

THE MODERN RETAILER'S ESSENTIAL RESOURCE

Gift Shop

SPRING 2019

WINNER OF CREATIVE DISPLAY
CONTEST SETS OUT TO

ENTICE & INSPIRE

BOOKS

CUSTOMIZATION

MOBILE BOUTIQUES

PARTIES &
CELEBRATIONS

FASHION &
ACCESSORIES
LOOKBOOK



Compendium books and gifts on display at Stuhlbergs in Seattle. Circle 269.



PAGING GIFT BOOKS

What fits neatly into every gift store and captures the perfect sentiment for almost every occasion? It's books!

BY POORNIMA APTE

Contributing Writer

Carrie Kohs of pucciManuli, a children's store in Ardmore, Pennsylvania, had heard about a dance performance based on the kids' book "What Do You Do With an Idea?" being staged in Philadelphia. She figured she might as well make the most of the opportunity and decided to host a series of events: Kohs partnered with publisher Compendium to host a book signing with author Kobi Yamada and even invited the dancers to the store. Kohs also organized school visits and arranged for a group of students to attend the performance.

Kohs wins high marks for this event because she took advantage of an area opportunity and even better, brought it home to her own store. Understanding that the central player here was the book, she stocked up plenty of copies and created a smashingly successful book-oriented event. Gift retailers indeed occupy such

a unique place in that they bring different worlds together, say industry experts. "Small businesses can be such a community hub, and stores should take advantage of their ability to bring people together [for book events]," says Angeline Candido, marketing manager at Compendium.

THE MAGIC OF BOOKS

Kohs was able to pull off the author event so successfully because of the enormous popularity of its key driver, the endearingly illustrated book. Indeed, your customers are hungry for neatly packaged sentiments. A card is good but doesn't feel substantial enough. A book is just the right antidote for such situations, say industry professionals.

"Most of your customers aren't likely poets or wordsmiths. They'll appreciate being able to select from

an assortment of heartfelt gift books featuring neatly-packaged sentiments through which they can express their love, appreciation, and concern for others,” says Becky Brandvik, senior director, Tyndale Gift & Specialty with Tyndale House Publishers.

Candido echoes these sentiments. “Books carry such rich meaning, and each title offers a different message,” Candido says. “A book about appreciation can highlight the recipient’s generosity. A friendship title can honor years of companionship and love. By giving someone a book, you’re inviting them into a deeper shared connection. You’re telling a story about your relationship.”

WHY BOOKS WORK IN GIFT RETAIL

And it’s not just human connections that books serve to highlight. Books are extremely malleable and probably the best cross-merchandisers that retailers can play with. Did we mention they take very little room?

“Books add a strong element of storytelling to a vignette,” Candido points out. “Use a book like a billboard. It’s an easy way to communicate upcoming holidays and other gift buying occasions. For instance, if a store wants to put together a Teacher Appreciation Week vignette, they could take a book like ‘Because I Had a Teacher’ and display it with chocolates, candles, and fun stationery. It will act as a reminder to customers to pick up something for their children’s teachers.”

“Books incorporated into topical themes always aid in discoverability. For example, we have a book ‘So Much To Celebrate’ by Katie Jacobs that is a wonderful addition to any party/hosting display,” says Laura Minchew, senior vice president and publisher, gift books and Tommy Nelson children’s books with HarperCollins Christian Publishers. “Devotions from the Beach is a perennial bestseller in gift stores when merchandised with other beach themed items,” Minchew adds.

Sometimes it’s important to remember that not all customers are book people but there are ways of drawing them in, Candido says. For easier merchandising, Compendium’s collections offer an assortment of products based around some of their best-selling books. “Store owners can quickly bring in one cohesive, curated assortment of products and develop a merchandising vignette theme. It makes a strong and striking statement. Customers can purchase a variety of products or the specific piece that speaks to them,” Candido says.

LET’S GO SHOPPING

Since books are retailing in so many different contexts, sourcing them from vendors who know and speak books is important, says Patti Stracher-Lee, event director at UnBound at BookExpo + BookCon. BookExpo, to be held



Dancers from a Philadelphia production based on the kids' book "What Do You Do With an Idea?" are on hand for an in-store event at pucciManuli, a children's store in Ardmore, Pennsylvania.



Author Kobi Yamada signs a copy of his best-selling book "What Do You Do With an Idea?" for a young fan at pucciManuli, a children's store in Ardmore, Pennsylvania.



