Drapery & Design
PROFESSIONAL

Serving the Custom Home Furnishings Industry since 1993

Table of Contents

Laurie Medford is the customer engagement manager for Rowley Company. Before joining Rowley Company, Laurie owned Centsible Creations, a professional design, fabrication and installation company for both wholesale and retail customers. Laurie is an instructor for Custom Home Furnishings Academy and is a member of WCAA and WFCP.

Anita Boetsma has been involved in the interior design and window treatment business for more than 26 years. Anita has taught at the Custom Home Furnishings Academy. She writes for several industry publications as well as presenting seminars and webinars. Anita is currently the director of education for Helser Brothers.
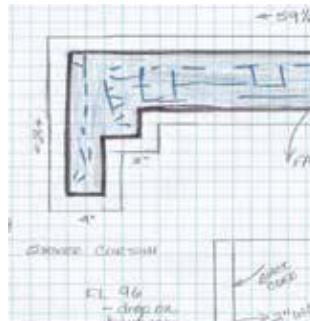
Beth Hodges, owner of Beth Hodges Soft Furnishings, a wholesale workroom servicing high-end designers both locally and around the country. Beth is a Certified Window Treatment Consultant, Certified Workroom Professional, Window Fashions Certified Professional Expert and the Past President of the Window Coverings Association of America. Contact Beth at beth@bethhodges.com.
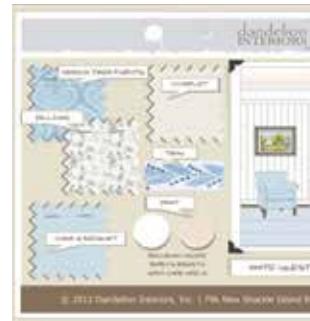
Merlyn Corcoran consults for Minutes Matter Solutions as the company's Studio coach and webinar host, and serves as the unofficial "mother hen" of the CHF Forum. After owning and operating a retail workroom for 26 years in Massachusetts, Merlyn and her husband Bourke retired to California where they are enjoying their four grandchildren and the sunshine.

Creating Customer Samplers That Close the Sale

By Laurie Medford
Charlotte, N.C.

Photo 1

Photo 2

Photo 3

As customers, we know we're more comfortable buying a product we've had a chance to look at and put our hands on. Your customers are no different. When presenting a project proposal, having actual product samples to show customers can go a long way toward selling the job.

A storyboard, the master of all samples, allows our customers to see and feel fabric and trim combinations and approve renderings, as well as give them the "big picture". Photo 1 above shows a storyboard for a contemporary bedroom we recently created for our Rowley Roomscapes series. The storyboard helped us plan for our photo shoot, and included the fabrics, decorative hardware finishes and embellishments we selected for the project. In addition, we included inspirational photos and sketches.

Having a professionally organized storyboard can inspire your customers and help advance you toward your ultimate goal — making the sale. Let's delve into some of the other samplers you can put together. Without a doubt, these tools will increase your sales potential and, most important, improve your bottom line.

A grommet sampler is a great tool to have in your sales bag. It allows you to test pole fit, explain sizes, compare colors and textures, and share a complete collection. A grommet sampler is fairly easy to make, but can take a few hours to complete. I would suggest fabricating three: EZ-Set™ grommets (Photo 2) metal grommets (Photo 3) and plastic grommets (Photo 4). You can also sew on labels that list available colors and sizes.

Be sure to first lay out the grommets you want to display, so you'll know how large to make the sample. Cut a front and back, plus seam allowances. Press a layer of iron-on batting to the back of the front fabric. Lay out your grommet placement pattern and mark for the holes. Sew the front to the back, turn and topstitch to close the opening. Cut holes and set the grommets. Sew on the labels.

A button sampler is smaller and will take less time to construct (Photo 5). It allows you to exhibit all sizes and styles of buttons (crimp and snap-together), as well as attachment methods (some stitched and others clasped with the locking washer), and can put customers in a button-buying mood. Since we charge for every button, this sampler may be small, but it can have a big impact on your bottom line.

The decorative nail sampler is my favorite (Photo 6). It shows styles, sizes and colors of nails that I use frequently. It would be impossible to put every nail ever used on the sampler, so be sure to keep reference material handy. This sampler is a great tool for opening the eyes of your customer to new possibilities — not only in nail styles but in nail placement. As you can see with the pillow in Photo 7, decorative nails are not just for upholstery anymore!

To lock the nails to the sampler and make it safer to carry, use Rowley Company's upholstery nail lock tool, the nail locks and the plastic backs. For this sampler you'll need to put all of the nails in place, lock them down, and then cut off the shanks before sewing on the back. Place a layer of batting over the back piece before sewing it to the front piece to help pad the cut ends. If you think you'll want to leave room for adding new nail designs, or removing those that are discontinued or out of style, you can always use a zipper.

Although making the samplers takes some time and a little bit of product, they'll become great sales tools for you. For easier carrying, add a handle, or fasten a small grommet to the top corner of each sampler and clip them all together with an O-ring. Construct them out of a sturdy fabric and they'll last forever. ✂


Photo 4

Photo 5

Photo 6

Photo 7

Rowley
DECORATING SUPPLIES & MORE

ROOMSCAPES

INSPIRATION   EDUCATION   FABRICATION   INSTALLATION

CREATE ROOMS YOUR CUSTOMERS WILL L♥VE
AND RECEIVE EXCLUSIVE SAVINGS.

SUBSCRIBE TO ROWLEY ROOMSCAPES TODAY!

WWW.ROWLEYCOMPANY.COM/SIGNUP
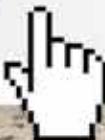
**SIGN UP FOR OUR FREE E-NEWSLETTER,
AND WE'LL DELIVER IDEAS RIGHT TO YOUR INBOX.**

- INSPIRATIONAL IMAGE BOARDS
- EDUCATIONAL WEBINARS
- FABRICATION PROJECT LISTS
- INSTALLATION TIPS & TRICKS

PLUS EXCLUSIVE DISCOUNTS!

COMING SOON:
ROWLEY KITCHEN & LIVING ROOM ROOMSCAPES!

Rowley
DECORATING SUPPLIES & MORE