

# TREND REPORT *fall '06*

## ROMANCING THE BUMP

Armanda Texidor, *A New View Maternity*

This season is about embracing feminine beauty. Inspired by the femme fatale, classic shapes will emerge with a soft and sexy slant.

All that is vintage is new again. Tucks and pleats will allow woven fabrics to hug the body. Cool fabrics like silk and satin will layer and flutter with ease. Slim tops are longer; puff shoulders are fresh.

Surface interest makes way for lace, velvet, and flocking for warmth. Adornments will include metallic threads, skinny velveteen ribbons, beading and colored crystals.

**Denim continues to be strong.** A wide range of treatments including studs, grommets and patches battle to take the lead in newness, but shapes will win out. Wide legs complement slim-hipped jeans. Skinny-legged jeans are a must to wear with longer tops, tunics, blazers and tall boots.

The slim skirt, the gaucho, and the dress are rivals when it comes to showing off curves of all kind.

**Blues are back.** Peacock, navy, and teal look great. Olive, plum and orange pop against indigo. Neutrals include slate grey, winter white, charcoal and New York black. Chocolate and latte are now basics just like pink and baby blue.

**Coats are a great accessory this season.** Double breasted jackets, furry hoods, and long simple wraps add character to the season's steel colors.

**Prints have evolved.** Monotone geometrics, faded paisleys, alternative colored camouflage, and tied-dyed cottons are rich and warm.



[www.noppies.com](http://www.noppies.com)



[www.elinotto.com](http://www.elinotto.com)



[www.puret.net](http://www.puret.net)

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# what's HOT Now

Fall 2006

This issue marks the one year anniversary of The American Baby Maternity Alliance; a powerful and ambitious effort through which we have united the entire independent maternity design and retail community. And, we could not have done it without you! Look for more updates, promotional opportunities and new information in the weeks and months to come. Be sure to share with us your feedback and suggestions. We are eager to see this union continue to grow and thrive.

*Norma S. Blatto*

Norma Blatto  
Publisher, *American Baby*

## NURTURE YOUR "baby" AND WATCH IT GROW

Shannon DiPadova, *Due Maternity*

Owning a small business is one of the most rewarding and challenging experiences you will have. To succeed and grow, you must understand every aspect of your business and continue to educate yourself. Below are some key ways to nurture your company:

**Remember your business plan.** It's important to refer to your original business plan periodically to make sure you are still on track with your goals.

**Delegate routine tasks and managerial responsibilities to employees you trust.** This can be hard for small business owners who are used to doing everything themselves. But learning to delegate will free you to focus on the road ahead.

**Stay Informed.** Read every publication you can about your industry. Watching the trends can drive sales simply by knowing what the celebrities are wearing and communicating this to your customer.

**Explore marketing and promotional opportunities with other businesses that have a similar target.** You might share customer lists, run co-op advertising and create special events together. This is less expensive than regular advertising, and enables you to meet other business owners in the process.

One other important thing to remember as your company grows: retain some life balance. Don't forget to play with your kids, take a walk or get that massage. Isn't that part of the reason you started your own business in the first place?



[www.duematernity.com](http://www.duematernity.com)

## DESIGNER PROFILE

# Maria Asker

ELINOTTO Maternity is the brainchild of veteran fashion executive and mom Maria Asker. The line, launched in 2002, has grown along with her family. Now the mother of three and the founding designer of two lines, Maria is busy, inspired and full of plans.

### Q. Why maternity? What inspired you to launch ELINOTTO?

A. When I became pregnant in 1999, I was a fashion executive and highly critical of what was available to wear. I made it through that pregnancy by wearing a lot of jersey stretch and by sewing a few essential pieces for myself. I remember thinking that there were no "maternity clothes" that were sleek and modern. Then when I became pregnant again, I knew I could make a difference. I resigned from my position as VP of merchandising and product development at Joseph Abboud Apparel and launched ELINOTTO.



[www.elinotto.com](http://www.elinotto.com)

### Q. What makes ELINOTTO so unique?

A. ELINOTTO designs are clean, sleek and elegant with subtle fashion details. They are not overly embellished or trendy. As a result of my product development background, I have exceptional standards in fabric and garment construction. Our customers consistently comment on the feel and quality of our fabrics. Most of my styles can be worn by any woman, pregnant and not.

### Q. The success of the Collection led you to create your White Label for spring 2006. What differentiates White Label from your Collection?

A. My collection, **Platinum Label**, is made with Italian fabrics, the finest quality yarns and very special attention is paid to all details such as linings, trims and finishings. Retail price points are between \$108-\$258. **White Label** is more affordable than my collection, yet remains stylish and comfortable. I did not want to limit my products to a select niche in the market. Retail price points are between \$65-\$149. This customer still enjoys the same design aesthetic as my collection customer.

