

## HINKLEY LIGHTS UP INDUSTRY WITH NEW SHOWROOM AND SALES TOOL

It's an exciting time for Cleveland-based Hinkley Lighting. In addition to developing its new publication *Lighting Made Simple™*, the company is also unveiling a redesigned showroom for the January Dallas International Lighting Market, and celebrating its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary!

*Lighting Made Simple* was created to take the fear out of consumers' decision-making process when shopping for lighting. Since it was introduced in June, more than 6,000 requests for the magazine have been received and close to 10,000 copies distributed to showrooms as part of Hinkley's co-op program. A virtual version of the publication is available on the company's digital publishing platform as well. That means e-tailers and showrooms are able to embed *Lighting Made Simple* into their Web site and upgrade their own media outreach and share the magazine through their own social media tools.

The project came about as a result

of rigorous research. "Looking at the current state of the retail environment and the challenges our customers are facing, we recently made a significant investment in consumer research," explains Rick Wiedemer, president of Hinkley Lighting. "We did intense, blind focus groups in several areas of the country to get real-life feedback on what consumers see as challenges or roadblocks to purchasing. We also conducted more than 60 undercover visits to showrooms across the country to get a true sense of what it is like out there for the consumer who knows little to nothing about lighting. To say the results were eye-opening is an understatement.

"Because of that research we are developing new initiatives to increase business for our partners. *Lighting Made Simple* is one of the steps we are taking. Seeing how hungry consumers are for information, and based on the statistics that almost 90 percent of shoppers now research products online before buying, we leveraged our award-winning lifestyle photography, incorporated technical information from the Design Centers in our catalog, and included helpful design trend ideas from our nationally recognized contributing designers to create the guide."

Just six months in and the feedback on the endeavor has been extremely positive. "Based on the high volume of requests for the magazine, there was a definite need for this type of user-friendly information on both the consumer and showroom levels," Wiede-

mer states. "Showrooms are looking for new ways to connect with savvy consumers since the retail environment has changed so drastically, and we are confident that this helps to fill that information gap."

Hinkley is continuing its drive to become the primary resource for retailers with a refreshed showroom debuting in Dallas next month. The company chose to work with a California designer for the project and found the collaboration to be illuminating. "Lisa McDennon is a part of Hinkley's network of nationally renowned interior designers that we collaborate with. Her expertise and guidelines are included in the Design Centers in our catalogs and various sales tools," Wiedemer notes. "She really understands our vision of a new showroom that will inspire creativity for our customers and help them grow their business. We interviewed several designers for this project and Lisa's portfolio really clicked with us; her aesthetic mirrors our 'Life Aglow' branding, so it was the perfect collaboration." The plans incorporate innovative visual merchandising concepts including distinctly designed category sections for chandeliers, bath, and outdoor, with what promises to be a jaw-dropping entrance, working vignettes that bring the product to life, and a state-of-the-art Fredrick Ramond boutique.

The grand opening of the remodeled showroom coincides with the company's 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary and its nomination as a finalist in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual ARTS Awards.

"By using a range of resources we have truly been able to turn challenges into opportunities," Wiedemer concludes. "Our showroom will provide an experience for the lighting retailers unlike any other at the Dallas Market Center. They will gain ideas to implement in their own showrooms to improve their business and appreciate what a partnership with Hinkley can really be worth."

