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Draperies & Window Coverings

Sandra and Tom Kaye
Your Home Interiors



Happy Trails

Life on the road ended for these former sales reps when they settled down to open their own interior fashions retail business.

by Howard Shingle
Photography by Mike Reynolds

Sandra and Tom Kaye once traveled the roads of Northern California as sales representatives for competing companies. Now, just three years after joining together in an interior fashions retail business, they find themselves at a crossroads: How do they make Your Home Interiors, their successful Fresno, CA, business, into a successful *bigger* business? Should they open a second location? Extend their involvement in textiles? Become a full-fledged furniture store?

The answers to these questions will greatly affect the pace of what has been rapid growth up to this point. Since April 1991, Your Home Interiors has grown from serving 30 clients a month to 275 clients a month. Likewise, sales have grown from \$8,000 during its first month in business to \$1.2 million last year. So despite being in an otherwise enviable position, it's also understandable why the Kayes want to be cautious about which way to turn.

The road this enterprising couple took to get to where they are today was somewhat long and winding. Sandra and Tom each have made window coverings and interior fashions life-long careers. Both have been in sales and have taught other independents how to compete against national multi-store retailers. In addition, Sandra, president of Your Home Interiors, has been the sales manager for a chain of window coverings stores and directed 27 shop-at-home decorators. Tom has owned and operated an interior design business, two retail window coverings stores and a wholesale blind and drapery fabricating business in Chicago, IL. Tom also is a second-generation family member in the industry, following the path taken by his father, John Kaye. "We've sold every type of window blind and home textile for upholstery and drapery," Sandra says.

But once the Kayes decided to settle down in Fresno and open their own retail store, the road to success has been a happy trail. From selling only custom window coverings in a 1,400-square-foot retail space, Your