

Too many stores?

Analysts say 'yes,' in some categories

By BARD PEET TEMPLETON
SPECIAL WRITER

Finding the best buy isn't as easy as ABC in the metro-Detroit retail markets these days.

Consumers could blow a circuit traveling the city searching for the lowest price with all the media play garnered by some area retailers.

Can there actually be such a thing as too many stores or too many choices? Area analysts seem to think it depends on how you look at the situation.

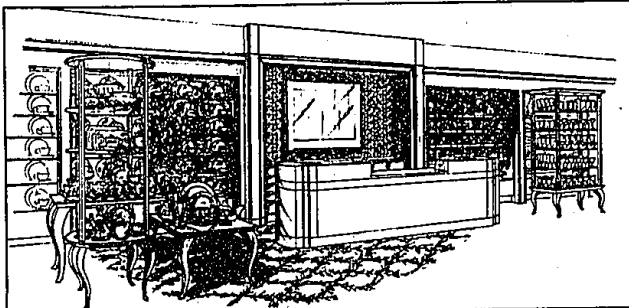
"In some categories there is over retailing in metro-Detroit," said Joan Primo, owner of Strategic Edge in Southfield. "Especially with the big box retailers. Builders Square, Home Depot and HQ are examples of too much in one category. Home Centers are overdone and they are 'duking' it out in the market right now."

Primo's firm, which she co-owns with Jay Wedeven, provides market and research feasibility studies for developers considering new projects. Strategic Edge boasts national and international clients and its services are provided exclusively for retail.

"The owners of a shopping center or (individual) retailers will come to us wanting to know how many shops would be good, which stores they should consider, and how big they should make them," explained Primo.

The call for information on power developments that will include a number of shops or a singular huge warehouse facility are much in demand at Strategic Edge today.

"There used to be more small retail space being sought out now it tends to be a conglomeration of the bigger retailers," said Primo. New location sites for stores like Media Play, Best Buy



New store: Blue water vacationers get set to welcome Hudson's to the Birchwood Mall on Saturday, Aug. 16. This will be Hudson's 20th store in Michigan. The 103,000-square foot, single-level store features a variety of departments, wide aisles, and a full service hair and beauty salon. Birchwood Mall opened in 1990.

and Circuit City have produced an abundance of outlets that all seem to offer the same thing.

"They used to have a strong market but now many of them are struggling due to the overlap," said Primo.

She said many of the larger chains started out with the development of a good concept at a "home base" location but as soon as they go nationwide they get too much of the overlap.

"It gets to a point where there isn't a differential in the stores and there's no unique appeal or special services," said Primo. "The same products are available at value pricing which was the niche but now there are too many of them to compete."

Giving shoppers a variety of product lines and options in today's industry is all about, according to William Cook, owner of Cook Real Estate and Research in Livonia. "The consumer desires and demands more alternatives and choices and retailers are trying to fit in with those demands," said Cook.

A big part of Cook's business is assisting commercial investors who are looking to solve their retail needs. Cook helps developers by scouting out property sites and exploring the possibilities for constructing a new building or taking over a vacant facility.

"We find though, that the economics of taking over an existing building can be greater sometimes than having the facility built," said Cook. Calls from retailers wanting to expand in new locations across metro-Detroit represent the bulk of Cook's client base. He said inquiries from new chains wanting into our market aren't as frequent.

"In retail it's not a matter of more or less, it's about change," said Cook. "It's about making

the pie bigger not just making the same pie with different pieces."

Changes in the market as retailers look to the year 2000 will continue to be dictated by consumer needs and demands.

"The graying of America is one of the key driving forces in the market today," said Primo, noting that the latest chain sweeping the area is Mod Max, a retailer that offers aids and supplies to the elderly. Analysts aren't worried about overlap just yet though. Like anything else, if it's a new twist there's always room for more.

"To a certain extent if they come up with a different way of doing it or presenting it I'm sure there's room," said Primo. "It just depends on the uniqueness of a situation and the category of the retailer."

"There's always room for retailers that have an exciting concept," added Cook.

Where can I find?

Readers called in the following information for shoppers:

- One expert said to remove oil and rust stains from garage floors or driveways, mix one-third part muriatic acid with two-thirds part water, brush it over the stains, then hose off the mess. He buys the acid at ACO Hardware stores.

- Callers offered their no-longer needed salad spinners, Anne Klein II colognes, rabbit hutches, "Serious Leisure CDs" and cookbooks to the searchers and phone numbers were exchanged.

- The long-sought pattern for the round dish cloth made of cream and sugar yarn is printed at the bottom of this column. We got copies of several versions and chose the simplest. A big thanks to all the kind knitters who sent in their patterns.

We're still looking for:

- Blueprints for wooden Adirondack chairs for "Kovin"

of Canton.

- A copy of an old children's book from the 1960's (was it a Golden Book?) called "Hum-um-um The Hamster" for Jenny Leffler's granddaughter.

- Another old children's book, "Shy Trunk" for "Donna" of Redford.

- A toothbrush for gentle, sensitive teeth (preferably by Oral B) for "Gail."

- Stamp embroidery products for tablecloths, napkins, pillowcases etc., NOT counted cross stitch for "Kathy."

- The Diet Exchange Book, published years ago by the Diet Centers of Canada, for "Pat."

- A copy of the song "Someone Who Believes In You," from the Date With An Angel soundtrack for Cindy of Canton.

If you've seen any of these items in your travels, let Malls & Mainstreets know and we'll print the answers. Please call (248) 901-2667 and relate your message and phone number slowly and clearly!

