

Welcome, **Michael**

[Submit News](#) [Update Company Listing](#) [Your Info](#)

Search Sipco.net:

Articles

[Table of Contents](#)

[F&FI Features](#)

[Contract/](#)

[Hospitality News](#)

[Profiles in Fabric](#)

[People](#)

[Technology](#)

[Events Calendar](#)

[Online](#)

[Buyers Directory](#)

[Classifieds](#)

[F&FI Exchange](#)

[World Fabric Forum](#)

[Sipco Store & Services](#)

[Advertising & Media Kit](#)

[Subscribe to F&FI](#)

[Contact Sipco.net](#)

[Articles Index](#)

[Uffner, the Hospitality Print Specialist,](#)

[Adds Upholstery](#)

[Trevira and Transfertex Develop a](#)

[Contract Manual](#)

[ADF Adds Cotton Velvet Line at](#)

[Showtime](#)

[Milliken Moves 180 Degrees From the](#)

[Ordinary](#)

[London Fog Takes Retail Expertise Into](#)

[Hospitality with Homestead](#)

[Brand Seeks Hotel Brand for Lasting](#)

[Relationship in the Hospitality Industry](#)

[Hanes Acquires Sani-Line Sales](#)

[Absecon Mills Unveils Cantara](#)

[RM COCO Purchases Kirsch Fabrics,](#)

[Expands Upholstery Line](#)

[Covington on Park Avenue, Move by](#)

[Yearend 2005](#)

[Contract Textiles](#)

(22 December)

(20 December)

(16 December)

(12 December)

(12 December)

(12 December)

(8 December)

(8 December)

(5 December)

(5 December)

[More Articles >>](#)



Brand Seeks Hotel Brand for Lasting Relationship in the Hospitality Industry

New FF&E Meeting Format Matches Suppliers and Specifiers at HMI 2005

12/12/2005

by [Deena Bouknight](#)

[Email this article to a colleague](#)

[Discuss this article in the World Fabric Forum](#)



[Click to view Trends 2006](#)

LAS VEGAS, Nevada — So, you're a new product supplier in town and you're looking to meet some nice, well-established specifiers with whom you can build a relationship. Well, just like mother always told you, you have to get out there and meet people.

What was referred to by many manufacturers of the hospitality industry, as the "speed dating" sales event of the year, Hospitality Match International (HMI) was held, here, by Sipco Events. President Michael Schneider, with the help of Helen Marcus of Zenith International, introduced the inaugural event to the hospitality industry in October.

Close to 100 attendees, comprised of hospitality specifiers and suppliers alike, spent the weekend together at the Rio All Suite Hotel and Conference Center where they dined, listened, bet big -- and of course talked business. Additionally, a reception was hosted by the World Market Center before releasing attendees to their night out on the Las Vegas Strip.

Attendees included a global audience from as far away as Australia, England and Pakistan and as brave as some from New Orleans and Houston.

The crux of the event was the pre-matched one-to-one meetings where specifiers and suppliers were given 20 minutes to meet and greet.

"Having an opportunity to interact with representatives from various levels of specifiers and buyers on a one-on-one basis was an asset. Often, we may have relationships with a principal of a firm, but to meet those in other capacities who affect the usage of our product is integral," said Elaine Schroeder, kravetcontract national sales manager.

"The effectiveness of the one-on-one appointments are far more valuable than a trade show," said Leslie Temples, director of sales & marketing, Burtco Enterprises.

The event gave suppliers the opportunity to meet potential clients one-on-one in an



Sipco.net

Exclusive Offer
for new web advertisers

40% off
Regular Price

[Click here](#) 

for more details

atmosphere that was laid back, fun, and conducive to education.

Two seminars were held during the event where attendees could voice their opinions on hot topics such as communication and design trends. 'What the Specifier Wants,' which focused on improved communication between the supplier and specifier was moderated by Eric Schneider, Sipco Publications publisher, featuring Chelsea Dossett of Gensler, Ron Golbus of Graphic Encounter, Russ Haber of Royal Oak Purchasing, Christopher Wheeler of BBG-BBGM and Lisa Roth of Montgomery Roth. 'The Influence of Boutique,' which focused on the boutique look popping up in mid-market properties was moderated by Rebecca Goldberg, editor of boutique DESIGN. It featured Tony Attard of Panaz and the British Contract Furnishings Association chair, Jeff Ornstein of J/Brice Design, Burt Boucock of sfa design, and Andrea Dawson Sheehan of Dawson Design Associates.

In addition to education in the traditional sense, many found the one-to-one meetings to be an informative format for finding out what works -- and what doesn't.

"I really enjoyed the one-on-one, intimate meetings with vendors that I have done business with in the past," said Tobin Schermerhorn, president of TOBY. Local reps always ask to bring their national sales managers to our office because I have no problem voicing my concerns, which are typically the same concerns that reps hear from other designers. Often, manufacturers don't heed the words of their reps, discounting the comments as isolated gripes from disgruntled employees. I feel that in order to maintain a fair partnership and an enduring relationship, it is my responsibility to tell a manufacturer why I do or do not do business with them. Too often, specifiers are shown manufacturers' products, nod approvingly and then never specify the product. The shallow nod doesn't sell the product. Honesty does.

"I met people I would rarely encounter and had an opportunity to find out how they do business and hear about their experience in the industry. The fact that the event had so many international participants was a real positive for me. We are always looking for new, innovative products and we found several," said Andrea Dawson Sheehan of Dawson Design Associates.

She continued: "At least 50% of the vendors I sat with were people I had never heard of or met in the past. Some were vendors I had met briefly at other shows but never had the time to talk with except in passing. Talking with them for 20 minutes was a luxury I never seem to have with my schedule."

"It was a great opportunity to talk to various vendors and, as a designer, let them know more of what I am looking for and also, have the one-on-one time that you don't normally get," said Dianne Kraus, of Diane Kraus Designs.

Ultimately, the question was why did these busy professionals decide to give up their precious weekend time to go on the dating game and tread in the uncharted waters of this event? SK Textile owner, Debra Centurion said: "Everyone is so busy these days that when I call on designers during the working hours I feel like I am taking time away from designers' billable hours, and I don't want to be the company who does that. It's important to see the new products, but you have to weigh out the value to the client and designers."

Helen Marcus, president of Zenith International partnered with Sipco Events, and was responsible for buyer registration. "All the feedback that I received from all the specifiers and the vendors has been nothing but positive; they loved the smallness of it," she said. "I, as a vendor, have gotten nothing but wonderful replies from people wanting my catalogue and wanting to work together. There were some people that I hadn't met but some people that I had done business with and hadn't met in person and we bonded. As a vendor, I'm delighted. As a helper, I am exhilarated."

-- Cynthia Tripp Kampf is the founder and president of Tripp Design.