

# NETWORK NEWS

trends  
savings  
gift shop

published monthly by  
retail advantage group



**Malden's** (5%) baby storyboard picture frame features the sentimental text "Baby Sometimes the smallest things take up the most room in your Heart." The wood frame holds a 3" x 3" photo to capture special moments. \$5.50 (800) 426-3578 [www.maldenframe.com](http://www.maldenframe.com).



**Consider this: Four Million babies are born in the United States each and every year.**

That makes us the third most populous nation in the world! While most gift shops have this category well covered; perhaps you will find terrific products featured here to add into your current mix. We are hoping to encourage all of you to contemplate the benefits of enticing customers into your shop, for a whole new reason. After all busy working parents need to shop for their babies and children; while grandparents, relatives and friends all shop to purchase gift items for babies. Successful retailing involves not only finding the right products but offering the right categories!

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The unique line of slippers from **Smiley Slippers** (10%) are made with the finest materials. Product features such as non-skid soles, thick foam cushioning, soft terry uppers and fresh designs. Baby Boy Finally Slippers \$10.00/pair (800) 446-3820 [www.smileyslippers.com](http://www.smileyslippers.com).



**CoCaLo's** (10%) adorable collection features textured fabrics in a soothing color combination; shades of brown, green, tan and ivory with accents of orange. The playful jungle animals create a comfortable setting for baby. (714) 434-7200 [www.cocalo.com](http://www.cocalo.com).

The Friendly Pacifier™ is the "must have" in pacifiers. The concept combines a soothing pacifier with a plush toy to maximize security and comfort for baby helping them calmly discover the world around them. Every baby needs **First Friends** (10%)! (314) 479-8087 [www.myfirstfriend.com](http://www.myfirstfriend.com).



> **Mighty Bright Balloons** from **U.S. Balloon** (10%) will jumpstart any occasion. This balloon is made with non-metallized film and specially-formulated inks to create stunning designs and a brilliant shine. (800) 285-4000 [www.usballoon.com](http://www.usballoon.com).

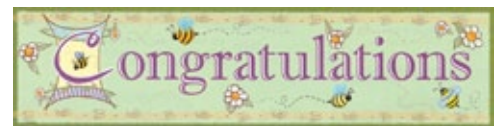


< A special day can be any day... birthday, great report card, finished project or any of life's many special occasions. What better way to celebrate then with the Celebration Plate and Mug from **Design Design** (10%)! Plate \$9.98 Mug \$5.98 (800) 334-3348 [www.designdesign.us](http://www.designdesign.us).

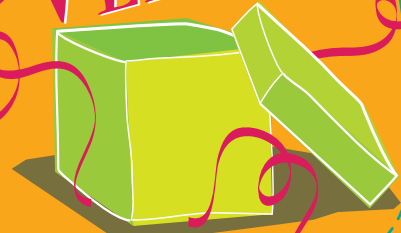


< **Making Memories** (10%) **Bravissimo™** products are intricate, stylized awards that, when mixed with delicate ribbon and a customized message component create the ultimate personal expression. Endless Possibilities! (800) 286-5263 [www.makingmemories.com](http://www.makingmemories.com).

> "B is for Baby" Collection from **The Beistle Company** (10%); a one-stop resource for all celebrations. Everything you need for your celebration; coordinating collection includes banners, decorations, tableware and more. SRP \$4.75 (866) 814-2135 [www.beistle.com](http://www.beistle.com).



introducing  
**NEW VENDORS**



**^ Cottage Garden**

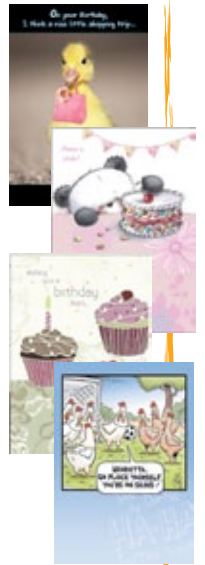
10% Discount  
(877) 210-3456  
www.cgcollections.com  
Opening \$150 Reorder \$100

**Cottage Garden** is the #1 gift wholesaler of music boxes including the traditional Sankyo and the new digital music boxes in the Music Box by You® program. In addition, their vast array of high-quality, inspirational, special occasion and everyday gifts include sentimental frames, clocks, signs, and treasure boxes.

**> For Arts Sake Greetings**

10% Discount  
(800) 689-5270  
www.forartsakeusa.com  
Opening \$100 / Reorder \$75

**For Arts Sake** was founded in 1985 in Sydney, Australia, with a vision to deliver best-selling cards and gift products to retailers. The goal was to set their product apart with unmatched variety and quality. Twenty five years later, this dream has become a reality and now For Arts Sake is available in America!



