

judy george

INTERNATIONAL

Judy George is an entrepreneur, author, leading business woman and recognized expert in the home furnishings industry who has always had her finger on the pulse of the ever-changing retail environment.

George has taken her business savvy to her newest venture, **Judy George International** (JGI). Founded in 2009, JGI is a creative think-tank that develops home furnishings concepts and brands by capitalizing on pre-peak design and product trends and leveraging consumer insights and influences. JGI offers custom furniture designs, innovative distribution channels and turnkey business models for retailers, manufacturers and importers. In 2010, JGI launched the **Hotel Maison** brand, which brings the look and feel of world-class hotels to the home and George recently persuaded retail mattress giant **Sleepy's** to carry the Hotel Maison mattress line in 550 of its stores – an impressive accomplishment for a new company.

Always a pioneer, she raised \$30 million – one of the first in the furniture industry to raise substantial funds from the venture capital community. In 1986, George founded **Domain Home** and served as CEO. With Domain, George broke new ground and forever changed the way women shop for furniture. She used research to uncover how women feel about furniture shopping and found that it is freighted with fear and the potential shame of making the wrong decision. With this key insight, she sought to make the experience fun and exciting. She developed fully accessorized displays that the consumer could understand and, importantly, could afford. Using one-of-a-kind antiques, fashion influences and European designers, she anticipated the needs of the marketplace and provided consumers with the right merchandise at the right time. Domain Home was highly praised and publicized, paving the way for competitors. In 2008, after a series of missteps, Domain closed. While it was devastating for her to lose Domain, the number of people who approached her with opportunities surprised her and she was eager to jump back into the industry at age 70 – a time when many would be long retired.

As part of her management process, George studied behavior and developed a system for identifying personality types among colleagues and clients. Dubbed **“The Intuitive System,”** it is a blueprint that divides the world into four broadly drawn archetypes: Visionaries, Artisans, Idealists and Adventurers. She co-authored two books about the process. In *“The Domain Book of Intuitive Home Design,”* she identifies how the four different personality types express themselves through their aesthetic choices. In *“The Intuitive Businesswoman,”* she applies the same concept to women and business.

George has been acknowledged for her contributions to the retail industry, women in business and the community. President Clinton recognized Ms. George twice for her work: in 1993, she was chosen to participate in the NAFTA Conference and in 1996 was selected to participate in the first-of-its-kind Women in Trade Business Development Mission in Amsterdam and London, representing U.S. women CEOs.

In May 2004, she received the Anti-Defamation League's prestigious American Heritage Award. In 2003 she was voted Ernst & Young's Northeast Region Entrepreneur of the Year. In 2003, in commemoration of their 50th anniversary, she was honored by the U.S. Small Business Administration at their “Celebrating Women in Business” breakfast. She was listed in Retail Info Systems “Power Elite 2003”; ranked 12th of 100 Top Women Led Businesses in Massachusetts, 2001 by Babson College and The Commonwealth Institute.

Her entrepreneurial journey has been praised in the following: “The Pursuit of Wow,” Tom Peters; “Circle of Innovation,” Tom Peters; “Making a Life Making a Living,” Dr. Mark Albion; “The Arc of Ambition,” James Champy & Nitin Nohria; “Success After 40,” Allan Zullo; “9 Secrets of Women Who Get Everything They Want,” Kate White; and “Love the Work You're With,” Richard Whiteley.

George sits on the Sodexo Business Advisory Board and she has served on the boards of Shoplink.com, Harvard Kennedy School of Government and AGA Foodservice Group.

Her many speaking engagements range from motivational talks, to presentations within the retail industry including: keynote speaker for The Women's Leadership Exchange Conference; keynote speaker for United Way of Massachusetts Bay, Women's Leadership Breakfast; Women Entrepreneurs Series, Harvard Business School; keynote speaker for the National Association of Women Business Owners – Chicago Chapter Annual Luncheon Gala; The New England Women's Business Owners Association; and The Fleet Bank Women Entrepreneur Series with Gloria Steinem.

She has made numerous television and radio appearances including: New England Cable News “CEO Corner,” HGTV's “The Furniture Show” and Kitchen Trends, Lifetime Television's “Our Home” and MSNBC's “Home Page”, as well as “Making a Living” on Martha Stewart Radio.

Memberships

Int'l Furnishings and Design Association, The Committee of 200, Center for Women and Enterprise, WithIt, International Women's Forum, National Home Furnishings Association

Notable Achievements

Awarded ARTS Academy of Achievement, January 2007

Joined Sodexo Business Advisory Board, July 2004

Awarded the Anti-Defamation League's American Heritage Award, May 2004

Ernst & Young, Entrepreneur of the Year 2003

SBA 2003 Women in Business Celebrant

Joined Daffy's Clothing Advisory Board of Directors, February 2003

Ranked 12th of 100 Top Women Led Businesses in Massachusetts, 2001

Led Domain through successful post-buyout transition