



HOME ACCENTS TODAY'S ANNUAL RETAIL STARS LIST IS MADE UP OF specialty retailers and design boutiques that are staying on top of the game with creative merchandising, community involvement and out-of-the-box business ideas. They shop the markets in Atlanta, New York, High Point, Las Vegas, Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, San Francisco and others, and sell their decorative accessories, rugs, lamps, accent furniture, wall decor, botanicals, soft goods and tableware in locations across the country.

This year's list includes five stores each from Georgia and California, four from Michigan, and three each from Nebraska, New York, Texas and Virginia. About half have been open for at least a decade, and 15 have been in business for at least 20 years, similar to the longevity profile of the stores in our 2009 Retail Stars list.

BY **SUSAN DICKENSON**  
AND **DANA FRENCH**

The collective staffs of our 2010 Retail Stars total 3,600 employees, in a total selling space of 1.9 million square feet, smaller than last year's total square footage of 2.6 million, staffed by a collective 3,400. Twelve of this year's stores operate in at least 9,000 square feet, one store less than 2009's number.

But despite the similarities between our 2010 and 2009 lists, there are some interesting differences to note, especially when comparing this year's Stars to the pre-recession and pre-social media Stars of three years ago.

For example, in 2007, we wrote that 41 of the Stars had websites and a few were beginning to expand into "the interactive world of blogs, galleries and photo journals to grow and maintain their customer relationships." Of our 2010 Retail Stars, only three do not have a website, 42 are actively engaged in social media, and 39 of the stores are on Facebook.

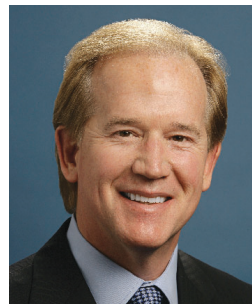
In 2006 and 2007, our lists had more stores ringing up greater than a million dollars in annual sales: 27 stores in 2006 and 23 in 2007, compared to 18 in 2009 and 19 in 2010. Most recently, however, more of our Stars are ringing up sales in excess of \$3 million: eight stores in 2010 and 11 in 2009 compared to six in 2007 and just three in 2006.

And therein may lie proof of AmericasMart CEO Jeff Portman's statement that those who embrace new methods for "navigating the unpredictable" are best prepared for the future.

Or, does it mean that when it comes to being successful, the retailers that circulate in Home Accents Today's readership universe simply outshine all the others?

Take a look at this year's list and decide for yourself. A summary of the selection methodology is presented at the end. A store can only be named to our Retail Stars list once. This is not a ranking, so the stores are listed in alphabetical order along with a summary that doesn't do them justice. We encourage you to visit their websites and stores for a closer look.

## What makes a star a star?



*In the world of entertainment and popular culture, the answer to that question is immediate ... and obvious.*

*In retailing, though, we reach farther and look deeper into the exceptional qualities and achievements that come together in perfect*

*union to create a business set apart and above.*

*The alchemy that defines true success is elusive to many and second nature to some. And while the old conviction of "it's in the blood" holds for retail legacies, the standards for lasting retail success — and even retail survival — have changed. Those who know and embrace these new ways of navigating the unpredictable skies of economic disturbances, cloudy consumer behavior and trend updrafts/downdrafts are best prepared to fly safely and smoothly into the future.*

*Retailers who are positioned and prepared to prosper are those who not only have a command of business essentials but who also understand the power of vision and passion — factors that more often than not define the vitality of a retail business as much as the business plan.*

*Today we see and hear much about retail reinvention ... taking risks ... being bold. In the best of times, these concepts are important. In today's environment, they are imperative. We see these commitments lived out in the presence of the tens of thousands of independent retailers who come to do business in our markets, and we greatly admire the dedication and conviction they bring to the task.*

*Surely the essential qualities of imagination, inspiration, tenacity and the quest for all things new are present in the lives, careers and accomplishments of the 2010 Retail Stars. How good it is to see them applauded here, and what a great honor it is for us to help celebrate their extraordinary achievements.*

JEFFREY L. PORTMAN SR.  
President and Chief Operating Officer  
AmericasMart Atlanta

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## MARKETPLACE INTERIORS GADSDEN, ALA.

**1 STORE; ESTIMATED 2009 TOTAL SALES: Less than \$1 million**

Home furnishings specialist, in business since 2003. Offers upper-middle price points in 1,000 square feet of selling space. Home accents are devoted to 80% of space. Total sales per square foot, \$150. Home accent sales per square foot, \$130. Has three employees. Home accents include accent furniture, lamps, wall decor, decorative pillows, permanent botanicals, tabletop, garden decor and other decorative accessories. Key vendors include Bailey Street, Imax and Jonathan Charles for accent furniture; Imax, Midwest-CBK, Napa Home & Garden, Park Hill, Homart and Accent Decor for decorative accessories; Sterling, Imax and Flambeau for lamps; AFD Home, Peacock, Imax and R. Rogers Designs for wall decor. Home accents accounted for 30% of 2009 total sales; accent furniture, 20%; other merchandise, including custom floral designs and custom table linens, 50%. Social media includes Twitter, Facebook and MySpace. Participates in historic downtown First Friday events. Monthly events include meet the artists, floral design and meet the chef. Merchandises with the seasons and says its most important feature is customer service.



