

ETCETERA RESPONDS TO REAL WOMEN'S FASHION & CAREER NEEDS WITH THE RELEASE OF ITS SPRING COLLECTION & NATIONWIDE EXPANSION OF HOME-BASED SALES OPPORTUNITIES

Direct Sales Fashion's Popularity Soars in Economic Downturn, As Women Demand More for Their Money and Seek Service with Superior Products

January 21, 2009 (New York) – Getting your spring wardrobe selected and into your closet well in advance of the season just got easier, thanks to Etcetera (Casuals Etcetera, Inc.). Today, the contemporary women's clothing line launched its 2009 spring collection in 45 states. Etcetera is known for providing chic, everyday wear to busy, fashionable women via a direct sales, personalized shopping experience. And the 2009 spring collection, which can be previewed at www.etcetera.com, is no exception.

The new collection can be characterized as an homage to color, featuring sassy sparks of heat and saucy takes on serene, ranging from lemon yellow and hot pink to sky blue and peony. In all, Etcetera's designers have come up with over 300 unique pieces that work both together and separately to give women the most exciting wardrobe possible for their money. The new collection is now available via appointment-only trunk shows in consultants' homes across the country.

"Given the current economy, women are focused on buying only the essentials this season," says [Mary Alice Heape](#), Etcetera President. "The spring line lets clients either enhance their existing wardrobes with a few must-haves or build out a more robust wardrobe by refreshing the basics. Some women are coming to us for that one signature piece that updates their wardrobe in one fell swoop. This is possible because our current and past collections work together to wisely expand a woman's closet, saving her time and money."

Through its direct sales business model, Etcetera is able to offer couture-level clothes to women at half the price of retail stores. Indeed, the line is proving to be more relevant than ever to clients who demand quality and want a comfortable, personalized way of shopping not offered by traditional stores. In fact, as brick-and-mortar stores go by the wayside, direct sales fashion – estimated to be a \$30.8 billion industry by the Direct Selling Association – is experiencing a renaissance, with further growth expected. By comparison, Britt Beemer, chairman of America's Research Group, recently forecasted that, "by the end of 2009, the number of retail players will be down by at least 25%."

Direct sales firms like Etcetera say that tough economic times are increasing not only their revenue, but also their sales force. Here's why: more and more professional women are looking for a better work/life balance and potential six-figure income, which only a handful of direct sales opportunities, including Etcetera, afford. Indeed, working with the company represents career nirvana for many busy women looking to "off ramp" into more flexible, non-traditional careers. The Connaught Group, which owns the Etcetera line, has a proven 28-year track record providing their wardrobe consultants with the ongoing training and necessary support to properly launch them in the industry.

“This is a career for an organized, natural networker with a passion for building her own business,” Heape adds. “Many of our wardrobe consultants left successful professional careers in finance, law, real-estate, sales and marketing that were highly structured in favor of working with Etcetera. They simply wanted more control over their time and lives.”

Etcetera is ramping up its recruitment efforts in key markets and regions across the country, with a strong focus on the following targeted cities and states: Arizona, California, Florida, Oklahoma, Ohio, Virginia, Chicago, Houston, New York City, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Seattle, the NY/Tri-State area, and the Washington D.C. metropolitan-area. Candidates interested in discussing a possible role with Etcetera can contact the company’s Director of Recruiting, Edie Dance, at 850-484-8120 or edance@etcnyc.com.

Beginning January 27th, wardrobe consultants throughout the country will showcase the new spring collection in their homes for a week at a time, through the end of March. The clothes are shown by appointment only, and consultants may be contacted through the corporate office at 972-733-6503 or via email at myconsultant@etcetera.com

To get a full rundown of the top trends this spring, as outlined by the Etcetera design team, visit www.etcetera.com. Here’s just a sneak peak at how spring is blooming:

