New Exhibitors
First Impressions

BY GARRETT LAI

We research everything online. Thinking of a new car? Scope it out on the web. Upgrading the TV or an appliance? Turn to the Internet. Moving? Look up the neighborhood and schools online. Want a significant other? Start browsing and clicking.

But the Internet isn’t enough to close the deal. You’ve got to meet, see, and experience that new neighborhood, that sexy car, and that too-good-to-be-true dating prospect in the real world before you truly know. Which is why it’s so important to be at The International Travel Goods Show, where you can see the new items, feel them for yourself, and meet the new vendors.

Think of the following roundup of first-time exhibitors like a Google search of new travel goods vendors, one that gives you the shorthand scoop, the first impression. Earmark the ones that seem like a good fit, and get ready to meet at The Show. It’s the only way to close the deal.

BAQBAG: Heritage, Handcraft and Sustainability
Booth 4094

The story of BAQBAG is about heritage. There’s the heritage of Boroy, a Norwegian island whose 220 inhabitants share a 130-year legacy of leather production and leatherwork. There’s the Viking heritage of founder Rolf Thorstensen, inspired by the luggage that voyaged with his grandfather, a ship’s captain and seafarer for 40 years. And there’s hope of providing a heritage for future generations, with organic, sustainably farmed leather and ecologically sound production and materials.

On Show: Captain weekend bag, showcasing BAQBAG’s painstaking attention to detail and sustainability. Each bag is created from a single vegetable tanned hide, traceable back to the individual farm that produced it, using methods that surpass the EU 100% Organic Content Standard. BAQBAG’s items are chiefly hand sewn, with vintage-looking brass hardware that takes advantage of laser cutting and other modern manufacturing techniques. MSRP: $4,900

Benga: Innovation, Simplified
Booth 6053

At Benga, innovation and simplicity are not looked upon as opposites, but are regarded as complementary forces that guide the creation of fashion-forward designs that hew to the “less is more” school of design.

On Show: The Benga 2S, a four-wheel hardshell spinner of Bayer Makrolon polycarbonate that separates into two discrete, identical suitcases. The resulting suitcases are both full-featured two-wheelers with telescoping handles and TSA locks, and each expands to encompass the volume of the original four-wheeled case. MSRP: $350

Buddy Pouch: The Belt-Free Waistpack
Booth 4128

Waistpacks are a great idea. But the same can’t be said for their attendant belts, which can ride up and dig in like a full-body tourniquet. The Buddy Pouch gives you the utility of a waistpack, but does away with the belt by cleverly attaching to your clothing’s waistband with an innovative magnetic suspension system.

On Show: The Buddy Pouch, a clipless, beltless waistpack that attaches to the waistband of your pants with strong magnets. Slip the flap inside your waistband, and the pouch is mag-

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NEW EXHIBITORS

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Canvas jackets are as much a part of the American labor landscape as the hardhat. And now it’s bringing that same no-nonsense, function-driven esthetic to luggage and carryalls, including duffles, toolbags, laptop sleeves and rugged-looking totes.

On Show: Legacy 21” Carry-on Wheeled Gear Traveler, a work truck of a rolling case with 1200D poly exterior with Rain Defender durable water repellent, 80mm treaded wheels, dedicated shoe compartment and removable laundry or gear pouch. Multiple interior pockets and zippered exterior stowage for tickets, books and a tablet help you stay organized. MSRP: $199.99

ChargerLeash: A Nearly Unforgettable Accessory for Personal Electronics Booth 4092

We’ve all done it: Not wanting to run out of juice at an inopportune time, you left the phone or tablet on the charger until the last possible moment. You unplug and go; accidentally leaving the charger behind. In the best case it’s languishing at home. In the worst, it’s gone, accidentally abandoned in a hotel room or airport lounge. ChargerLeash saves you from this scenario.

On Show: The ChargerLeash Apple MFI Lightning “Forget-Me-Not” Cable, which sounds an alarm when your device is disconnected so you won’t leave your charger behind in hotel rooms, airports or conference rooms. Also works as an anti-theft alert should someone attempt to take your phone or tablet while it’s being recharged in public. MSRP: $29.99

No more chargers left behind! ChargerLeash

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CNS Trading Inc.: Frederic T’s Born-in-Paris Chic Booth 5140
Frederic T’s roots go back to 1967, and a creative Parisian leather workshop. Today, the company is responsible for handbags, business totes, purses and wallets, all in leather, and in a vast array of styles ranging from the traditional to the avant garde.

