

The Store Room

Our monthly column is devoted to what works and what doesn't – for our readers, from our readers

Question:

“What trends did you notice this past graduation season?”

Boni Dillinger
Dan D Party Corner
Cheyenne, Wyo.

This last year we saw a shift in products for graduation from the bare essentials to more of the luxury items for their parties. Instead of just buying graduation-themed plates and napkins in their school colors, we had a huge sale increase in decorative items such as banners and paper lanterns. Graduates were much more apt to buying things they have seen all over social media and we carried it all this year.

Even balloons were a bigger success than ever with graduates forgoing the all-too-common three balloon centerpiece for more extravagant balloon décor like columns, arches and fabulous centerpieces featuring way more than just three helium balloons.

Jeanine Morrison
Party Plus
Elizabethtown, Ky.

We did super with balloons and banners. We make custom banners with photos, school logos, etc., and had our biggest year ever for banners. We also dropped our prices on 18-inch grad Mylars and did a tremendous amount of bouquets, along with arches. We also started making 3-inch custom buttons this year. We got our machine two weeks before our local graduations and it has already paid for itself. My nephew graduated this year so I made some for our family and wore mine at the store. Customers loved these as a keepsake!

Lisa Loosen
Heavenly Creations Events
Milwaukee, Wis.

We saw a lot of theme graduation parties this year – everything from luau, Western, casino, Candyland and even Alice in Wonderland. Basic school colors were still popular as always, showcasing the high school and future college colors.

Our graduation party season is still running until mid-July this year, which is nice for business.

Tammy Corzine
Celebrations
Delphos, Ohio

The biggest trend we saw for graduation this year was anything zebra print. While zebra print mixed with pink was our strongest seller, we also had a lot of girls mixing zebra with their school colors and even a few multi-colored parties. Polka dots still had a strong showing and even a couple mustache grad parties were being planned.

We also saw an increase in joint parties, where best friends or cousins joined their parties into one event. While the girls are definitely the trendsetters, the boys were much more traditional using school colors, but a few added in college colors to change it up a bit.

Lewis Wildman
Jordan's of Princeton
Princeton, N.J.

Printed invitation business was non-existent, as electronic invites have completely dominated the category. What a shame for the parents!

See more replies at www.partypaper.com.