

Features

8/27/2012

Holiday: Filling In The Gift Gaps

Jennifer Polanz



You've been to the market in January, and you've already received some holiday product. But there have been a few new products introduced since then. If you didn't make it to a July market, never fear—we've got you covered. Here are some nifty new items and ideas that will keep your holiday customers in a jolly mood. All of these companies can ship product before Santa's bells start jingling, too.

Fresh Jewelry Co., Geneva, Illinois

This company is now completely dedicated to the garden market with a permanent showroom at AmericasMart in Atlanta, and works with each retailer to custom-tailor a product grouping that fits the retailer's core customer profile. The company makes rings, pendants, earrings, bracelets and more with fresh flowers, and has created a new birdhouse display this summer that has been popular with its retail clients. Jen Bristow is co-owner of Fresh Jewelry Co. with her husband, Troy, and asks that retailers who are ordering for the first time contact the company directly to discuss the best product mix and display options for them. www.freshjewelrycompany.com

Midwest-CBK, Union City, Tennessee

Midwest-CBK always offers a wide range of holiday products for the garden retail market. But it just introduced a few new lines at the July gift market at AmericasMart that retailers could add into their holiday mix this year. Everybody's Ayurveda is a relatively new brand that includes multiple collections designed to "promote balance in one's environment." The Soyveda Dosha line of 100% soy wax candles, which was exclusive to independent retailers, became a huge hit. Now, four more collections were added this summer to expand the product offerings with: Soulveda home décor, Teaveda organic teas, Soyveda body care and Soyveda Elements candles. There are 125 new products with all four lines.



Many retailers already carry the popular Genuine Monkeez and Friends plush collection. Now the company has added a cool new charitable educational program for children with it. The program is called Monkeez Makes a Difference, and the lovable toys have a tag with a unique game activation code. With an adult's help, children can visit the website at www.MonkeezandFriends.com and watch a video on each of three charitable organizations that

partners with Monkeez Makes a Difference. Kids can choose a charity and the company donates 10% of the wholesale cost of the product on their behalf. The website also features educational games and ways kids can help others. www.mwcbk.com

Additional Services To Make Customers Smile

The credit for this idea goes directly to the sisters of Donzell's and Gales' Westlake Garden Centers—Julie DiFeo and Pam Donzelli. Before the recent Garden Centers of America tour in Detroit, the sisters visited Bronner's Christmas Wonderland, an explosion of all things Christmas. They were specifically looking to learn more about ornament personalization. Bronner's has about 24 stations set up with staff to personalize thousands of Christmas ornaments. It's an idea Julie will be expanding on at her store with more staff dedicated to it and Pam will be starting hers as a way to differentiate themselves in the hard-scrabble category of holiday ornaments.



Hillhouse Naturals, Wickliffe, Kentucky

This company, a family-owned business that's been around since 1986, derives its inspiration from the farm and farmers market for many of its collections. Even the holiday collections are a treasure trove of fruits and herbs, along with traditional holiday scents. Here are just three suggestions to set the holiday mood retailers want for their customers: The Holiday Weck Candle Collection, housed in authentic Weck canning jars from Germany, comes in four herb and fruit scents; The Evergreen Seedling Collection inspired by a trip to a Christmas tree farm, combines whispering

pine, spruce, juniper and cedar wood; and the Holiday Collection captures fresh pine warmed with a hint of cinnamon. www.HillhouseStore.com

Georgetown Home & Garden, Kent, Washington

This small business specializes in fun, whimsical garden art and accents. It doesn't disappoint for the holidays, either, with a couple of fun gift products within the garden theme. First off, its fairy garden kit (pictured) features mini-furniture, tools and a how-to booklet. This would be a great fit in a dedicated fairy garden department for budding gardeners (young and experienced alike!)



Another offering is a collection of small, unique hanging glass terrariums that are perfect for decorative stones, tillandsia and even tea lights. These could be used as decoration in the home or even on the Christmas tree. www.georgetownusa.com GP