

## HOLLY JOLLY HOLIDAYS

**1**  
HOLLY JOLLY  
HOLIDAYS

When **Cottage Garden** (10%) elegant music boxes are opened, a glass enclosure allows customers to see the musical movement as it plays. For Christmas, Tammy Repp licensed art work is featured with more than a dozen designs including holiday tunes. \$13.75 (877) 210-3456 [www.cgcollections.com](http://www.cgcollections.com)



**Red Carpet Studios** (5%) hot selling Fanwear three piece set includes hat, gloves and scarf for just \$8.50. Seven colors are currently available and they are adding eight new colors to represent colleges, high schools and pro teams. \$8.50 (877) 985-0405 [www.rcsgifts.com](http://www.rcsgifts.com)



Introducing...  
Love That  
for Baby!  
Buzz

**Global Village Glass Studios** (10%) festive art glass holiday trees and ornaments offer sparkle for the holiday season. Each set includes one tree and 16 tiny glass ornaments packaged in a reusable storage box. These popular trees are a great seller! \$12.00 (800) 246-5585 [www.globalvillageglass.com](http://www.globalvillageglass.com)



This is a delightful table centerpiece for a wonderful Christmas gathering from **Meri Meri** (10%). The tree comes hung with ornaments and topped with a gold star. Santa and his reindeer are also included, bringing lots of lovely presents. \$4.00 - \$11.00 (650) 508-2300 [www.merimeri.com](http://www.merimeri.com)



Decisions, Decisions  
Breast Cancer  
Awareness

**Howard's Jewelry** (5%) expands upon the success of their top selling silicone watches for spring and summer with the introduction of Christmas designs for the fall and winter season. They are certain to be a hot seller in your store! \$10.00 (800) 777-5658 [www.howardsjewelry.com](http://www.howardsjewelry.com)



Create a keepsake ornament with your own photos! **Lucky Feather's** (10%) Photo Ornament is a great handmade gift. Hand tied ribbon creates ornament or add a chain for an art pendant. Use the free on-line "Easy Shrinker" to get the right size photo. \$4.00 (818) 947-0496 [www.luckyfeather.com](http://www.luckyfeather.com)

**4**  
Vendor Updates  
Holidays  
Breast Cancer  
Awareness

In coordination with the *Snow Wonder* snowman figurines, **Carson Home Accents** (5%) delightful collection of ceramic mugs and multi-sized plates display a unique sentiment that accents the loveable snowman character on each piece. Each plate comes with an acrylic easel for in store display. \$8.50 (800) 888-1918 [www.carsonhomeaccents.com](http://www.carsonhomeaccents.com)



**The Gift Wrap Company** (10%) has Christmas and Hanukkah festivities all wrapped up! With festive designs ranging from traditionally classic to playfully modern; on-trend offerings from Stephen Lawrence and Eco-Luxe, environmentally friendly recycled kraft collection. \$12.00/dz - \$28.50/dz (800) 443-4429 [www.giftwrapcompany.com](http://www.giftwrapcompany.com)



Continued on Page 4

# introducing new vendors

## Infantissima

10% Discount  
(866) 522-1415  
www.infantissima.com  
Opening \$200 Reorder \$100



Infantissima offers a quality product for your little one at a good price. Bibs, hooded towels, burp cloths, blankys and sleep sacks are available in traditional dots and gingham and fashionable prints. All products are made in the U.S.A.

## The Buzz

**Melissa & Doug's** (5% ex. Sunny Patch) alphabet fun begins with this extra thick wooden jumbo puzzle that includes 26 easy-grasp, chunky pieces. Fun and educational! \$9.99 (800) 284-3948 www.melissaanddoug.com



Make an ongoing commitment to love your life with the new **AmeriBag** (5%) "I Love My Life" bag. This small Healthy Back Bag tote is featured in black microfiber with picturesque black embroidery and subtle wording. Share this statement with everyone or wear it quietly. \$37.50 (800) 246-1292 www.ameribag.com

## Member Corner

Check out these Fun Promotion Ideas from Member, **Renee Schumacher**, Service League HCMC Gift Shop in Minneapolis, MN.

**Sidewalk/Garage Sale:** Why not? We all have items that for one reason or another didn't sell. I have started having a Bargain Cart outside the shop on Thursdays. All items are 60% off the lowest marked price (most aren't even marked down to begin with) I am pleased with how popular it has been and it's getting rid of the "dogs".

