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LiveTrends Opens a Retail Shop

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I recently chatted with founder and CEO of LiveTrends Design Group Bisser Georgiev about the opening of the company's first store. That's right—the producer of stylish indoor plant designs now has a storefront in Winter Garden, a western suburb of Orlando. To compete with you, the retailer? Not at all. The LiveTrends Boutique has a totally different purpose and that is to be a place for experimentation and, yes, a little risk-taking.

“The whole idea is to test things out,” Bisser told me. “There are so many online retailers, so many big brands out there that are now getting into small brick-

and-mortar kind of experiential shops. The whole idea is to play with things at the local level, and if it works, we can then take it to the market. It also allows us a playground to experiment with some more risky designs and ideas, like self-watering systems and a variety of things, and observe people.”

They had a soft opening in mid-October and an official Grand Opening on November 12, and they've had lots of traffic since. They've hired a team of seven to run the store.

“It's kind of cool because we're supplying 15,000 stores nationwide with our brands, but we haven't operated any stores. For us, it's a brand-new experience to learn how to operate one store,” Bisser said. “But we're having so much fun.”

I asked Bisser, “So how does it feel to do retail and be on the other end of the products?” His answer? It shows how deeply he's committed to understanding the consumer even more:

“I'm not seeing it as being on the other end of our products. I see it as being immersed much deeper in the consumer experience. In just these three short weeks, we are learning so much about our products and how people interact with them. Having the ability to curiously peek behind the retail curtain allows us to learn so much about how our brands need to be displayed, grouped and priced. We will use these findings and apply them at much larger scale with our mass-market retail partners. This knowledge is invaluable.” **GP**