

GIFT SHOP
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Fresh Ideas for Retailing Success

The FUN is on pg. 21



RETAIL RESOLUTIONS

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CREATIVITY FOR KIDS



Kim Stoegbauer of The TomKat Studio turned online success into a one-stop retail shop offering everything from boutique party supplies to gifts and treats. *Photos courtesy of Rennai Hoefer, www.Ten22studio.com.*

Parting Shot

The TomKat Studio expands online success to brick-and-mortar store

BY ABBY HEUGEL

Assistant Editor

Kim Stoegbauer is a party stylist and founder of The TomKat Studio, a blog and shop filled with creative inspiration. After leaving her real estate career in 2008, she started her blog on a whim, to share her creative projects including home decorating, crafts and parties.

She came up with the name “TomKat” by combining her children’s names, Tommy + Kate. A few months later, Stoegbauer shared Kate’s 2nd birthday party and it became apparent that there was a big demand for her creativity.

She opened an Etsy shop selling party packages including invitations, cupcake toppers, banners and more. As the demand continued to grow, she went digital with her designs. It helped her balance her time and her customers love the concept. Last year, Kim opened a one-stop online party supply shop to offer her printable designs, along with a selection of party supplies, accessories and gifts.

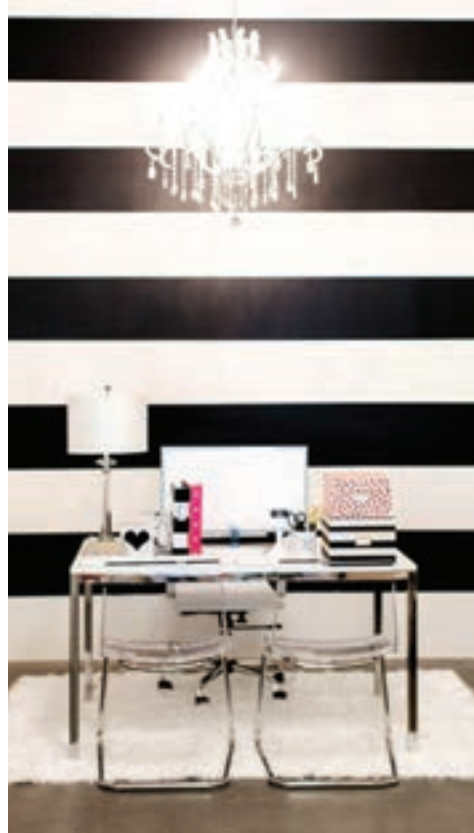
“The online shop was a success and I started dreaming of one day opening a retail location, that would offer our

local customers a place to see and feel our products in person, and also be able to offer party planning services,” Stoegbauer said. “That dream came true September 2014 when we opened our retail shop in Chandler, Arizona.”

“With the new retail shop, I have added so many new products that are in the gift category, rather than party,” she said. “I want customers to want to visit and see what’s new on a regular basis, not just when they are planning a party. I think as awareness grows about the shop, we will become the go-to place for boutique party supplies but in the meantime we are offering our everyday customers adorable gifts and treats.”

Her experience has expanded into ongoing photo and party styling opportunities for major brands like HGTV and Pottery Barn Kids.

“I have expanded my brand by taking slow steps,” she said. “It has been quite a process to figure out what works and what doesn’t, but I believe the best way is to give something a try and see what the results are. You’ll never know if you don’t try.” **GS**



Clockwise from top left: The store's window features its signature black and white with pops of color — in this case ballerina pink. The horizontal striped wall creates a striking backdrop for Kim's office space in the shop. The cash wrap counter is well-lit thanks to two drum shade chandeliers. The girls' Premium Pettiskirt is a popular item in every color of the rainbow. Sweets to eat and hang on the wall add to the festive atmosphere.