**POWER PROMOTION**

February Deal

**Wellspring**  
**SAVE 50% OFF**  
REGULAR WHOLESALE

How It Works

**Exclusive Offer!**

Another terrific aspect of your Membership? Power Promotion's just for our Members! Think of Groupon but at the wholesale level. Keep them coming by placing your order today. **Call (888) 221-3367** for your order form today.



Take advantage of this incredible deal from Wellspring. This is a fabulous assortment of product, perfect for this time of year and all at an incredible **50% off** wholesale!! **Receive:** 24 Flipnotes, 24 Pill Boxes, 24 Pencil Pads (6 Each of Assorted Designs) and 8 Note Cards

Regular wholesale cost = \$216.00

**Power Promotion cost = \$108.00**

Remember, to take advantage of this offer, you must call our office for an order form at (888) 221-3367

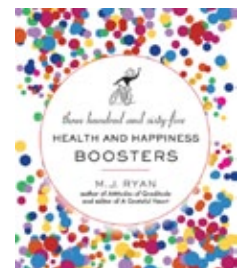
**LOVE THAT!**

**> Texas Leather's** (10%) newest arrival, the sling bag, features a starburst pinwheel design, three inside pockets, and a zipper pocket on back for easy access. The bag is available in green (featured), black, hot pink, blue, orange or purple. \$19.00 (800) 284-2358 www.texasleather.com



As our team busily works to compile each newsletter, **we always stumble upon items that we just love and love to share with you.** Here's what grabbed our attention this month!

**>** This book from **Red Wheel's Conari Press** (10%) offers 365 ways to experience more happiness; changing one's outlook and learning to lift one's spirit. Some of the tasks are lighthearted, others quite serious. They all will have a positive effect on mind, body, and spirit. \$8.48 (800) 423-7087 www.redwheelweiser.com.





**David Helmstadter from Allegheny General Hospital is passionate about retail!** Speak with him for just a few moments and that enthusiasm is bound to rub off on you. He recently took the time to speak with us about promotion ideas and how you can make them work for your shop.

**I**n the month of December, he created fun scratch off cards that he distributed to each customer, who made a purchase of \$5.00 or more. (Although, that did not prevent him from keeping a stash in his pocket, to pass out, as he walked around!) The recipients could then scratch off their card, in anticipation of saving 15%, 20% or even 25% off their next purchase of Christmas merchandise over \$15.00. A little bit like winning the lotto - these scratch off cards were a hit and 171 were redeemed!

**T**he scratch cards were printed by a local printer for the cost of about 15¢ each. David also clearly defined the parameters. He set the discount, the category it could be applied to and limited one coupon per transaction. With just a bit of foresight and creativity, he was able to create real buzz and excitement!

**T**his would be a terrific promotion any time of year - Need to move jewelry, plush, candles? Create a scratch off card that is specific to that category! Its fun for everyone and gives your customers a reason to come back to your store.

**O**f course, we could not stop at just scratch off cards! We started pondering our favorite incentives from "big box" stores. These stores have teams of advertising, marketing and promotions staff assigned the task of coming up with ideas to increase traffic, boost customer loyalty and increase average sales transaction, so why not adapt a few for use in your shop?



**Gift Shop Bucks** ~ Establish a period of time, perhaps a Friday, Saturday and Sunday, in which you issue \$10 worth of Gift Shop Bucks for every \$50 spent. The "Bucks" must then be redeemed, during a set weekend the following month, for any amount exceeding the redemption amount - if you have \$20 in Bucks, you may redeem them for merchandise totaling \$20 or more.

**Customer Loyalty Programs** continue to be extremely popular and easily translate to gift shops. Grocery stores, coffee shops, restaurants and others offer programs to reward consumers for frequent patronage. Discounts, free gifts with purchase, and gift certificates are just a few possibilities to reward frequent shoppers. Start simple, with a frequent shopper punch card; receive a punch for every \$5 or \$10 spent.



< The Weird & Wacky Contraption Lab has 60 mix-and-match pieces to build an unlimited amount of contraptions. Kids can dream up crazy courses, then build and test them using this easy-to-construct Velcro®-like system; a best seller from **SmartLab Toys** (10%). \$20.00 (866) 319-5900 [www.smartlabtoys.com](http://www.smartlabtoys.com).

