

# Next is Now

*Technology and Experience Merge to Create the Shopping Environment of the Future – Today*

Technology is influencing the way people shop with an energizing pattern of pre-consideration via online research, their real life connection through experience, and utilisation at the point of sale. Next is Now involves multiple steps and more channel-hopping than ever considered in the past. As a consumer, I might see a new item on TV (and Google it while still watching the show) or in a magazine (connecting immediately to the mentioned website); a friend might have purchased it or maybe I even saw it in another store (and check on the stats via my cell phone or PDA). Or to be even more deliberate, I might go home and research it to seek the best price, availability and colours – all before I purchase. All of this consideration

is not necessarily only for high ticket items; it might involve infrequent purchases including personalised products or determining the best place to buy a gift card to fit my recipient's unique interests and needs.

### Get Connected

Today's shopping trip might take me to eBay, a manufacturer's website, an online retailer or a bricks-and-mortar store. I might use my cell phone and computer; solicit a peer review from a new shopping blog or a self-proclaimed expert on Wikipedia to see how they rate the product or retailer. I might visit a new city and go through many of the same steps to find out who the interesting retailers are,



**Kenneth Nisch**  
Chairman, JGA, INC.



Get Connected (Verizon Wireless)

At Verizon Wireless, the store experience provides a practical solution through a marketing dimensional matrix allowing integration of graphics and interactive product displays.

*Kenneth Nisch is an architect and chairman of JGA, Inc., a retail design, architecture and brand strategy firm in Southfield, Michigan. Named one of the industry's "Most Influential," Nisch applies his knowledge and entrepreneurial insight into consumer markets to create concept and prototype development, brand image positioning and architectural direction. JGA's clients include Godiva Chocolatier, Brookstone, Cortefiel/Springfield, Verizon Wireless, Borders, Hershey's, Hickey Freeman, Jaguar and The North Face. Ken may be reached at 1.248.355.0890, www.jga.com or info@jga.com.*



### Experience It (Hershey's Shanghai)

From NYC and Chicago to Shanghai, China, Hershey's transforms the authentic character of the candy factory into a collection of brand advertising, nostalgic art and interactive focal features to become a memorable consumer experience



### Make it Yours (Things Remembered)

At Things Remembered their lifestyle approach focuses on individual collections that promote gifting and personalization ideas.

and may even use that as a way of weighing one destination over another – be it a city, neighborhood or store.

### Make It Yours

Like most trends, with this access to all things, any place, any time, there is an equal and opposite trend. Next is Now can be about making it mine, one-of-a-kind, putting my measure of creativity into the process. The growth of "studio shops" where retailers host or create opportunities for in-store creation is not just about selling me the materials and utensils, but about creating a place that adds a social and community aspect to the process. It is taking everyday objects, and through a process such as engraving, turning this common gift into a unique "only from me to you" gift. Customisation is not limited to the one-of-a-kind retailers or global giants. Some companies allow consumers (at a premium price) to add, subtract, change and modify colours, textures, and materials making a new personality while maintaining the technical performance and superiority of the product.



### Redefine It (Borders)

The new technology-rich Borders prototype prompts customers to experience an iconic blend of traditional bookstores with futuristic neighborhood communication center.

### Experience It

Next is Now is about co-creation as part of the store theater. Candy makers such as Hershey's with its "Hersheyizer" create custom and topical cupcakes celebrating life - from Valentine's Day to local sports teams' championships. Even the ubiquitous Starbucks flatters the customer. They have perfected the process of custom creations with the approximate 17,000 options and choices (toppings, non-fat, double whipped cream, etc.) offered from their menu. Yet their ultimate compliment is when the local coffee barista recognizes you possibly not only by name, but as well by the originality and the uniqueness of your "just for you" beverage during the morning drive-to-work, get-coffee-first ritual.

### Redefine It

In "old school" bookstore meets the twenty first century, Borders with their new digital zone; features everything from Sony Readers (digital books) and software programs to

gadgets and technology that expand the booklover's access to media, entertainment and knowledge. Multiple generations of "readers" are becoming avid listeners and watchers, downloading, custom mixing and transferring content assets to personal devices within the guided and assisted environment of Border's digital zone.

### Get Eco-Iconic

In contrast to the digital zone, Next is Now integrates the natural world as crucial element. Understanding the social and human impact through social interaction, environment or culture, the retailer needs to be aware of the products they sell and the environment in which they sell them in relation to how they will be viewed and judged by their consumers. While traditionally this has only been true with a very narrow set of eco-focused consumers, the green movement is extending into the mainstream; particularly for retailers whose consumer brings a new generation's sense of angst and mission into the world of

tomorrow's consumers.

**Where will you go Next? How will you do it Now?**

*Ken Nisch will be a featured speaker at the In-Store Asia conference July 16-18, 2009 in Bangalore. For details, visit [www.instoreasia.org](http://www.instoreasia.org).*