealy bedding products for four years, but has pursued the Tempur-Pedic brand since the mattress company bought Sealy in 2013, says American Textile’s Patrick Seiffert. Tempur-Pedic will be positioned at the high-end, targeting department stores and Bed Bath & Beyond, leaving Sealy for the value-priced retailers. Tempur-Pedic products also will eventually also be sold through American Textile’s direct-to-consumer divisions, which was launched in 2015 to sell its AllerEase bedding products.
- Welspun is bringing Delos’ Stay Well brand to retail for the first time, building out a Delos business that started with hotels several years ago. Marriot and MGM Grand hotels have added Stay Well premium rooms that feature personalized lighting, humidifiers, aromatherapy machines and other products that will now be combined with Welspun bedding. Welspun also will ship Delos bedding to retail, including sheets, pillows, duvets and comforters, and mattress pads. The bedding products will include many of Welspun’s technologies, including Hygro cotton that produces more absorbent material.
- Welspun also is seeking licensed characters for its Tilt Textiles technology that features built-in optical sensors with duvets and rugs to allow for playback of its SpinTales iPad app. The optical markers – 4-5 of them placed around images in a duvet or rug – work with the app and the iPad camera to deliver stories targeting 3-7-year-old children. The app contains three stories, including versions of “Little Riding Hood” and “Jack and the Beanstalk” that interact with the duvet. The area rug contains jungle-related games. “We do feel that licensing [characters] will be the way forward” for SpinTales, says Welspun’s Mili John Tharakan. The rug is being sold through Amazon. The SpinTales products also will launch at Hamleys in India (May) and in UK department stores (July), said Welspun’s Sanjiv Pillai.
- Allied Home introduced bedding featuring interior and product designer Nikki Chu.
- Revman International unveiled Original Penguin brand bedding including pillows, comforters and duvets via its licensing agreement with Perry Ellis International. It also showed a “more aggressively priced” line of Laura Ashley bedding products that draw from the brand’s archive in London for new printed designs.
- Duke Imports is expanding its assortment of Debra Valencia bedding with 20 new designs covering accent pillows, duvets, sheets and blankets that will bring the line to 200 SKUs by fall, says Valencia. The collection was introduced with eight quilts last year that were sold through Zulily and specialty dealers. Prior to signing with Duke Imports last year, Valencia designs were limited to private label bedding.

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