### Q. Where do you look for ideas?

A. Everywhere...people-watching, boutiques, editorials, art and magazines, both here and abroad.

## Celebrity Belly GOES LOCAL

Julia Beck, *FortyWeeks*

This is the year of celebrity pregnancies. The "Belly Craze" has the nation following along as Angelina, Brooke, Gwyneth and Katie make their way to motherhood. This translates to pages and pages of coverage in national magazines, on TV and on the internet. Turn these "hits" into local media opportunities for your store with these sure-fire tips:

**1. Keep an eye out for publicity** about maternity fashions and accessories that you might carry. For example, Lil' Dipper Baby Skin Care products have been linked to Mary Louise Parker, Brooke Shields, and Jennifer Garner; Bravado Nursing Bras have been a favorite of Britney Spears and Ming-Na; Duet and Tummi have been featured on Alias and Grey's Anatomy.

**2. Stay in close contact** with the media. Find out what national coverage your top lines have been getting, and use it to spawn local coverage via press releases or personal phone calls. (It's best to know how your media contacts like to get information, so do your homework). For example, point out that Angelina wears a great deal of Cadeau, and that you are the local source for this coveted line.

**3. Be a reliable source.** Know what is going on with celebrity pregnancy fashion, and bring the media up to speed.

**4. Lend product** to local media for segments or photo shoots. Let them know that you are the best local resource for maternity fashion -- be a helpful and reliable guide.

**5. Bring celebrity "belly craze" to life!** Create windows that encourage pregnant patrons to "steal that look." Include magazine clippings to make the connection between your fashions and the haute mamas of Hollywood.

Remember, the local media are looking for stories, and you have got news to share. Happy pitching! [www.fortyweeks.com](http://www.fortyweeks.com)

## ACCESSORIES, etc.

To celebrate the fall season, our "off-the-rack" picks for some new and buzz-worthy lines are all eco-friendly. Look for products that engage the senses. Here are some of the latest, greatest, "greenest" things we have seen.

### OOPA BABY

Oopa Baby is the next generation of sling carriers, giving every new mom a hip, funky and fashionable way to hit the town with new baby. Oopa slings have a luxurious shawl-like feel and look. They come in a variety of colors and textures that will merchandise wonderfully in-store. [www.oopababy.com](http://www.oopababy.com)

### UNDER THE NILE

Under the Nile's colorful and cute layette items are made from 100% organic Egyptian cotton produced without pesticides or chemicals. These must-have baby items will appeal to moms and grandmas who care deeply about what goes next to the newborn's skin. [www.underthenile.com](http://www.underthenile.com)

### NUTRABELLA

Keep your hungry clients happy and shopping in-store longer. Delicious, nutritious Belly Bars come in assorted flavors and have been specially formulated to meet the nutritional needs of women before, during and after pregnancy. This simple add-on will enhance and extend the shopping experience. Consider offering product samples to drive sales. [www.nutrabella.com](http://www.nutrabella.com)

### ERBAVIVA

Your pregnant clients will adore the all-natural and organic Erbaviva skincare lines. Developed specifically for baby and mommy-to-be, the products are made with essential oils and organic milk powder. Pamper your clients with products that will help them glow throughout their pregnancy and keep them coming back! [www.erbaviva.com](http://www.erbaviva.com)



[www.erbaviva.com](http://www.erbaviva.com)



[www.oopababy.com](http://www.oopababy.com)

## STROLLERS boost THE BOTTOM LINE

Kari Boiler, *Bugaboo*

"Have Baby, Will Travel" is the mantra for today's parents. And one of the first questions parents face is how to get around with their new baby. Retailers can serve their customers' lifestyle needs by offering a versatile collection of mobility products for parents.

In 2004, annual sales of baby durables (car seats, strollers and travel systems) were over \$690 million. The juvenile products market has grown 187% in the past 10 years, and the baby durables category will continue to increase at a rapid rate. Fifty-one percent of parents purchase their stroller within the third trimester, when they are actively shopping for maternity. Adding this key category to your retail mix becomes an efficient

way to boost sales and solidify your retail positioning. Bringing products in becomes simple when working with a knowledgeable manufacturer. Choose a brand that suits your store's profile. More than ever, functional high design products are in demand. Bugaboo, the Dutch design company, created strollers to meet the needs of active families in the city, sand, snow and off-road. Latest models from Bugaboo, the Bugaboo Gecko and Cameleon communicate high-performance and adventure in a modern design.



[www.bugaboo.com](http://www.bugaboo.com)