Pattern for Round Dish Cloth

Needle size 8
Sugar & cream yarn (100% cotton)

Cast on 15 stitches

1. Knit
2. Knit 3 yarn over (YO) knit II - 1 stitch left - turn needle.
3. Knit
4. Knit 3 yarn over (YO) knit II - 2 stitches left - turn needle.
5. Knit
6. Knit 3 yarn over (YO) knit II - 3 stitches left - turn needle.
7. Knit
8. Bind off 3 stitches - knit 2 - yarn over (YO) knit 8 - 4 stitches left - turn needle.
9. Knit
10. Knit 3 yarn over (YO) knit 8 - 5 stitches left - turn needle.
11. Knit

12. Knit 3 yarn over (YO) knit 8 - 6 stitches left - turn needle.
13. Knit
14. Bind off 3 stitches - knit 2 - yarn over (YO) knit 5 - 7 stitches left - turn needle.
15. Knit
16. Knit 3 yarn over (YO) knit 5 - 8 stitches left - turn needle.
17. Knit
18. Knit 3 yarn over (YO) knit 5 - 9 stitches left - turn needle.
19. Knit
20. Bind off 3 - Knit to end Repeat 1-20, 5 or 7 sections, last row bind off.

Blossoms blooming in new Birmingham store/studio

Blossoms will relocate its design studio to Birmingham with a fall opening planned.

Norman Silk and Dale Morgan, owners of Silk & Morgan, Inc. the parent company of Blossoms, made the announcement July 1.

The studio will be located at 33856 Woodward on the corner of Adams - the former site of the Birmingham Cleaners.

Renovations to the building are being designed by Schneider and Smith, Architects, and will feature a glass atrium entrance, landscaping and striped awnings.

"We are very excited about the new building and think the site has been underdeveloped for

many years," Silk said.

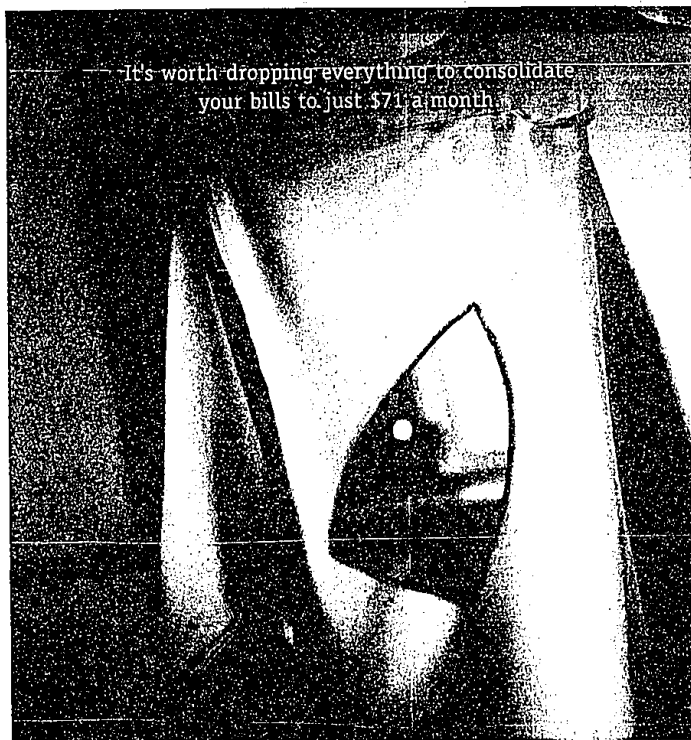
Project cost is expected to exceed \$1 million when completed.

Blossoms Design Studio has been located in Berkley for the past six years. The new building will house the floral department, telephone order department, and corporate offices with wedding and party services.

The design studio employs a full-time staff of 20.

Blossoms will maintain two stores in Birmingham, the current store at 175 Maple, will continue to offer fresh flowers by the stem, or bunch, gifts, cards, home and garden accessories and silk flowers.

It's worth dropping everything to consolidate your bills to just \$71 a month



The chores can wait. It's not every day you can consolidate your bills into an incredibly low monthly payment. For example, borrow \$10,000 with our "Prime for Life" Home Equity Credit Line and pay just \$71 a month. In fact, you ought to open a checking account so you'll have some place to put all that extra money.



For details, call 1-800-628-7074, or visit any banking office.

Take control of your money.

SHADOW PORTRAITS

The Art of Silhouette
by Sally Newcomb

Now coming to
PARISIAN
IN LIVONIA

Tuesday, July 15 thru
Saturday, July 19
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
except Thursday
12 to 7 p.m.
Upper Level

Head.....\$18 Copy.....\$8
Figure.....\$35 Copy.....\$15

Please call for your
appointment

(313) 953-7500

Payment by cash or check only

PARISIAN

LAUREL PARK PLACE
LIVONIA, MI • 1-275 AT W. SIX MILE & NEWBURGH RDs.

*Assumes current 8.5% APR does not change and that 120 minimum monthly payments are made. Your minimum payment will not repay the principal that is outstanding on your line. If you pay the minimum payment each month, you will have to pay the entire outstanding balance in a single payment when your account ends. This offer does not apply to certain types of personal credit lines which may be assigned to other lending institutions. The Prime for Life product has an annual fee of \$48, and the current APR is 8.5% through July 28, 1997. Prime Rate means the Bank Prime Loan rate published by The Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System on the national money market. The APR may vary each month, but will never be higher than 18%. Payments may include other charges. Some interest rates. Use of the word "prime" does not indicate that the rate is the best or lowest rate offered by any lender. The APR may vary each month, but will never be higher than 18%. Payments may include other charges. That are due in addition to interest. There may be a charge for calculation of the account within the first three years. Insurance must be carried on the real property securing the account. All accounts are subject to credit review and an acceptable property appraisal and title search. Member FDIC. ©1997 Huntington and Huntington Bank are federally registered service marks of Huntington Bankshares Incorporated. ©1997 Huntington Bankshares Incorporated.