> This lemongrass and grapefruit body wash from Beecology, distributed by **MarketShare** (6.5%), is the perfect way to baby your skin. Natural moisturizers and cleansers, essential oils, and nothing else - a sulfate-free body wash with rich lather and a fresh scent. \$4.50 (888) 262-6088 [www.marketsharegifts.com](http://www.marketsharegifts.com).



**Free Gifts** ~ One international retailer discovered a great way to increase traffic in their stores. Purchase a special edition re-usable shopping bag for \$5.00 and get 20% off your current purchase. That's not all ~ The bag also includes weekly coupons (one per week for six weeks); redeemable in-store for a free gift. This is a terrific way to get more customers in your store during a busy, gift-giving time of year... why not use this opportunity to sell them gifts for their co-workers, friends, family, hostess gifts, teachers?

**I**f you have any promotional ideas that you have offered in your store, please share them with us at [info@retailadvantagegroup.com](mailto:info@retailadvantagegroup.com). We would love to hear from you!

# Retail Advantage G·R·O·U·P

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Be sure to visit our website at  
[www.retailadvantagegroup.com](http://www.retailadvantagegroup.com)

**VENDOR UPDATES** Due to a lack of orders, the following Vendors will no longer be extending a discount to Retail Advantage Group Members:  
**International Arrivals, Periwinkle by Barlow**

**The Shipping Program**, managed by PartnerShip, recently announced that FedEx and UPS will increase shipping rates for 2012. PartnerShip is a leading freight management company providing shipping solutions and exceptional savings to small and medium-sized businesses. For more information, please visit [www.partnership.com/59PPP](http://www.partnership.com/59PPP) or call 800-599-2902



*Prayers for My Baby Boy* from **Harvest House Publishers** (10%) ~ Written by an adoring mom, whose prayers presented as letters to God,

celebrate delight in everyday moments with a newborn boy. Each is beautifully bundled with heartwarming photos of sweet babies. SRP \$12.99 (888) 501-0160 [www.harvesthousepublishers.com](http://www.harvesthousepublishers.com).



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Nap Sak from **SOZO** (10%) is a wearable baby blanket made of snuggly soft velour, perfect for keeping baby warm! A two way zipper for easy changing and fits newborn babies through six months; up to 28" machine washable \$17.50 (203) 266-0701 [www.sozousa.com](http://www.sozousa.com).



This interactive toy features printed fabrics based on Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*; available from **Kids Preferred** (10%). Developmental features include jingle bell rattle, squeak and crinkle sounds, textured beads and fabrics, and printed label tags. \$8.50 (866) 763-8869 [www.kidspreferred.com](http://www.kidspreferred.com).



Discover the brand new **Ravensburger** (10%) puzzleball® series for pre-school kids! With

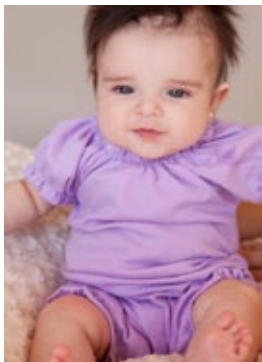
age-appropriate, extra-large pieces and assembly aid, little puzzle beginners are able to train fine motor skills, concentration and 3D comprehension! \$10.00 (800) 886-1236 [www.ravensburger.com](http://www.ravensburger.com).

**North American Bear's** (10%) award-winning *Smushy* collection grows with new friends in more choices! Irresistibly huggable in signature shaggy, soft cohair and velour with embroidered facial features.



Convenient 2-pack means a spare is always close at hand. \$10.00 (800) 682-3427 [www.nabear.com](http://www.nabear.com).

There's a whole lot of adorable happening at **Sweet Cottons** (10%). Bubble Rompers gather in all the right places...so simple and soft, mom will want one in every color; 100% Pima cotton in hot pink, lilac, and blush. \$15.00 (407) 268-4422 [www.sweetcottons.com](http://www.sweetcottons.com)



Mail call! A fun mailbox complete with three postcards, Velcro-like stamps and rotating red flag. From **Manhattan Toy** (5%); the dense fabric material assures durability for play. Carry by handle or hang on child's door. \$15.00 (800) 541-1345 [www.manhattantoy.com](http://www.manhattantoy.com).

It's easy to twist and turn the sections of the wooden caterpillar, from **Melissa & Doug** (5%), into different positions and creative shapes. With its vivid colors, appealing expression and easy grasp size, this is a perfect first manipulative. \$3.99 (800) 284-3948 [www.melissaanddoug.com](http://www.melissaanddoug.com).

