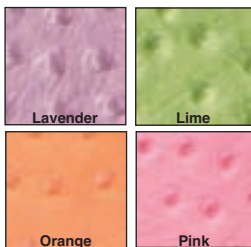


Ostrich Seats

The Elite

ABETTA proudly offers its newest addition to the fastest selling line of Western saddles in the industry. The Elite features unique Ostrich Cow trim in hot new colors with engraved silver conchos, large square skirts, rugged Cordura® nylon over shock absorbing foam, nylon-leather half-breed rigging with stainless steel dees and hand engraved aluminum Visalia stirrups.

This award winning design just got better!



4 Hot Colors to Choose From!

- Tree:** Ralide® Quarter Horse.
- Seat:** 13", 14", 15", 16", and 17"
- Cantle:** 4" Highback
- Horn:** 3-1/4" Leather covered.
- Rigging:** 7/8 Nylon-leather half breed with stainless dees.
- Finish:** Tough, scratch resistant Cordura® laminated to shock absorbing foam. Scalloped Ostrich Cow trim in Lavender, Lime, Orange, or Pink.
- Stirrups:** Hand engraved aluminum Visalia & non-slip tread.



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Holiday Sales Forecast Gloomy



EXPECT HIGHER ENERGY PRICES to take their toll on holiday sales. According to an October prediction from the National Retail Federation, holiday sales will increase only 5 percent,

compared to a 6.7-percent gain in 2004. Skyrocketing gas prices are being cited as the grinch. The American Automobile Association reported the national average for regular gas at \$2.94 per gallon in early October. The highest average price in United States history was \$3.06 in early September.

In spite of higher gas prices, retail sales had increased about 6 to 7 percent through August of this year. Other factors such as hurricanes Katrina and Rita, however, have since put a cramp on shoppers' pocketbooks. Historically, Labor Day has been a fairly accurate indicator of where numbers will be for the holiday selling season. Post-Katrina Labor Day sales were down about 6 percent, as were results posted for the remainder of the month of September. There is also evidence that media coverage of the devastation on the Gulf Coast may even cause people to feel guilty about spending money on gifts.

PARTING SHOT: Gas prices are predicted to drop in November and December, but will it be too little too late?

New Bar Code Technology Coming

BAR CODE AND SCANNER MANUFACTURER Intermec Technologies Corp. announced that it will unveil a new generation of bar code readers. The company says the new readers will be 80 percent more accurate than today's models.

Most traditional bar code readers use mirrors to direct light from a laser across the bar code. The new devices are based on micro-electromechanical systems (MEMS), a kind of nanotechnology. They are faster, more accurate and about 66 percent smaller than current models. Currently, as many as 10 percent of reader scans fail and need to be manually input, taking up valuable time and annoying customers in the checkout line.

Although the new technology is more difficult and expensive to manufacture, initial pricing for a hand scanner will be about the same as the comparable traditional device. The new version will start shipping in November.

Also in the works at Intermec is a reader that can rotate its mirrors in multiple directions, eliminating the need to line up bar codes with the scanner. This technology promises to be helpful at stores where employees have to turn themselves upside down to scan large objects, such as a tack trunk or a saddle.

PARTING SHOT: Intermec expects prices to drop about 20 to 30 percent once production volume increases.