**On Show:** Frederic T convertible backpack, available in Black, Red, Navy or Saffron split leather. MSRP: $220

**Departure Products: Pilot Designed. Coach Class Approved.** Booth 3131
As an airline pilot, Donald Linrothe spends a lot of time in the back of the plane, commuting. And he’s all too aware of the comfort limitations of flying in coach, which is where he sits on his way to and from work. “You just can’t recline the seat enough to really get comfortable any more,” he noted, explaining the origin of the ZzzBand.

**On Show:** The ZzzBand sleep aide headband is made of fleece, and uses an integrated strap to wrap comfortably around your forehead to provide support by securing it to most headrests, avoiding the dreaded “head bob.” MSRP: $19.95

dbest products inc.: Luggage That Helps You Take a Load Off Booth 2097
dbest products is very much in the portable cart business, with products ranging from wheeled pet carriers to coolers to personal-size carts for hauling pretty much everything. The company lives up to its motto: Life is tough…We make it easier! And it’s bringing its wheeled expertise to the luggage category.

**On Show:** Sit-On-It Carry All, a two-wheel roller with built-in seat that can support 350 lbs, with a sturdy steel frame and tough polyester fabric. With wheels that don’t touch the floor in the upright position, it’s a stable seating surface, and can be used to carry big, heavy items when towed as a cart. MSRP: $169.99

**Ethan Julian: Professionally Stylish. Stylishly Functional.** Booth 2047
Ethan Julian’s handbags are designed for stylish mobility. Intended for both professional women and travelers, they’re versatile enough for workplace carry, as well as carry-on.

**On Show:** The Francis Nude’s wide interior is roomy and spacious, with an inside zipper pocket, cell pouch and pen holders. A large zipper pocket and front padded pocket for tablets helps you stay connected on the go. MSRP: $195

DIGIPAS USA LLC: Smart Electronic Locks for Smarter Security
Booth 3077
The eGeeTouch® division of tech company DIGIPAS USA LLC produces a myriad of smart locks that take advantage of NFC (near field communication) to provide robust security solutions that don’t require the use of keys, codes or biometrics.

**On Show:** the eGeeTouch® Smart Luggage Lock uses state of the art proximity technology to safeguard luggage contents, providing exceptionally unimpeded access for the luggage owner by using an NFC paired smart phone, smart device or NFC tags to open.

Fafa Concepts: Design Inspired by Necessity
Booth 3123
New York designer Fafa studied at ESMOD International in Paris, as well as New York City’s famous Parsons School of Design, but it was her sister’s experience of having a handbag stolen...
at a busy city cafe that inspired her to design the HookUp and Embrace, modernized versions of the purse hook. **On Show:** The teardrop-shaped Embrace and heart-shaped HookUp transform with a twist into purse hooks that are shaped like a sleek letter S. They protect handbags from theft and dirt by allowing them to be suspended from most any surface, close to their owners: bars, tables, desks, or closets. **MSRP:** $45 (Embrace), $110-$125 (HookUp)

**Gate8 Cabin Size Luggage: Tested Commitment to Carry-On**
**Booth 4157**
“Cabin size, carry-on, road-warrior tested, business suit approved luggage for zipping through travel,” declares the Gate8 Cabin Size Luggage website. And that’s what this UK company delivers, with a surprisingly broad product range consisting of nothing but carry-on bags. **On Show:** The Gate8 Garment MATE is a tri-fold wheeled garment bag engineered to get you through a 1-3 day business junket with everything you need. A zip-away laptop bag accommodates up to 17” laptops, along with a tablet; zip it off to work on the flight, or use as a stand-alone for the office. The garment bag is carry-on size and coddles your clothes in a wrinkle-minimizing configuration to arrive in ready-to-wear condition, so you’ll be ready to work. **MSRP:** $189

