

Title:

ABCs Desperate Housewives and the Suddenly Famous Pink Blanket

Word Count:

585

Summary:

Hollywood baby-watching has become a national obsession, and the interest in celebrity babies is starting to affect the retail baby products market. A vivid example is Desperate Housewives and the buzz it created when one of the characters brought her new baby home in a Little Giraffe designer baby blanket. Baby boutiques were caught off guard by the sudden demand for "baby Lily blankets."

Keywords:

Desperate Housewives, Little Giraffe, Katie Holmes, Tom Cruise, Angelina Jolie

Article Body:

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Ever since Cary Grant rattled the men's t-shirt industry by famously appearing without one and causing a decline in retail sales of undershirts, television and movie stars have been changing the tastes of the American consumer.

For retailers in the baby products market, these celebrity-induced trends haven't been as much of a factor as they have been in the adult fashion world. No more. The American psyche seems to have entered a new phase of celebrity baby watching as Britney, Katie, Brooke and the rest show up on magazine covers with their babies alongside them. Now everyone seems to need to know which brand of stroller or diaper bag celebrity moms are using. And, not only in the popular blogs about celebrity babies, but also in the mainstream media, the baby buzz gets louder all the time.

Case Study: Desperate Housewives and Little Giraffe

Although much of the baby hoopla comes from celebrities and their own children, a recent example shows how television is capitalizing on and contributing to the same trends. One of the most striking examples of celebrity culture impacting consumer tastes in the baby market was seen recently when the ABC mega-hit Desperate Housewives created a stir in the usually calm baby boutique world by featuring a designer baby blanket made by Little Giraffe

(www.littlegiraffe.com). When Eva Longoria's character Gabi brings home an adopted baby wrapped in a beautiful, obviously super-soft pink blanket, suddenly, the phones at baby boutiques around the country are ringing off the hook as customers demand one of these blankets for themselves.

So even though Gabi's stint as a mother ended several episodes later when Lily's birth mother reclaimed her, Lily's appearance on Wisteria Lane created a ripple effect still felt in baby boutiques around the country.

The now-famous pink blanket has also sparked a groundswell of interest in Little Giraffe, the company that designed it. Jennifer Zankan, of Jeneration PR, the company that manages Little Giraffe's publicity, has stated that the company's signature blanket "has become Hollywood's hottest baby product. We've been getting calls from people like Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes asking us to send them blankets."

Baby Boutiques Take Note!

All the buzz in Hollywood is apparently getting out onto Main Street, where celebrity-endorsed designer products like Little Giraffe are more popular than ever. Cundy Bryson, owners of a baby boutique based in Atlanta that features the Little Giraffe line of baby blankets, stated that purchases of Little Giraffe baby blankets rose dramatically this spring, and she attributes the increase to baby Lily's blanket. "I don't watch the show every week," she admitted, "so I was surprised when my customers started asking me about the baby blanket they saw on Desperate Housewives."

Bryson went on to note that earlier this year sales of Little Giraffe blankets increased when it was publicized that stars like Angelina Jolie and Katie Holmes used Little Giraffe blankets, "but the Desperate Housewives appearance had the biggest effect by far."

For Bryson and other retailers in the baby products market, it makes sense to keep up with Hollywood trends because in today's celebrity-focused world, whatever the stars are doing, will likely be picked up by the public eventually. And this trend shows no signs of slackening. According to Zankan, Little Giraffe blankets are going to be featured in People Magazine's upcoming baby issue. If Hollywood has anything to do with it, those baby boutiques better get ready for even bigger crowds.