

GIFT TREND

Back to the Basics

Hot gifts for 2015 are items that people will actually use and enjoy in their everyday lives, says Janet Lewis, founder of the online boutique orangefish.ca. The trend falls into three main categories:

Tech accessories: Innovative chargers are the big story here, including solar chargers and multi-taskers such as the Power Wallet, that powers your phone and holds your cash and credit cards.

Personalization: “Gone are the days when people want items with a company logo on it,” says Lewis. “It’s all about the customer, not about the company that is giving the item.” It could be something simple, like a pen with bacon on it for the bacon lover, a blanket emblazoned with their favourite sport or a pendant with a meaningful message.

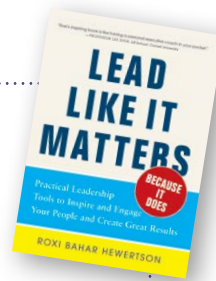
Safety and Travel: Convenience items for the person on the go are always appreciated, says Lewis. “They want to know that their items are safe and that they have everything organized.” SECRIID credit card protectors, security tags that locate phones or baggage and luggage organizers all meet that need.

CAREER TIP

Listen up

Roxi Bahar Hewertson is the CEO of Highland Consulting Group, Inc. and the author of *Lead Like it Matters...Because it Does*. We asked her to share her top tip for taking leadership to the next level:

“No one can get too skilled at listening—and really, if you aren’t listening, you aren’t leading. What is said matters; what is not said can matter even more. We are often too busy being busy to pay attention. We think we can multi-task a dozen things at once, only to find that we’ve missed an important meeting, call, conversation or nuance that cost us one way or another. Slow down and listen!”



Get Schooled

Make it your New Years resolution to boost your credentials. Two new programs to consider:

Healthcare Meeting Compliance Certificate (HMCC): Launched in 2013 and recently purchased by MPI, this certificate program is accredited through Saint Louis University. It covers compliance regulations, laws and techniques for managing healthcare meetings. The program will be offered at the World Congress Meeting Planner’s Summit in February, Pharma Forum in March and MPI-WEC in August. mpiweb.org/ProfessionalDevelopment/hmcc

The Customer Certified Sales Expert (CCSE): Geared to suppliers, the program covers proposal writing, prospecting using technology and other useful skills.

The CCSE requires candidates to complete 12 hour-long webinars taught by senior-level planners and industry experts. Candidates have a full year to complete their coursework and tests. CCSE designees are privy to private meet-ups of senior-level planners at major industry conferences, such as IMEX and MPI WEC.

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COLOUR TREND



Soothing Shades

While the greatly anticipated 2015 Pantone Colour of the Year won’t be announced until after this issue goes to press, we might be able to get some clues from the company’s Fashion Color Report for Spring 2015. The collection is called En Plein Air and features understated brights, pale pastels and nature-like neutrals.

Barrel-aged cocktails

Not only does serving cocktails from a barrel look cool, it also allows the ingredients to mingle and mature, resulting in a richer flavour. And the make-ahead factor is great for crowds—all you have to do is pour! You can try one yourself at the Four Seasons, which has recently launched a number of barrel-aged drinks unique to each property—such as The Richland Rum and Coke at the Atlanta location and Barrel-Aged Manhattan at the Four Seasons Chicago.

DRINK TREND

