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Pantone's pick FOR 2013 IS A GEM

NEW YEAR NEW TRENDS

Scott McGillivray Renovating for RENTAL INCOME

Maximize *your* budget

by **LISA CANNING**

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Budget Blinds
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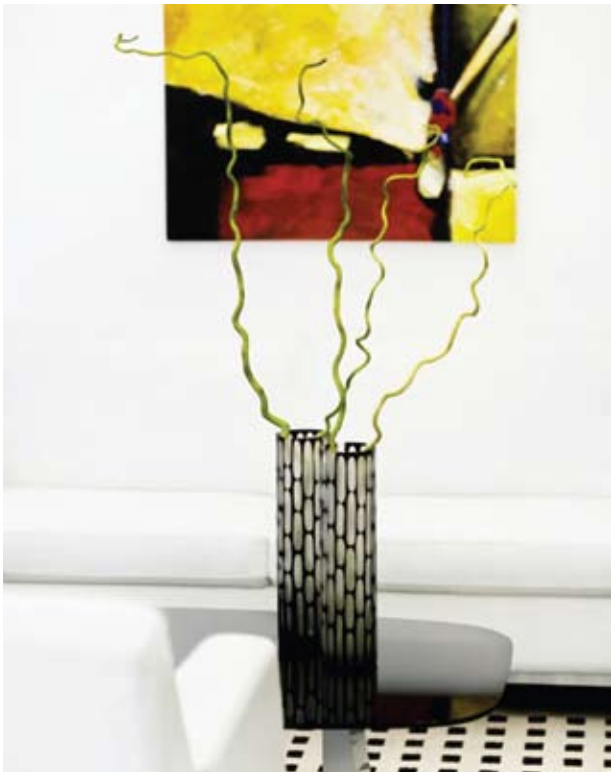
WHEN A NEW CLIENT STARTS WORKING WITH US, ONE OF THE FIRST conversations we have is about their budget. It's important that we know what the total allocated funds are for a project so priorities can be made and funds distributed accordingly. For projects large or small, there will always be a bottom line. With experience, I've learned a few ways to maximize budgets of all sizes, to deliver a finished room that helps my clients enhance their quality of life.

The first way I help my clients maximize their budget is through defining their priorities. In one of our first conversations, I ask clients to name five

ANOTHER WAY I AM ABLE TO ENSURE FUNDS ARE SPENT IN THE BEST POSSIBLE WAY FOR MY CLIENTS IS IN CAREFUL UTILIZATION OF COLOUR AND PATTERN.



things they want to see changed in their space, and to list them in sequential order. We do this at the very beginning to ensure we are making the best decisions with the funds available. Listing priorities forces clients to narrow their focus and ensure those five things are top quality. Even in the largest of budgets, unexpected situations can occur. Focusing on a limited list of "must-haves" for a project helps to ensure quality pieces can be acquired to serve the individual needs of the users.

The second way I ensure my clients' dollar is spent wisely is with working with experienced trades. Experienced trades will often point out ways to save my clients' money. For example, when I design custom cabinetry or wall units, my millworker will advise small alterations that won't impact the overall aesthetic, but will save the client money because it uses slightly less material and produces less waste. In addition, experience has shown me that seasoned trades make fewer mistakes. It doesn't mean they don't make any mistakes — but experience is a great teacher.

Another way I am able to ensure funds are spent in the best possible way for my clients is in careful utilization of colour and pattern. For example, installing patterned wallpaper on a feature wall, while it may not seem like a cost-saving solution, will reduce the need for art or other pattern in the room. On a similar note, I wrap many of the small spaces I design in deep, saturated hues. I find that a bold colour choice makes such a strong statement that other elements used in the room can be more demure. Moreover, a technique I have used in spaces with more limited budgets is to emulate the look of wallpaper with paint. Stripes or stencils and a bit of sweat equity can yield stunning results.

The final way I help clients get the most out of every purchase is through being resourceful and thinking outside the box in regard to materials. I'm currently working on a project where the budget would not allow for wallpaper, as window coverings were higher on the list of priorities. Working with a window covering specialist from Budget Blinds, we selected a patterned roller shade that provides the function needed for the large windows, and when pulled down, injects the pattern that is achieved with wallpaper. With the large expanse of windows I am dealing with in this situation, I get form and function in one purchase.

Photo by Amal Photography

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