**Gleener: Fuzz-Free Grooming Made Easy**
**Booth 3090**
The more you love a particular article of clothing, the more you wear it. And the more likely it will develop those annoying fabric “pills” that make it look more lived-in than loved. That’s where Gleener comes in, with an easy-to-use, portable solution for removing fabric pills to restore that like-new luster to your favorite garments. **On Show:** Gleener On the Go, which packs all the fuzz- and fluff-removing power of the original Gleener Ultimate Fuzz Remover into an eyeglass-size case. Safely strip fabric pills and errant fuzz from clothes, remove pet hair and other hangers-on with the lint brush, and your clothes will be as well-groomed as you are. **MSRP:** $9.99

**GOSLEEP: Sleeping Systematically**
**Booth 4130**
You don’t go to bed with only a pillow, there’s sheets and blankets and the bed itself to help carry you off to slumberland. Which makes GOSLEEP’s approach make sense: It’s not a single item, but a travel sleep system.

**Grand Trunk: Adventure, Organized**
**Booth 5144**
Grand Trunk was born on a backpacking trip in Thailand in 2001, spawning products like hammocks, travel pillows, sleep sacks, camp stools and other items to aid in the pursuit of fun and far-flung adventure. **On Show:** Grand Trunk ATOM Collection, Adventure Travel Organization Modules (ATOMs) that help you pack and stay organized. Items include compression packing bags, multi-compartment toiletry kits (including one

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with LED lighting to keep you looking sharp and groomed even while traveling off the grid), RFID-blocking travel wallets and passport/travel document organizers. MSRP: $29.99-$99.99

**Happy Chic: Go Chic. Then Accessorize.** Booth 2161
With a company philosophy that says “Build a timelessly chic foundation, then accessorize with abandon,” there’s an obvious playfulness to Happy Chic that permeates everything, perhaps reflecting company founder Jonathan Adler’s first art-bonding moment over a pottery wheel in summer camp. It’s a fun spirit that spills over from his interior design studio into the travel world with this collection.

**On Show:** Pop art, pop culture, mid-century modernism and luxe lifestyles converge in Jonathan Adler’s world, coloring his whimsically fun luggage collection, exemplified by the Happy Chic 21” Hardside Upright. $159.99

**Kent Stetson Handbags: Art, at Hand** Booth 2157
Kent Stetson’s entry in the handbag business was almost accidental, but in hindsight seems almost pre-ordained. The son of a blacksmith father and equestrian mother who made a lot of her own tack, Stetson learned leatherwork and metalworking at an early age. His interest in new media and hybrid digital/traditional fine art led him to craft one of his digital paintings into a handbag in 2003, as a framing experiment, and the rest is history.

**On Show:** Kent Stetson’s Donut clutch is your zero-calorie, zero-carb way to profess your donut love. The crossbody-chain clutch features a donut clasp and sweet donut imagery printed on coated canvas. MSRP: $160

**LeTrav-Carvatta: Brief or Backpack? It’s Both!** Booth 3125
Convertible briefcase/backpacks have been done before, but seldom so cleanly. In briefcase mode, there’s no hint of a backpack in sight; and in backpack mode it’s just the opposite, not a whiff of briefcase to be found. Cleverly allows access to all pockets and compartments in either mode, and transforms with a sub-30-second zip-and-flip. Genius!

**On Show:** Convertible Carrying Case that transforms from a leather or leather-trimmed brief into a cloth backpack, with multiple pockets that keep contents held securely and accessibly in either carry mode. MSRP: $400-$1200

**MTM Inc.: Elevating Your Wait-Time Experience** Booth 3154
They say reading is more comfortable and less fatiguing when it happens closer to eye level. And MTM Inc. makes it easier with its new LEVO Luggage Tray that affixes to your carry-on, functioning as a work desk or leisure platform for books, e-readers, tablets and PCs.

**On Show:** The LEVO Luggage Tray holds a tablet, phone or laptop by attaching to a carry-on bag to transform it into your own personal desk or table. MSRP: $24.99

**Netpackbag: 45 Years of Manufacturing Know-How** Booth 2121
Netpackbag’s manufacturing history goes all the way back to 1970. That’s a
lot of production experience and manufacturing know-how.

**NEW EXHIBITORS**

On Sight Equipment Ltd:
**Environmentally Sustainable Travel Outfitting** Booth 2119

On Sight Equipment might be the biggest travel goods company you’ve never heard of, but it’s one of Canada’s best-selling brands by volume. The company pursues a green ethos, maximizing its use of recycled content (almost 100% of materials used in its Travel Organizers and Daypacks are produced from recycled plastic bottles, including fabric, mesh, buckles, webbing and zippers) and non-toxic materials (such as the use of EPO tarpaulin material instead of the more commonplace PVC).

