

Press release

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## Tips from Eva Olbrich for the high-turnover Christmas season

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Since July 2021, Eva Olbrich has also taken over the management of Creativeworld, trade fair for the international hobby, craft and artists' supplies sector, in addition to Christmasworld, the international trade fair for seasonal and festive decoration. She is thus responsible for two strong product worlds that are also moving closer together in the trade. In this interview, she shares her expertise for the preparations for the strongest-selling and most emotional time of the year.



Christmas is less than four months away: Time to prepare for the strongest-selling and most emotional time of the year. Photo: Messe Frankfurt / Pietro Sutera

**What creative trends have you seen in 2021 that you think will be popular this Christmas?**

**Eva Olbrich, Director Christmasworld and Creativeworld, Messe Frankfurt Exhibition GmbH:** It is very obvious that DIY experienced another boom during Corona. Do-it-yourself is more in vogue than ever before, people had time again for beautiful and creative things. The topic of sustainability has also gained in importance.

Interesting DIY trends that are also appropriate for Christmas are homemade and personalised wrapping paper and packaging - here, for example, through batik or the Japanese variant shibori, which also works on paper.

In addition, screen printing is experiencing a renaissance. Lettering and Christmas motifs can be printed on a wide variety of surfaces - for postcards, but also napkins or tablecloths. Complete sets for crochet, embroidery patterns, handlettering sets including instructions or printing

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sets can be offered as gift ideas. It is also very trendy to make your own paints, for which there are also complete sets that enrich the range.

### **What trends do you see in festive decoration?**

For example, "blackboard baubles", which can be designed with chalk, add your own touch to the Christmas tree. Balls made of glass, ceramic or cardboard can be individualised with pens. Glass baubles that you can fill yourself with natural twigs, moss or feathers are also a trend and set sustainable accents. Or bring real Christmas trees into the shop, hang them upside down for the presentation of goods in the shop or in the shop window - this is an absolute eye-catcher and attracts customers. Nature plays a big role in the decoration: dried orange peels can be cut out with Christmas biscuit shapes and make a beautiful table or window decoration. There is a wide range of natural decorations from florists' requisites at Christmasworld and Creativeworld. Make the most of the product worlds and trends at Christmasworld and Creativeworld and create your own style.

### **What are your tips for small retailers who want to enter new product lines this Christmas?**

The desire for a sustainable lifestyle is currently greater than ever - also take this trend into account when putting together your assortment. Put your Christmas shop under a motto - for example "Green X-Mas" or "Merry, Sustainable Christmas". Decorate everything with natural materials, without plastic only with glass, ceramics, wood, felt or similar ornaments.

The new lines can be promoted through appealing window dressing. You can optimally prepare an extraordinary shopping atmosphere now.

Remember, customers want to feel products again, try them out and fire their creativity in the process. The shop window is your flagship.

Advertise your promotions there. Put a Christmas tree in the window with self-designed baubles and offer assistance in the shop for the creative design of the baubles. Show how to make other ornaments. Show what you can do! Show your strength and your competence.

In addition, especially for this Christmas business, the focus is on personal exchange: if you know your customers well, you can very well point out new products to them and pick up on their needs and preferences.

### **What are the best ways to reach customers and inform them about these innovations?**

If you want to introduce new product lines, you have to know them well and be able to offer customers competent advice. To order new product lines, I recommend our digital ordering platform Nextrade until the next live trade fair experience at Christmasworld and Creativeworld from 28/29 January to 1 February 2022.

In addition, the motto "customer loyalty through community and community building" is relevant. Workshops on the new products, which can be promoted by postcards, flyers and via social media, are ideal for this. The workshops can be conducted by your own dedicated staff, or influencers can be engaged. Workshop topics could be: Making your own Christmas decorations or candles, upcycling Christmas decorations, getting creative with paper, felt and fabrics. Position yourself as a good

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advisor. There is no one pen for exactly one product, test the handling of materials and offer new uses.

**What guiding principles have shaped you most recently? What do you give retailers to take with them?**

We had our Consumer Goods Digital Day in April and the following sentences from our keynote speaker Sanjay Sauldie have stayed in my mind in particular: If you sell with passion, you always win - even over the cheaper (online) price. Put the customer at the centre of all your considerations and don't stop constantly questioning what you are doing, just like successful start-ups do.