- 1) **Flashback** – We’re sixties obsessed and loving it! Taking a cue from the ladies of “Mad Men,” we can’t get enough of the decade’s legendary chic. It’s the snappy tailoring, high waists, tight cinches and pegged skirts atop stiletto heels that really do it.
- 2) **Hippie Chic** – Less gypsy, more jet set! Boho goes uptown with a twist. Fringe is finding its way into casual and classic designs. Luxe suiting, organza-layered and fray-edged in tweed; embroidered, patterned and bugle beaded in tribal jacquard. Or try a hot pink lacquered linen rain slicker thrown together with a fringed floral scarf.
- 3) **Tier Drops** – Cast your feminine wiles with a wink! Everything girly is a must. Revel in rivulets of tiers on dresses of two-piece organza black silk to party in or a drop-wasted cachet sand suede number to die for! Find pleats showing up on t-shirts and self-knit on sweaters.
- 4) **Beltway Girls** – The inside skinny is a cinch! Waists tied, wrapped, draped, slung; belts whisked on at every opportunity. Stock up on belts from arrow narrow to uber-wide and everything in between.
- 5) **Lace Works** – It’s a sweetheart of a trend! Less classic, more fashion forward. Found in eyelets and embroideries; translated into styles with tender flourishes to take-no-prisoners femme collars and cuffs.
- 6) **Fancy Free** – Flashes of fabulous are everywhere! As a classic trademark with Etcetera, unexpected details make the look. This season, they are found in beaded embroidery on Bohemian-inspired suiting, cotton voile handkerchief trim on a graphic print Henley-style blouse or even with a rose-embellished collar and cuffs on a mock-layered sweater.
- 7) **Peek-A-Boo** – Fresh and flirty never went out of style. Pop a long top under a short jacket! It’s a matter of proportion that’s edgy, sexy, and altogether new. Watch how finishes contrast, how just-threw-it-together-and-looks-terrific works.
- 8) **Twinkle-Twinkle** – Pedal to the metal with a lighter touch! More shimmer and sheen this season vs. sparkle plenty. All elegantly done in threads of silver and gold; glazed fabrics and subtle jacquards that catch the light.
- 9) **Fresh Florals** – All the news that’s fit to print! This spring, flower girls rule! Check yourself before leaving the house because something floral is a must!
- 10) **Upbeat Colors** – Happy brights pop and sizzle! Get ‘em while they’re hot --sun drenched hot pinks, juicy shades of tangerine, lemon and lime green.

Etcetera's Manhattan-based design team creates four collections a year – Spring, Summer, Fall and Holiday. These collections are made available to clients four times a year through wardrobe specialists across the U. S., making it possible for women nationwide to access each new collection.

Here are just a few reasons women swear by Etcetera:

SUPERIOR FASHION INDUSTRY EXPERTISE: The Etcetera management and design teams have experience in some of the most renowned design houses in the world including: Christian Dior, Burberry, Albert Nipon, Mary Ann Restivo, Carmelo Pomodoro, Episode, Ellen Tracy, Anne Klein and Tahari.

PERSONALIZED SERVICE: Etcetera, with its full spectrum of wardrobe essentials and personalized service, is the answer for women who long for the days of the specialty store. Consultants keep files on each client in order to help them maintain a smart wardrobe with fresh looks, season to season. Some of today's best-dressed women in politics, broadcasting, real estate and finance trust Etcetera as their secret fashion resource.

SMART PRICING AND SIZE RANGE: Etcetera price ranges include: Tops \$95-\$195; jackets/coats \$275-\$425; pants/skirts \$170-\$250; with suede and leather pieces starting at \$295. The collection covers women's sizes 0 to 16.

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About Etcetera:

Founded in 2000 by [Bill Rondina](#), CEO and Chairman of The Connaught Group, Etcetera ("Casuals Etcetera, Inc.") is a company which embodies Rondina's vision of providing women with top quality designs through a customized and rewarding trunk show shopping experience. Headquartered in Manhattan, Etcetera currently has management and wardrobe representatives showing collections in over 660 cities and upscale suburbs nationwide. In 2007, *Money Magazine* ranked Etcetera as offering one of the top "Best Jobs in America" for parents returning to work. Etcetera was also ranked by *Money* among the top 5 Sales Representative Jobs – graded with an "A" for Flexibility and "A-" for Family-Friendly, with high scores for compensation and job growth as well. For more information, please visit www.etcetera.com. To set up a day and time to see the new collection, please contact Etcetera at 972-733-6503 or via email at myconsultant@etcetera.com.