**Candy Corn Count:** Fill a jar with candy corn and the customer that guesses the closest get a gift certificate to the Shop and the candy. This can be done for almost any Holiday, Kisses for Valentines, Peppermints for Christmas, Jelly Beans for Easter. Try to find an oddly shaped container making it harder to try to figure out the actual count, or conceal a cup or tube inside to take up space.

**Pro Sports Fun:** When the Minnesota Vikings headed to the playoffs this year, we declared a Purple Pride Day, encouraging employees and customers to show their support for the home team. The gift shop offered purple Tootsie pops for those in purple. I was surprised how many new faces I saw come in for a free treat! Can be done for Homecoming or College teams too!

When asked to donate items to for special events, always give a **Gift Certificate** to your Shop. This makes a potential new customer come into the Shop to redeem and get hooked.

## Love That...for BABY!

A. **Malden International Designs** (5%) beautifully constructed magazine inspired baby design fits a 4" x 6" photo. Crafted of furniture finished white stained hardwoods, glare resistant glass lens is silkscreened in baby soft colors and mat is acid-free soft-white. \$5.50 (800) 426-3578 www.maldenframe.com

B. **Sweet Cottons** (10%) new Holiday and Organic Collections are lovingly crafted from 100% Peruvian Cotton for newborns to 18 months. These sweet ensembles feature beautiful colors and detailing! Sweet Cottons provides you with sumptuously soft, eco-friendly clothing, this holiday season and beyond! \$25.00 (407) 268-4422 www.sweetcottons.com

C. This cotton baby bib from **Lillian Rose** (10%) includes charming artwork embroidered on the front, along with the phrase "My Little Sweet Pea." This *Sweet Pea* baby collection includes romper, room décor, booties, hat and more. \$5.50 (800) 521-8760 www.lillianrose.com

D. The baby manicure kit from **Tweezerman International** (10%) includes four perfectly miniaturized manicure tools, all ultra-comfortable for parents to use yet customized specially for the safe and gentle care of sweet little fingers and toes. \$15.00 (800) 645-3340 www.tweezerman.com



# Decisions, Decisions

*Specialty Shop Retail Blog by  
Carole Schroeder*

As a store manager, your day is filled with decision-making. You need to decide what tasks to tackle first, how soon to approach a customer, what merchandise to buy, how best to display each item, and on and on. Your customers are also faced with decisions -- the most important being whether or not to buy each item that you offer in the shop.

But what do we really know about how decisions are made? Jonah Lehrer has made a study of this question from the neuroscientific viewpoint in his book *How We Decide*. It may be a bit heavy on the functions of different parts of the brain for many amateur readers, yet it has insights to offer that you may find improve your ability to decide -- and to influence the decisions of your customers.

I found it reassuring as a buyer that he says that most decisions are made up of a combination of reason and emotion, and that we should trust the emotional component. In fact, he states that "reason without emotion is impotent." Many of us do much of our ordering based on a feeling that the products we choose will sell well, but we can't

necessarily justify that hunch based only on sales data and other facts.

My shop is celebrating its 35th anniversary this week, and I'm happy to say that the longer you are in retailing, the more reliable your hunches turn out to be. That's because your mind can combine past experience and current emotion almost seamlessly as you make a decision. Happily this takes only a second, since the buying process requires making hundreds of rapid choices.

It is interesting to note that Lehrer has learned that the most effective way to get better at something -- including buying, I'm sure -- is to focus on your mistakes. If you review why something didn't sell, and what pattern you can detect from that, you will be better at making good decisions.

When it comes to encouraging shoppers to decide to buy, Lehrer points out that we need to overcome the part of the brain (the insula, in case you're interested) that produces adverse feelings related to spending money. He points out that increasing the pleasurable feelings (NAccs) generated

in the prefrontal cortex can outweigh these negative feelings. "A good deal... and the thrill of getting something new" are both ways to counteract "the sting of spending money."

"Retail stores manipulate this cortical setup. They are designed to get us to open our wallets; the frivolous details of the shopping experience are really subtle acts of psychological manipulation. The store is tweaking our brains, trying to soothe the insulas and stoke the NAccs." The pleasure centers are stimulated, and the insula inhibited, by words such as guaranteed, low price, bargain and good deal (an effort that is aided by the use of credit cards instead of hard cash).

