



Sales Bells Ring, Are You Listening?

Most gift stores realize up to 50 per cent of their annual sales during the fourth quarter. Choosing the right product can therefore truly make or break your year. Once the Santas, snowmen and angels are on order, turn your attention to the little extras, which can really boost your bottom line.

GLASS PICKLE ORNAMENTS

Glass pickle ornaments have been around for a while, but continue to sell well. In many countries and cultures, people hide a pickle ornament in their tree on Christmas Eve. On Christmas morning, the first child to find the pickle gets an extra gift, while the first adult to spot it is thought to enjoy good luck for the rest of the year.

Decorate a tree with dozens of these glass ornaments from Christmas Tradition. Hang a sign explaining the folklore and reap the sales. With a retail price of less than \$10, customers tend to buy a few, making them a fun, amusing and profitable add-on.

PLASTIC WISHBONES

Thanks to Lucky Wishbones, everyone can take a crack at making their wishes come true during turkey dinner. The wishbones are a plastic replica of the real thing, and a unique item for the holidays.

Display from Thanksgiving to New Year's at the cash or as part of a turkey "fixings" display, complete with

roasting pans, cookbooks, stuffing mixes and the like.

Wholesale: .48¢ US each.

MELTY MINTS

These yummy chocolates are one of my all-time favourite holiday products.

They really sell. In fact, if you commit to showcasing them

properly, you can sell hundreds, even thousands, of them.

Wholesale: \$2 to \$3 per bag.

BIRDSEED ORNAMENTS

Ornaments made from birdseed are another unique holiday item with mass appeal. Handmade in Newmarket, Ont., each ornament is designed to attract a different Canadian bird. The item has become a tradition for many families, and the supplier receives hundreds of repeat orders every year. Hang them on a large birch branch and watch your sales fly.

Wholesale: \$3.75 each.

As you plan your holiday purchases, I hope you'll squeeze in a couple of these suggestions. Santa and snowmen rule, but these non-traditional holiday items will help create new traditions – and sales. ■

Hope Milner, our resident queen of product picks, is the award-winning founder of La Premiere Compagnie de Paniers/The New England Gift & Basket Company in Pointe Claire, Que. For more of her product picks, log onto www.hopesbag.com.

WHOLESALE LOCATOR

PICKLE ORNAMENTS

CHRISTMAS TRADITION

Telephone: (800) 561-5515
www.christmas-tradition.com

PLASTIC WISHBONES

LUCKY BREAK WISHBONE COMPANY

Telephone: (866) 582-5994
www.luckybreakwishbone.com

MELTY MINTS

SAKSCO GOURMET BASKET SUPPLIES

Telephone: (800) 668-4390
www.sakSCO.com

BIRDSEED ORNAMENTS

THE WILD BIRD TRADING COMPANY

Telephone: (888) 410-9060
www.wildbirdtrading.com

For more details on these companies, turn to Supplier Listings on page 50.

Join **Hope & Retail News** Editor-In-Chief **Erica Kirkland** for a discussion on products and purchasing at the Fall 2007 CGTA Gift Show: Wednesday, August 15* 8:30 a.m. *BERTON ROOM, TORONTO CONGRESS CENTRE