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Jewelry on the go

Memphian's travel cases keep baubles untangled and easy to find

By Barbara Bradley (Contact)
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Janie Sims, 38, has Kenny Chesney to thank for her new business.



The JJ jewelry travel case holds hook-type earrings on mesh linings and studs on perforated straps. The straps unfasten to allow necklaces to be draped over them. A removable center pouch holds other jewelry.

The East Memphis stay-at-home mom had flown to Boston three years ago to see a friend and attend Chesney's concert. But when she opened her bag, the chains of her jewelry had formed Gordian knots. It took so long to untangle them she was late for the concert.

Sims' frustration led to her patent-pending jewelry travel case called JJ by Janie. She has sold 900 in one month.

The pretty, printed JJ is the size of a small clutch purse. It ties with straps and opens like a book. The inside is lined with mesh to hold hook-style earrings. Two perforated leather straps hold stud earrings and also open at one end to allow you to drape necklaces. A removable, zippered center pouch can hold other pieces or simply serve as padding.

JJs are 10-by-4 inches and covered in printed canvas in polka dot, geometric, paisley and animal prints. Sims cleverly designed the JJ to stand up and display its contents.

She took her first 100 cases to the Merry Marketplace in late October, priced them at \$34 each, and sold out by noon the first day. She got a shipment of 1,200 from the factory in early November and sold 800 in two weeks.

Sims also will sell them through the Web site jjjanie.com, which she is launching now. But the price is likely to rise soon. JJs are selling for as much as \$40 at area stores. They are carried at Pappagallo II, Twigs & Ivy and Mode du Jour in Memphis, as well as Seriously Fun in Germantown and Bella Vita stores in Collierville and Cordova.

Before the JJ, "there was just nothing out there to keep your earrings from getting tangled or broken," said Sims, who first searched the Internet. A lawyer and friend helped her apply for a patent. A California company acts as liaison between her and a Chinese factory to produce the cases.

Meanwhile the cases are "taking over the house," said Sims. She inspects each one from the factory, then her husband and two boys, ages 8 and 9, help her prepare them for sale by putting them in clear packages and tying them with ribbon. The boys also help carry samples.

Don't want to carry a purse?

Here's another good idea.

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Dancing with a purse on your shoulder is a drag, but at big New Year's Eve parties and other events, there may be no place to safely set it down.

So check out Flatterme's Leg Pocket, a little wallet attached to a garter with Velcro that you can wear under a skirt. It's just big enough to hold a car key, driver's license, credit card and maybe a \$20 bill. Different sizes wrap thighs (including plus-size thighs), ankles and biceps.

(I've seen young girls carrying such things in their cowgirl boots. This device would make that much more comfortable.)

They're made of lambskin, suede and patent leather and priced at \$29 to \$35. That seems a little steep. But it's a price I would gladly have paid last year when my daughter's purse was snatched at a Memphis club. She found it later in the women's restroom emptied of her credit cards.

You can order the Leg Pocket at flatterme.com or by calling (800)985-5780.



Flatterme's Leg Pocket, a little wallet attached to a garter with Velcro, solves the problem of what to do with your purse.

Stinky sneakers?

Sneakers might last longer if they smelled sweeter. To the rescue comes Sneakerballs, touted as "smaller, tougher and rounder," than other air fresheners because they have to work in nasty little places such as sneakers, gym bags or lockers.

They look like little soccer or golf balls, basketballs, baseballs, etc. One is a yellow smiley-face ball. They're made by Implus Footcare LLC., a leader in shoe accessories.

A pack of two balls is \$3.99 and reportedly lasts for months. Call (800)446-7587 or visit sneakerballs.com

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