Think in networks with traders in your immediate neighbourhood - such as hairdressers, booksellers or cafés - and work on joint sales ideas that offer customers valuable synergies. Involve external experts for digital solutions or form a joint online presence of shopping streets with a central online shop. See lifelong learning as your personal opportunity, whoever has stopped learning has stopped participating in the economy. Everyone should internalise these guiding principles and regularly reflect on them.

**How far in advance do you think preparations for Christmas should start?**

In these special times, people start decorating for Christmas much earlier than usual, because they long for a cosy Christmas time with the family, which is now hopefully possible again in a larger group. Specialist retailers should start decorating indoors and outdoors from the beginning of November at the latest and offer the Christmas goods.

The key word for the Christmas season is emotionalisation, because this remains the decisive success factor between stationary trade and online trade. Create attention-grabbing themed worlds and presentations that appeal to all the senses and, above all, suit your business. And combine your on-site services with digital offers, because consumer shopping already begins at home via smartphone. Announce promotions not only in-store, but also in advance via your social channels.

You could use social media to launch a Christmas countdown with decorating and crafting tips to increase anticipation.

**The number of younger people interested in DIY has risen sharply. How can small businesses appeal to this age group and at the same time retain the customers of the older generation?**

Here, for example, there is the topic of street art, which attracts young people in particular. A display with matching spray cans and markers fits into every creative shop. Here, too, authentic and competent advice is important. Handlettering is still in demand across generations. But a range of products such as Christmas tree baubles with Star Wars motifs or emojis also attract young people to the shop. Crochet and knitting are popular with young and old and should appear in the assortment.

The younger generation can be reached well via social media channels. To reach both target groups equally, a mix of workshops, live actions in the shop and social media is probably the best solution.

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**How important is a good social media campaign/presence in the run-up to Christmas this year? Do you have any advice for small businesses creating a marketing plan for this season?**

Social media is very important, especially for the younger generation. Our Consumer Goods Digital Day offered exciting presentations on this topic. On our website [conzoom.solutions](http://conzoom.solutions) you can watch lectures on "Understanding social media content" or "How does influencer marketing work even with a small budget".

In all social media actions, it is important to stay with oneself and only present the core competences. Closeness to the customer is possible through personal contact. Here, trend-oriented topics are particularly suitable - this presupposes that you keep yourself informed about the latest trends on the market and stay tuned.

Furthermore, positioning is important: who am I, who are my customers and how do I want to be perceived? This also determines the channel I choose for myself - Facebook or Instagram.

Don't underestimate the time commitment that social media entails. The accounts have to be well maintained and the followers want to be well looked after. So if you want to build up your community, you have to put in manpower. Young employees or trainees who have a high affinity for social media can help here. Pupils and students are also happy about part-time jobs where they can turn their hobby into a profession.

**Do you predict that sustainability will be a key expectation for small retailers when it comes to Christmas packaging? How can businesses show their customers that they care about the planet?**

The themes around sustainability such as recycling, DIY, repairing and second-hand will be with us for a long time to come, according to our trend experts from the style agency [Stilbüro bora.herke.palmisano](http://Stilbüro.bora.herke.palmisano), who develop the Christmasworld, Paperworld and Creativeworld trends for us.

It is definitely worth starting with small steps. What is particularly noticeable in a positive way is when you do without superfluous packaging and plastic. Or if you offer packaging and ribbons made from recycled materials and use them yourself. In addition, offering regional producers is a sign of sustainable action. This can also be advertised in the shop window. A bicycle rack in front of the shop is a statement. Look for a selected range of sustainable products (papers, paints, stars, decorations, etc.). The theme is also becoming more visible at our trade fairs.

Christmasworld, Creativeworld and Paperworld will once again offer the consumer-goods sector the long-awaited physical trade-fair experience from 28/29 January to 1 February 2022. Additional digital formats will also ensure international reach, new contacts and networking opportunities during the year. Here you can already find ideas and solutions for your Christmas business.

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The three international consumer-goods trade fairs, Christmasworld, Paperworld and Creativeworld, will be held again as usual in 2022:

Christmasworld: 28 January to 1 February 2022

Creativeworld and Paperworld: 29 January to 1 February 2022.

