

Independent Pattern Company Alliance Raises The Bar

Working Together Promoting Excellence

The Independent Pattern Company Alliance (IPCA) is comprised of companies formed by independent fashion pattern designers. The goal of IPCA is to increase awareness of the high standards of its members throughout the fashion sewing industry. Not all independent pattern companies are created equal, therefore, IPCA members follow agreed upon standards and provide a truly professional and quality product.

We asked some of the mem-

bers to share more about different aspects of IPCA, who they are, and how this group might benefit your store and customers.



The Independent Advantage by Laura Nash

Supporting independent pattern lines is made easy with low or no minimums, friendly customer care, and individual store support. Though there are no “standardized” terms, IPCA members strive to provide a number of perks and advantages that make it easy and convenient to become a customer.

IPCA members offer wholesale customers a variety of options to help owners minimize effort, maximize buying power, educate store customers, and help promote sales.

- Kathleen Cheetham of the popular line of Petite Plus Patterns keeps her customers abreast of new designs by sending customers a free sample pattern with every new release.

- Dana Bontrager, the mastermind behind Dana Marie Designs, offers her customers a ready to use counter catalog.

- The creator of SAF-T-POCKETS patterns, Marsha McClintock, provides a trunk show

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Angela Wolf's patterns are fashionable and fun. She is also known for her Jeans Patterns.



Dana Marie #1003 Upcycle your tired jeans into a show stopping jacket!



A best seller from Petite Plus Patterns #108 Yoked Blouse

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terns by Coni” Designer Blouse Block or Dartless Knit Block pattern will have a size for everyone, and Designer Joi Mahon teaches her Create the Perfect Fit Measuring system through her designs. If students are looking to improve skills with clothing classics, Janet Pray is the skilled designer of Islander Sewing Systems with a shirt patterns for everyone that has the sew better, sew faster industry techniques. Angela Wolf’s popular jean patterns help students get pants with great Ready-to-Wear appeal and are in high demand.

While IPCA patterns bring a diversity of style to the marketplace, designers also teach within their respective niche. With an invitation, IPCA designers enjoy personal interaction with store customers in a variety of ways through “meet the designer” events, trunk shows, or by providing classroom instruction. All IPCA designers are nationally



The Wear with All Jacket from SAF-T-POCKETS brings fashion and function together with hidden pockets.

recognized teachers, providing sewing education through a variety of venues and means. IPCA members are among well-known TV personalities, authors of books and magazine articles, and can be found teaching both online and in person at expos and conferences throughout the nation and world.

Promoting Fresh Sales by Kathleen Cheetham

Fashion sewing is making a come-back and the current crop of aficionados is buying fabric and patterns for different reasons than the previous generation. These sewers are not looking for bargains but want creative self-expression and good fit. If your store is not carrying patterns from independent pattern companies, you may be missing out on a growing segment of the sewing market. Independent pattern companies offer an exciting selection of boutique styling, specialty items and niche sizing for your customers. Their patterns are produced with high quality



The Tia Dress, #1312, is just one of many classic modern/vintage looks from Sew Chic Pattern Co.

standards, offering professional drafting, grading and guide sheets. These designers have their thumb on the pulse of what appeals and works for their market. This in turn translates into loyal, repeat customers excited to find fresh ideas and quality products.

Benefits:

Attract Appreciative Customers

Independent pattern companies already have an eager and loyal following. They are aimed at niche groups and serve them well.

High Standard in Quality

Pattern companies who are members of the IPCA are headed up by experts in their field. Each company must pass a quality control screening to ensure their patterns pass professional standards in drafting and grading, and have clear text and diagrams in their guide sheets. For these independent pattern makers, service and high quality is their calling card. They are committed to serving their valued customers with well-drafted patterns, consistent in their sizing, accompanied by top notch instruction, many with added custom fitting and design tips.

Low Risk and Quick Turnaround on Investment

An opening order will not require you to buy a cabinet or commit to a large minimum order.

These companies carry a select number of styles and have an eager following.

Pick and choose the styles that best serve your customer. It's easy to stock all the styles in a line or

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their styles along with the current and leading edge fabrics available at the expo. As a buyer you can pick up plenty of ideas from this group on how to promote your fabrics, patterns and notions.

Fabric Store Connections by **Connie Crawford**

Independent fabric stores can always use IPCA members to present a workshop or lecture program. In my past experiences, both the speaker and the fabric store benefit from this experience. The fabric store is very generous in providing a room or space to teach, and sometimes lunch or snack. In return, for the speaker to use the classroom, the speaker is able to wholesale their patterns, books,



IPCA Midnight Magic Design Contest
Winner created by Ann Vidovic

and supplies and the store would retail sell the items. This always was a win/win situation for all because the store made immediate sales without needing to inventory product. In addition, they also had customers in their store to see and purchase fabric and their supplies at the same time.

Other means in which fabric stores have an advantage in connecting with IPCA members is to have a truck show to promote business within the store. If the fabric store does advertise for a program to draw customers into the store, this will benefit the store in sales of fabric and notions. When an independent fabric store advertises special guest speakers, it is always raising the bar of the quality of business the store generates.

And The Winner Is? by **Pattie Otto**

The IPCA announces our third annual fashion sewing contest, "Party Like A Rock Star". The contest is open to all levels of fashion sewers. Store owners can participate in the excitement by publicizing the contest in their store. Postcards announcing the contest are available from IPCA. You might consider offering discounts on fabric and notions to those who wish to participate. Share the IPCA photos on the store Facebook page and display any garments from customers before or after the contest to drum up excitement.

Contestants begin by selecting a pattern or patterns from one of the IPCA pattern companies and create an outfit around the theme. In addition to listing the pattern(s) used, the entrant will



Great Copy #2520 Thunder Bay Jacket combines pattern and machine embroidery to create elegant fashions.

explain any alterations made to the pattern as well as describing the event that the entry was designed for. Photo entries are due May 1, 2014 with final Facebook voting taking place during July. See all the contest details at www.patterncompanies.com.

The finalists' entries are photographed for the Grand Prize voting which will also be done via Facebook. Entries are judged on the theme selected, the appropriate pattern and use of fabric for the desired theme and construction. The winner will be displayed at the American Sewing Expo in Novi, MI and other venues over the next year. National sponsors include the nine members of the IPCA as well as The American Sewing Expo, Baby Lock, Coats Thread, T'LIO and FineFabricStores.com. Fabulous prizes include merchandise, gift certificates from IPCA members and the grand prize of a Baby Lock Imagine Serger.

New Educational Retreats by **Marsha McClintock**

The IPCA is currently plan-

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Independent Pattern Company
Alliance Members

Fashion Patterns by Coni

FASHION PATTERNS
by Coni

www.fashionpatterns.com

Great Copy Patterns

GREAT COPY
PATTERNS

www.greatcopy.com



Islander Sewing Systems

www.islandersewing.com

L.J. Designs

www.ljdesignsonline.com



Petite Plus Patterns

www.petitepluspatterns.com



Dana Marie Designs

www.danamarie.com



SAF-T-POCKETS Patterns



www.saf-t-pockets.com

Angela Wolf Designs



www.angelawolfpatterns.com

Sew Chic Patterns

www.sewchicpatterns.com

Bali Elements



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along with a teacher market place in the evening. Our goal is to educate along with increasing awareness about the IPCA. If all goes as planned, this event will become an annual event and will move around the country so customers

throughout the country will benefit from retreat held near them. We will be looking for sewing machine stores that might want to partner with us on these events.

For more information on IPCA and each member check out www.patterncompanies.

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