We may not like to think of ourselves as manipulating our customers, but ideally buying something in a specialty shop creates a pleasurable sensation -- which I like to think means it was a good decision to shop there.

Happy Retailing,  
Carol "Orange" Schroeder.  
Orange Tree Imports

**"A good deal...and the thrill of getting something new" are both ways to counteract "the sting of spending money."**

## Breast Cancer Awareness

Choose Your Cause Badge Reel from **Bonitas International's** (5%) ...Choose your cause from one of the 25 personalize it yourself ribbon colors enclosed in the package. This product allows your customers to show their support for any cause. Never miss a sale! \$5.00 (888) 726-6533 [www.bonitaswholesale.com](http://www.bonitaswholesale.com)



Support Breast Cancer Awareness! Show off what is dear to your heart by including this pink ribbon charm from **Center Court** (10%) in your personalized locket. Charms fit inside locket for a unique, personalized necklace, bracelet or key chain. \$1.50 (888) 905-3935 [www.centercourtdirect.com](http://www.centercourtdirect.com)

**95 & Sunny's** (10%) Bottom's Up hand-painted stemware is a big hit! The "Fight Like A Girl" design is a memorable gift that will get used over and over. Each glass is distinctively gift-boxed. Check out the coordinating crystal nail files and note cards. \$11.50 (888) 953-4537 [www.95andsunny.com](http://www.95andsunny.com)



This collection of five Breast Cancer Awareness bracelets featuring pink charms, crystals



and enamels is new from **I Love Bracelets** (5%). 10% of proceeds are donated to the Susan G. Komen Foundation. \$40.00 for 5 piece assortment (310) 399-3445 [www.ilovebracelets.com](http://www.ilovebracelets.com)

## Vendor Updates

Due to a lack of orders, the following Vendors will no longer be extending a discount to Retail Advantage Group Members:

Imagination Ventures Two Lumps of Sugar

### HOLLY JOLLY HOLIDAYS continued

**A.** The featured set of seven wooden "BELIEVE" blocks are a best seller from the Nutcracker Designs division of **Candym Ent./Accent Imports** (10%). These adorable blocks include Santa or snowman figures frolicking on each block. \$20.00 (800) 263-3551 www.nutcrackerdesigns.com



**B.** The Holiday Bath Décor three-piece set from **Kurt Adler** (5%) is a great way to bring the holidays to any bath or a unique hostess gift. Each holiday themed set includes a soap dish, soap pump and glass in a gift box. \$10.00 (800) 243-9627 www.kurtadler.com



**C.** The Glass LED Snowmen from **Banberry Designs** (10%) will warm your heart. With color-changing LED lights and real knit scarfs, they will be a customer favorite. Each snowman includes battery and bonus battery. \$4.75 (800) 418-4438 www.banberry-gifts.com



**D.** The Musical Smiley Snowmen from **Princess Soft Toys** (10%) are available with blue, red or green accessories. This soft plush musical snowman plays "Frosty the Snowman" when his belly is squeezed. Outstanding quality and price point! \$5.00 (800) 252-7638 www.princesssofttoys.com



**E.** **Burton + BURTON's** (5%) holiday *Joy to the World* collection includes everything you need to celebrate this holiday season. This hand-painted ceramic platter will become the "go to" serving plate for holiday events. "Joy to the World...the Lord is born." Gift boxed, Set of 2 \$39.95 (800) 241-2094 www.burtonandburton.com



### Breast Cancer Awareness continued



**Wellspring's** (10%) #1 best-seller, Flip Notes are perfect for notes on-the-go as they fit snugly inside pockets, purses, or briefcases. Each Flip Note features a chic metal spring-loaded case with a blank white note pad and a coordinating retractable pen. \$3.50 (800) 533-3561 www.wellspringgift.com

This ceramic tumbler keeps your cool drinks cool and your hot drinks hot. It's durable, well-insulated, spill resistant, comfortable to hold, and sized to fit car cup holders. The **Fight Like A Woman!**



(10%) tumbler will help you stay hydrated and healthy. \$9.00 (800) 545-1113 www.fightlikeawoman.com

The **Trust Your Journey** (10%) Share Bracelet--Give One, Keep One, is a very special set of two bracelets designed for sharing the journey with a friend, family member or anyone who needs a daily positive message of just knowing someone is there for them. \$5.25 (877) 548-3895 www.trustyourjourney.com