**On Show:** The Tarmac travel duffle, a carry-on-size duffle with removable shoulder straps that lets it be portaged like a backpack. Sewn from tough 1000D Cotec EPO material for water resistance and strength, with a padded computer sleeve and a generously oversize D-shape opening for easy loading. MSRP: $119.95

Numinous Anti-Theft Travel Backpacks: **Securing Belongings, One Layer at a Time** Booth 3140

An unfortunate aspect of travel is the simple fact that travelers attract thieves. It’s important to be savvy about security while abroad, and a Numinous Anti-Theft Travel Backpack is a smart move in that direction.

**On Show:** Numinous Anti-Theft Travel Backpacks employ what the company calls a “layered security system” consisting of slash-resistant Kevlar fabric, integrated security cables and TSA locks and puncture-resistant zippers to safeguard your belongings. In four sizes, from 25 to 80 liters. MSRP: $100-$380 (25-80L)

ORB Travel: **That One’s Mine!** Booth 4082

ORB® Travel’s accessory line is designed to help travelers identify and secure their luggage, with fashion-smart, high-visibility luggage straps, matching ID tags and padlocks, along with RFID passport wallets, all in a variety of designs and styles.

**On Show:** The colorful ORB® Travel strap helps your bag stand out from a sea of me-too bags at the luggage carousel, along with helping secure your bag. Plus there are available matching ID tags and padlocks, to complete your bag’s visual ensemble. MSRP: $7.99-$9.99

Pfeilring of America Corp.: **Good Grooming with Fine German Steel** Booth 4154

Pfeilring has been in the fine manicure products business since 1896, in Solingen, Germany, which has been the European capital of cutlery and fine steel products since the days of knights in armor. And it’s the steel that matters most, when it comes to cutting implements like the clippers and scissors that are part of Pfeilring’s stock in trade.

**On Show:** The Eleganza 3PC Travel Manicure Set bundles together a complete manicure set — nickel-plated stainless steel tweezers, nail scissors and file — in a flap-over leather case, and backs it all up with a lifetime warranty. MSRP: $59.95

Playluggage: **The Name Says it All** Booth 3161

The name says it all: Playluggage is as much about games and entertainment as it is luggage. Like the company itself, the designs and molds all hail from Estonia, with more than a hint of the function-driven design elegance made famous by this Baltic country’s Scandinavian neighbors.

**On Show:** Playluggage has a huge array of luggage that doubles as a game, a lifetime, found out the hard way when they were turned back by the airline for excessive wear and tear on a passport. The resulting delay cost them $2,500, and four days off their trip, but inspired the invention of the Passport Protector.

**On Show:** Tough ABS plastic, a water-tight rubber seal and RFID-blocking properties safeguard your passport, with just enough extra room for cash and credit cards. MSRP: $40

Keep those passport pages crisp, wrinkle-free and safe from water, creasing, physical damage and RFID snooping with The Passport Protector.

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The Blocks case from Playluggage is made for fun, with a central panel with raised dots that are compatible with most LEGO-style building blocks to help make waiting time into fun time.

Rad Roller: Roll Your Way to Relaxation Booth 3091

We often travel to relax and escape from tension, but sometimes travel creates its own stress. So it’s a good thing there’s RAD Roller, the portable self-massager that helps release tension in your back, arms, legs, hips, shoulders and more.

On Show: The RAD Roller, which can create functional point release all along the spine without putting painful pressure on the spine itself. Also helps break up muscle restrictions in the calves, hips, glutes, arms, feet, shoulders and neck. MSRP: $25

With two firmness options (stiff & regular, and soft), and two contact points, the 3.5”-long RAD Roller is a versatile, portably compact self-massage device that’s easy to take with you anywhere, for physical relaxation and muscular stress relief everyplace.

Rollasole: Saving Women’s Feet, One Pair at a Time Booth 3129

Rollasole’s unique, patented roll-up flats are the portable antidote for long days in high heels, in a tiny, travel-friendly form.