**Further information:**

[www.christmasworld.messefrankfurt.com](http://www.christmasworld.messefrankfurt.com)

[www.creativeworld.messefrankfurt.com](http://www.creativeworld.messefrankfurt.com)

[www.paperworld.messefrankfurt.com](http://www.paperworld.messefrankfurt.com)

**Press information and photographic material:**

[christmasworld.messefrankfurt.com/press](http://christmasworld.messefrankfurt.com/press)

[creativeworld.messefrankfurt.com/press](http://creativeworld.messefrankfurt.com/press)

[paperworld.messefrankfurt.com/press](http://paperworld.messefrankfurt.com/press)

**Christmasworld**

Christmasworld focuses on the strongest-selling and most emotional time of the year and exploits the success factor of experience at the point of sale like no other consumer-goods trade fair. Therefore Christmasworld is the world's most important order venue for the international decoration and festive articles sector. Held annually in Frankfurt, it presents the latest products and trends for Christmas and all festivities of the year and provides innovative concept ideas for decorating large-scale and outdoor areas for the wholesale and retail trades, shopping centres, DIY markets and the green sector. Christmasworld offers the entire range of decorative and festive articles - from hand-blown Christmas tree baubles to large-scale light displays for shopping centres and city centres. In 2020, it welcomed 1,063 exhibitors from 47 countries and 42,834 visitors from 128 countries (FKM-verified figures).

**Creativeworld**

Creativeworld is the world's most important trade fair for the international hobby, craft and artists' supplies sector. In 2020, 368 exhibitors from 39 countries presented themselves to 9,201 visitors from 102 countries (FKM-verified figures). The exhibitors show new products, techniques and materials for decorative handicrafts, graphic arts and artists' requisites, handicrafts and textile design, graffiti and street art as well as for creative hobbies. As a trend and business platform, the trade fair is the first port of call in the business year. Creativeworld is the ideal time to place orders for wholesalers, retailers, specialist retailers, DIY stores, garden centres, the internet and mail-order companies. With its varied programme of events, Creativeworld provides new ideas, inspiration and sector know-how.

**Paperworld**

The international trade fair presents the latest products and trends for paper, office supplies and stationery in Frankfurt am Main. Paperworld offers the world's largest range of products for commercial office supplies (visionary office) and private paper and stationery supplies (stationery trends). This makes it a source of innovative business ideas for wholesalers and retailers, booksellers, internet and mail-order businesses and commercial consumers. In addition, the multifaceted complementary programme offers inspiration around the themes of lifestyle trends and Future of Work / New Work for retailers, architects, planners and facility managers. In 2020, Paperworld welcomed 1,581 exhibitors from 69 countries and 29,266 trade visitors from 141 countries (FKM-verified figures)..

**Conzoom Solutions – the platform for retailers**

Conzoom Solutions is a knowledge platform that offers the consumer goods industry a wide range of studies, trend presentations, workshops and guidelines for the point of revenue. It provides a complete overview of Messe Frankfurt's international portfolio in the consumer goods sector – bundling a wide range of information for retailers.  
[www.conzoom.solutions](http://www.conzoom.solutions)

**Nextrade – the digital marketplace**

The new digital ordering and data management system for brands and retailers in the consumer goods industry extends the trade fair and allows orders to be placed at any time of day or night, 365 days a year.  
[www.nextrade.market](http://www.nextrade.market)

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**Background information on Messe Frankfurt**

The Messe Frankfurt Group is the world's largest trade fair, congress and event organiser with

its own exhibition grounds. The Group employs approximately 2,450 people at its headquarters in Frankfurt am Main and in 29 subsidiaries around the world. The company generated annual sales of approximately €257 million in 2020 after having recorded sales of €736 million the previous year. Even in difficult times caused by the coronavirus pandemic, we are globally networked with our industry sectors. We have close ties with our industry sectors and serve our customers' business interests efficiently within the framework of our Fairs & Events, Locations and Services business fields. One of the Group's key USPs is its closely knit global sales network, which extends throughout the world. Our comprehensive range of services – both onsite and online – ensures that customers worldwide enjoy consistently high quality and flexibility when planning, organising and running their events. We are expanding our digital expertise with new business models. The wide range of services includes renting exhibition grounds, trade fair construction and marketing, personnel and food services. Headquartered in Frankfurt am Main, the company is owned by the City of Frankfurt (60 percent) and the State of Hesse (40 percent). For more information, please visit our website at: [www.messefrankfurt.com](http://www.messefrankfurt.com)

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