## MOMENTS ON MAIN RED WING, MINN.

**1 STORE; ESTIMATED 2009 TOTAL SALES: Less than \$1 million**

Home accent and gift specialist, established in 2005. Offers mid-priced lines in 1,100 square feet of selling space, with 30% of floor devoted to home accents. Total sales per square foot, \$173. Has a team of three sales associates. Carries accent furniture, lamps, wall decor, decorative pillows, tabletop, garden decor and other decorative accessories. Key vendors include Sterling, Southern Heritage Woodworks and Midwest-CBK for accent furniture; K&K, Midwest-CBK and California Floral for decorative accessories; Vintage Verandah, Sterling, Midwest-CBK and Giftcraft for lamps; Ashton, Demdaco, Language Arts and Midwest-CBK for wall decor. Has a Facebook fan page. Is an active part of the historic downtown. Hosts three seasonal open houses each year and a birthday party in April. Located near the Mississippi River, this store's location and architectural storefront attracts many customers. Strives to under-promise and over-deliver. [momentsonmain.com](http://momentsonmain.com)

## NEBRASKA FURNITURE MART OMAHA, NEB.

**2 STORES; ESTIMATED 2009 TOTAL SALES: \$10 million or more**

Home furnishings specialist, founded in 1937. Founder Rose Blumkin sold a majority interest to Berkshire Hathaway in 1983. Store remains under the leadership of Blumkin's son and grandsons. Operates one store each in Omaha and Kansas City, Kan. Offers promotional to high-end lines in a combined 900,000 square feet selling space. Home accents devoted to 5% of space. Total sales per square foot, \$750. Home accents include accent furniture, lamps, lighting, wall decor, decorative pillows, permanent botanicals, rugs, tabletop, garden decor and other decorative accessories. Key

vendors include Powell, Bassett and Uttermost for accent furniture; Uttermost, UMA, Imax, Interlude and Import Collections for decorative accessories; Lite Source, Pacific Coast, Stein World and Ashley for lamps; Paragon, New Century Picture, Stylecraft and Bassett for wall decor. Has a Facebook fan page and a Twitter account. Teamed with Thomas Kinkade this year for an in-store event. Merchandises to show customers how product will look at home. Offers a one-stop shopping experience. Brings new product to its floor each day, giving shoppers a reason to come back. [nfm.com](http://nfm.com)

## PALAVELA HOME SCOTTSDALE, ARIZ.

**1 STORE; ESTIMATED 2009 TOTAL SALES: Less than \$1 million**

Home and design showroom, established in 2007. Is owned and managed through a mother and son partnership. Offers mid-priced to high-end lines in 8,000 square feet of selling space. Home accents are devoted to 75% of space. Home accents include accent furniture, lamps, lighting, wall decor, decorative pillows, permanent botanicals and other decorative accessories. Key vendors include Pulaski, Art As Antiques and Jonathan Charles for accent furniture; Cyan, Roost, Global Views and Import Collection for decorative accessories; Currey & Company, Robert Abbey and Arteriors for lamps; Uttermost and Global Views for wall decor. Home accents accounted for 25% of 2009 total sales; accent furniture, 25%; furniture, 50%. Has a Facebook fan page. Hosts a quarterly client event tied to a local charity. Likes to showcase a mixture of styles that work together. Says that personal service is a guarantee. [palavelahome.com](http://palavelahome.com)

## PERENNIAL DESIGNS NEEDHAM, MASS.

**1 STORE; ESTIMATED 2009 TOTAL SALES: Less than \$1 million**

Custom floral designer and home accent specialist, founded in 1993. The store is modeled after a French flower store and offers promotional to high-end lines in 1,000 square feet of selling space. Home accents occupy 75% of space. Home accents include wall decor, permanent botanicals, tabletop and decorative accessories. Key vendors include The Import Collection, Oriental Danny, PMJC, East Enterprises, Silk Botanica, California Floral Supply and Tapscott's for decorative accessories; Timothy's Fine Art, Biologi and Wendover Art for wall decor. Home accents accounted for 75% of 2009 total sales; other, including custom silk floral designs, books and stationery, 25%. Has a social media presence through Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. Features a local artist each season to promote creative people in the area. Asks clients to bring in new or gently-used clothing during special events to donate to a local women's shelter. Believes the future of small business is tied to each of us working together and promoting each other. Perennial Design's number one goal is superior customer service. [pdesignsonline.com](http://pdesignsonline.com)

## RANDOM DALLAS

**1 STORE; ESTIMATED 2009 TOTAL SALES: Less than \$1 million**

Home accent and gift specialist, in business since 2005. Carries mid-priced to high-end lines in 3,800 square feet of selling space. Home accents occupy 60% of space. Also sells online. Has two employees. Home accents include accent furniture, wall decor, decorative pillows, permanent botanicals, rugs, tabletop, garden decor and other decorative accessories. Key vendors include Austin, Jeremie, Demdaco, Jones & Jones Abode, Fringe, Roost and Allen Designs for decorative accessories. Also carries antiques and original works by local artists. Home accents accounted for 40% of 2009 total sales; accent furniture, 15%; other merchandise, including gifts, stationery, jewelry, home fragrance and personal care, 45%. Added a teen/tween 200-sq.-ft. section, called India's Corner, in 2008, at the urging of the owner's daughter. Vendors include Bruce McGaw Graphics, Fatboy, Karma Living, Molly 'n Me and Natural Life. This area now accounts for 8% of overall sales. Participates in Partners Card, an annual charity event benefiting a local battered women and children's shelter. Markets secret sales via e-mail. Merchandises in a random way to create conversation and interaction with customers. [shopatrandom.com](http://shopatrandom.com)

## SCHNEIDERMAN'S FURNITURE LAKEVILLE, MINN.

**5 STORES; ESTIMATED 2009 TOTAL SALES: \$10 million or more**

Furniture retailer operating one store each in Duluth, Lakeville, Roseville, Woodbury and Plymouth, Minn. In business since 1948. Stores carry promotional to