On Show: Bow Belles Rollasoles, casually comfortable roll-up shoes with a statement bow and upscale dressiness that wouldn’t be out of place in an office environment. They come with a bag sized for carrying that less-comfy pair of heels you just ditched, in favor of Rollasoles’ comfy flats. MSRP: $40

Safari Ltd.: Teaching in a TOOB® Booth 5110

Founded with the belief that playtime can be educational, Safari Ltd. offers a huge array of hand-painted figures, from animals and dinosaurs created in concert with zoologists and paleontologists to fantasy figures and educational items.

On Show: Super TOOB® USA is a 13” acetate tube packed with a dozen hand painted miniatures depicting important symbols of the United States, including landmarks like the St. Louis Arch, U.S. Capitol, Statue of Liberty and others. MSRP: $20

Hand painted, collectible quality has never been more fun to play with. Or so easy to take along, thanks to the trademark 13”x2” TOOB®.

Rejuva Compression Legwear: Fashionably Functional Booth 3087

There’s no denying the medical benefits of compression legwear, especially on long flights. But from a fashion perspec-
tive most compression products leave a lot to be desired, with an appearance that’s more orthopedic than esthetic. Rejuva aims to change that with sartorially smart compression socks, so you can have your support while avoiding citations from the Fashion Police.

On Show: RejuvaSocks, with graduated compression that’s tightest at the ankle, and looser above to help prevent swelling and increase circulation.

Graduated compression never looked so good. RejuvaSocks come in a variety of stylish designs including argyle, herringbone, houndstooth and a host of fashion-forward colors.

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the shelves, and just like that, you’re unpacked. MSRP: $349

**Travel Head Pillow LLC:**
**Engineered for Comfort**
**Booth 4153**
Aviation engineer Jeff Hauer took an engineering approach when designing the Travel Head Pillow, and the result is a unique design with a creative anchor system that holds it in place, hands free, for a stable place to rest your head on the plane.

**On Show:** The Travel Head Pillow’s patented shape is designed to provide ergonomic support by filling the space between your head, shoulder and the side of the plane, for side-sleeper support. If you’re not in a window seat a unique elastic anchor, that works with any seat, helps hold the memory foam pillow in place on your shoulder for equally comfortable snoozing. MSRP: $29.99

An engineered, optimized shape and polyurethane memory foam make the Travel Head Pillow comfy. Its unique elastic anchor helps keep it in place for hands-free slumber anywhere.

**VIM & VIGR:**
**Circulation Boosters in Wool, Nylon and Cotton**
**Booth 2045**
Give your circulatory system an added boost with VIM & VIGR’s compression socks, designed in conjunction with vascular surgeons to help give your legs an added boost of 15-20 mm Hg.

**On Show:** Compression socks in fun colors and fashionable patterns, in wool, cotton or moisture-wicking nylon. MSRP: $29.95 (cotton), $32.95 (nylon), $34.95 (wool)

Nylon blend compression socks from VIM & VIGR provide 15-20 mm Hg of compression to help reduce swelling from extended sitting or standing, and are available in a host of colors and patterns.

**TripGear:**
**For Your Well-Rested Arrival**
**Booth 3119**
The TripGear One isn’t a travel pillow, so much as it is a device that provides a resting place for your head and arms. The genius is using the weight of your arms to help support your head, via a clever suspension that connects a padded forehead strap to the arm slings.

**On Show:** TripGear One, a sleep system that uses your arm weight to help secure and support your head, for a more natural sleeping posture free of forward “head bob.” MSRP: $60

An engineered, optimized shape and 6.5”, but telescopes to extend your arm’s reach by an additional 31.5” for well-composed selfie shots. MSRP: $24.95

The TripGear Pocket Selfie Stick fits cameras and mobile phones, extending your reach by 31.5” so you can squeeze more of yourself and your friends into those all-important vacation selfies.

**YaY Novelty:**
**Slim But Stylish**
**Booth 2155**
With dozens of designs, ranging from serious and stern to cute and fun, it’s easy to express your personality with YaY Novelty’s fun graphics. Most are available on matching ultra-slim wallets, ID tags and reusable bags.

**On Show:** YaYtag, with whimsically fun designs printed on PVC, and a pivoting design that keeps personal info hidden for privacy. MSRP: $3.99

YaY Novelty is just one of dozens of playful designs available on YaY Novelty’s YaYtags, and matching, minimalist YaYwallets.