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WHITE PAPER

Corporate Gift Giving

Why Wait For The Holidays To Acknowledge
And Thank Your Customers And Colleagues?

Recognize And Reward Those You Appreciate

Christmas and New Years are wonderful opportunities for business owners to express their gratitude to clients and associates. Business gifts are given to customers, employees and clients for thanks, to develop business and to recognize performance. It is also a chance to make clients and business associates feel special.

With the holidays rapidly approaching, the anxiety associated with choosing the appropriate items for corporate gift giving is increasing. Tired of giving the standard corporate "trinkets", executives are looking for new gift ideas which convey their company's good taste – something that is contemporary, unique and useful.

Ideas For Corporate Holiday Gifts Should Include A Few Important Considerations

The first and probably the most important step is to decide who gifts should be sent to. If you have the funds to give gifts to all your customers, by all means, do so. However, unless you are an extremely large company with ample funds and you're like the rest of us, only give gifts to:

1. Your most valuable customers
2. Customers who regularly refer others to you
3. Good customers you know well

Then ask a few questions:

What does he or she like to do away from the office?

Which holiday does she celebrate at this time of the year - Christmas, Hanukkah, none?

Would he prefer the gift delivered to his home or his office?

What gifts from previous years has she liked enough to display in her office?

Does he have a favorite charity to which you can donate in his name?

Know your client's company. Does the recipient's company set limits on the number or value of gifts their employees can accept? Some companies limit it to "token" gifts. Some specify a dollar amount. Others prohibit them altogether. Find out what that policy is and abide by it. You don't want to put your customer in the awkward position of having to decline a gift from you because it violates their company policy.

And, don't give gifts to prospects you're wooing. It would have the appearance of bribery, which may turn them off — or they may come to expect that something extra for every job you do for them.

A Gift Solution For Every Budget

There are no rules written in concrete when it comes to giving gifts, but it would be in your best interest to:

1. Present a professional image.
2. Include a greeting card or hand-written note
3. Wrap the gift
4. Present the gift in person, if possible.

Fortunately, there is a business gift solution for every budget, from modest, promotional items to more expensive offerings. Current favourites include golf-related items (balls, tees, putters), apparel such as jackets, golf and T-shirts or fleece wear (especially appreciated during the cold winter months!) as well as traditional gifts such as mugs, pens and frames.

Customizing any of these gift items with your company name and logo is a perfectly acceptable practice and a great way to create brand awareness.

Of course, there is always that favourite among favourites: chocolates. No one can resist candy or fudge or chocolate covered almonds and pretzels. The selections are endless and mouth watering. When in doubt, consider this tempting gift that is available in an array of baskets, tins and boxes.

For Your Employees

Don't forget those who make it all happen for you this season. While they may be from different religious backgrounds, everyone appreciates a gift. You can keep to a common theme without becoming too impersonal.

For example, you can:

- Recognize everyone in your company with a "Happy Holidays" or "Seasons Greetings" card and gift certificate to a popular store or restaurant.
- Order a small gift like a light jacket, golf or fleece wear for each employee with the company logo embroidered on it. **NEBS** has great ideas for employee recognition.

Just remember this...big or small, expensive or economical...as long as the two basic rules of "quality" and "good taste" are followed, whatever business gift you decide upon will likely be well-received.

To learn more about brand building ideas, visit www.nebs.ca/branding.