The Believe collection from Compendium Inc. sprinkles a touch of inspiration when needed. Circle 273.



From Tyndale House Publishers, this beloved Christian allegory is a mixed-media special edition complete with charming watercolor paintings, antique tinted photography, meditative hand-lettered Scripture, journaling and doodling space, and designs to color. Circle 274. A take on the classic "God is Good, Y'All" from Tyndale House Publishers. Circle 275.

PAGE-TURNERS

While books are universally loved and every kind of gift book has its own special place, retailers attending BookExpo or other shows are probably noticing a few trends in the industry, Candido says. These include guided journals, books of encouragement and interactive titles. "Overall, we feel like the conversation is changing in society," she says. "With the rise of Brené Brown and Elizabeth Gilbert, there's a new comfort in expressing emotion and being vulnerable with each other. Our gift books and journals offer a way to share and connect."

"Lifestyle books are so popular—whether it is home design, cooking, or personal style," says Minchew. "Décor books are far more than looking pretty, they are now about reflecting your personality and purpose in the space you live," she adds.

Minchew has seen that devotionals are a top-selling category in every sales channel, including mass market and gift stores. "These short bites of inspiration sell well whether they are author-driven or topically based," she says.

The key takeaway is that books do the heavy lifting for your customers in terms of expression and they work for all occasions. Even better, they fit well into your store and can add to your bottom line in style.

"We often say that we're in the reminder business," Candido says about gift books. "People are busy, preoccupied, and generally stressed out, and we offer reminders to focus on what's true and real within each of us — the stuff of life that makes living worthwhile. Books allow someone to pause, reconnect (with ourselves and each other), and celebrate life's goodness. It's almost a luxury in such a fast-paced world." **GS**

Learn more about our Gift Shop contributors on page 14.



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LIVING CORAL

Whether this affable, animating shade finds itself on textiles, housewares, stationery or even matches, it always exhibits an energizing, enlivening effect.



1. Handmade Lamp. Kinzig Design. Circle 222. 2. Hill & Dale Large Zipper Pouch. Danica Studio. Circle 223. 3. Himalayan Salt Lamp. GeoCentral. Circle 224. 4. Square Pendant Necklace with Adjustable Macramé Strap. Dunitz & Company. Circle 225. 5. Personalized Notepad. PrintsWell. Circle 226.

6. Mug. C.R. Gibson. Circle 227. 7. Tooth Teepee. Tree by Kerri Lee. Circle 228. 8. Wooden Matches. Made Market Co. Circle 229. 9. Simpatico Guava Hobnail Candle. K. Hall Studio. Circle 230. 10. Luxe Foil Notecard. teNeues. Circle 231. 11. Wooden Wall Art. Compendium. Circle 232.

PEPPER STEM

From farmers markets to rustic retreats, this refreshing yellow-green speaks to today's healthy, outdoor lifestyles. It's no surprise that these items evoke natural scents, outdoor adventures and pastoral vistas!



1. Recycled Glass and Silver Earrings. Sundrop Jewelry. Circle 242. 2. Liquid Cleanser. B. Witching Bath Co. Circle 243. 3. Goats Doormat. Now Designs. Circle 244. 4. Match Cloche. Skeem. Circle 245. 5. Wire-O Notebook.

Printfresh. Circle 246. 6. Wooden Wall Art. Compendium. Circle 247. 7. Simpatico Fern Diffuser Kit. K. Hall Studio. Circle 248. 8. Desk Caddy. Spruce Storage. Circle 249.

PRINCESS BLUE

This majestic royal blue adds a regal pop of color wherever it appears.



1. Mystique Water Bottle. Danica Studio. Circle 250. 2. Brass Bookmark. Fiorentina. Circle 251. 3. Draper James Glass Bottle. Wild & Wolf. Circle 252. 4. Violet + Yarrow Vegetable Soap. K. Hall Studio. Circle 253. 5. Hooked Pillow. Peking Handicraft. Circle 254. 6. Wood Wall Art. Compendium.

Circle 255. 7. Sling Pack. Harvest Label through Molla Space. Circle 256. 8. Molly Hatch Journal. C.R. Gibson. Circle 257. 9. Blue Stripe Ceramic Vases. Mud Pie. Circle 258. 10. Dapper Garden Watering Can. Time Concept. Circle 259.