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indie bookstore entrepreneur

IDEAS, INSPIRATION, BEST PRACTICES

summer 2011

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Getting into the bookstore business?

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Bookstore

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THE BOOKSTORE TRAINING GROUP

Is the sky partly sunny or partly cloudy as you forecast the future of your business?



As we enter a new season for bookselling, much has changed even in the last few months, and the industry continues to evolve.

Let's tap our entrepreneurial energy to help navigate the changes and strengthen how we live our mission.

fly higher.

When customers are looking to buy physical books, their experience in a brick-and-mortar bookstore can go **way beyond** click-and-buy.

Let's push the envelope a little further to accentuate our competitive advantages - focusing on what customers need and want with the valuable 'high touch' aspect of our business.



The desire for lifelong learning.



Readers want to expand their world. They want to keep learning and growing. Fulfilling this need with *more* learning opportunities in the bookstore is a natural extension of selling books.

While many customers may not go to the trouble of enrolling in an extension course at the community college, they might sign up for a 4 session series taught by a retired English professor in the comfort of your store ... and pay a fee to attend.

Merchandising Made Easy 2.0



To preview video,
click on image
above.



Put ideas to use to
inspire the sale:

- * The most-valuable retail real estate: the "Front of Store"
- * Tables & focal point displays
- * Sections throughout the store
- * Shelf-talkers
- * Impulse areas like the cash wrap & service areas

BUY NOW

What do people want to learn about in your area? From home arts to literature, healthy living to parenting, chances are you have a host of local experts that you can engage to develop - and deliver - programs.

The need for connection.

Just look at how many people have busy lives, but still find time for their book group! Maybe it's time to re-invent the Socrates cafe. What are the topics your customers want to discuss?



Local experts can present a topic, select a book for participants to read, and facilitate group conversation. From local and national politics, war and national security, history and current events to travel, faith, and creativity, you can be the venue where people have meaningful conversations. Extend the popular book group concept.

The need for meaningful activities for children.



As long as parents are busy, they'll appreciate the meaningful programs you coordinate that will engage children, help them learn to love to read, and use their imaginations.

Partnering with teachers, an artist association, music school, community theatre group, storytellers and local entertainers can make it easier to host and implement programs.

It takes a community to create a community bookstore. Engage local experts (who will invite people they know) to offer opportunities to connect, exchange, and learn. Instead of events, think 'programs' or 'classes' ... all have value and are worthy of a class fee.

sell the experience.

price point watch.

Whenever business shifts, leaving a gap in sales and profits, it's time to think of strategies to fill the void.

Vickie Crafton, co-owner





of Litchfield Books in Pawleys Island, SC, observed a customer who came in to browse and purchased not a single book, but found seven items priced at \$10 to buy. A \$70+ sale was made by the customer discovering little surprises as she wandered through the bookstore.

What affordable items do you offer that are great pick-me-ups for that ever more important add-on sale?

Here's a fun little cocktail napkin from [Gallery 19](#): *"Let's celebrate with a little ginsing! I'll bring the gin and we'll all sing!"* A selection of eye-catching cocktail napkins may be the perfect "pick-me!" when placed with book club recommendations.

watching price points & buying behavior is the art of retailing (and for the customer, the fun of shopping).

unmistakably indie.

Art in the bookstore. Why not combine the literary arts with visual art for a beautiful, interesting space with a personal and local flair?

The local artist who created the new logo for Rona Brinlee, owner of The Bookmark in Neptune Beach, FL, also created this beautiful ocean scene on canvas. The painting is behind the cash wrap, offering customers a pleasant visual, as well as reinforcing the store's identity.



Leslie Hakala, owner of Best of Times Bookstore in Red Wing, MN, asked a local artist to paint nature scenes in small spaces in several areas in the store. This one is in a visible corner space just beside the public rest room.

celebrate everything local.

books & babies.

Did you see the feature "**Once Upon a Baby Shower**" in the May issue of *Martha Stewart Living* magazine that provided inspiration for a lovely and thought-filled book-themed party for expecting moms?

While we may believe that all babies should receive books as gifts, have we made it clear in our stores with displays, book lists, signage, and programs?



When you think of just this market niche, there are plenty of people who receive gifts when a new baby arrives: parents, siblings, grandparents and of course, the new baby! Think of all those opportunities to make a sale.

Be the go-to place for baby gifts ... don't forget toys, cards, invitations, and party favors to make it easy for your customers to know what to buy. Profit gaps are filled with a series of small, easy strategies of identifying and meeting customer needs.

seize the opportunity.

Ideas, objective feedback and guidance, encouragement (always) and support ... we are here for you!

Do you have something on your mind or a project on your plate? Give us a call. Your first consultation is free and we're much more affordable than you think.

Call us at 800.260.8605. We'd love to work with you!

Warm regards,

Mark & Donna Paz Kaufman

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