

# HOLIDAY GIFT SHOP

## OPERATIONS MANUAL



### DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAKING YOUR EVENT A SUCCESS

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#### **YOU WILL NEED:**

- 4 or 5 eight foot long folding tables or the equivalent
- A lockable room in the school where you can display the merchandise on the tables and comfortably accommodate a number of children at one time
- 3 or 4 volunteers who are willing to spend parts of three days setting up and running the shop

#### **IF YOU ARE MISSING ANY OF THE ABOVE:**

**Stop! Close this booklet and call Hazel at 1-800-665-5656 to cancel your event!**

Seriously, the top three items are indispensable. If you don't have enough tables, you will be unable to properly display the hundreds of different items that you will be selling. Items that are grouped too closely together will mean that the children will be climbing on each other to get a better view. Too small a room will only compound the problem, while setting up in a large open area such as a hallway would mean that you either have to put everything away between event times or take your chances that nothing will be disturbed.

**Absolutely the most important need is for reliable volunteers.** With sufficient help the program will be a breeze and your volunteers will only remember how much their young customers enjoyed themselves. However, if you end up with people dropping out at the last minute, the remaining volunteers will be forced to do too much and what could have been a great experience will be reduced to an unwelcome burden.

We at Fun Services tell you these things not to discourage, but to present an accurate picture of what you can expect when running the Holiday Gift Shop. We do not like to be on the receiving end of irate phone calls. We are doing everything we can think of to ensure that our follow-up call to you after the event is a pleasurable experience for both of us. Please remember that we are in this together. If you do poorly so does Fun Services. **We are here to assist you. Please don't hesitate to call.** That having been said, on to the program!

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## PROMOTION

Well in advance you will be receiving supplies to help publicize the upcoming event. These supplies will include the following:

1. The Promotion Guide - This booklet takes you through the six weeks leading up to your shop. It suggests how to best bring the event to everyone's attention and even provides several pre-printed forms and letters you can use.
2. Children's Savings Banks
3. Gift Planner Envelopes - These envelopes and the banks are sent home with each child. They will help the child prepare for their shopping trip to the Holiday Gift Shop. With this emphasis on budgeting and saving the money they will need for their gifts most of these children will be better prepared for the holidays than most adults.
4. Holiday Gift Shop Color Flyers - These brochures will explain the program to the children's parents or guardians. The back is blank so you can print your particular school's event dates and times on the flyer by running them through a photocopier.



As you can see, the list shows 6 Tape Measures and 24 Lipstick Cases because it added together the items in the two B boxes received. Once you have matched your individual box packing lists to this **Master Invoice** you may throw them away since **all the information you need is on this one document. (Guard it with your life!)** When the shop ends all your calculations will be done on this paperwork, but we will get back to that in a few minutes.

### **Step 3: Displaying the Merchandise**

At this point you should have your tables in place with tablecloths on and the boxes of your merchandise. Generally speaking, the items are packed with the most expensive items in Box A with the items descending in cost through B, C, D, etc. Jewelry is an exception with all items grouped together in one pre-packed box, usually labeled JWL. We strongly suggest that you follow this same format in setting up your display tables.

Start at your first table with the items from Box A. Place one only of each item on the table arranging them in an attractive fashion. When an item is available in more than one colour or style then one of each should be displayed. All remaining stock should be placed behind the tables where only the volunteers can select items as they are purchased. While this may seem overly controlled, the first wave of 20-30 excited young shoppers will convince you it's the way to go. Another important point to remember is to remove the display items from their boxes. Many items are much nicer than they appear on the box pictures. Displaying both the empty box and the product side by side gives the customer a really good look and minimizes handling which may result in breakage. Finally, once you are happy with your display, stick the ***Product Description Label*** (**A complete set will be enclosed with your Master Invoice**) on the tablecloth next to the corresponding gift and write in your sale price for the item in the space provided on the label. **It is very important that you place the label on the tablecloth only, as price marked items are not returnable for credit.**

Repeat the above procedure for boxes B, C, D, etc. and then set up a section for your jewelry in the same way. As you move to the less expensive items many of them will be packed a dozen or more in a display box. For example the "Small Painted Wood Box" comes packed in a display tray of 12. In this case you would set out the whole tray of 12 since the display tray will make the item more attractive. Again, mark your sale price on the ***Product Description Label*** and stick it on the tablecloth next to the display tray.

The finished shop should now be ready for the first eager customer. Upon entering the room they can be easily directed to gifts in their price range. A sample of every time for sale is on display and price marked so they can freely shop and compare without assistance, leaving your volunteers free to deal with those that have made their decisions.

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## **THE HOLIDAY GIFT SHOP SALE DAYS**

If you have done a good job planning and setting up your room layout the sale itself should be a lot of fun! The only operational matter you have to decide on is how to collect payment for the gifts. One

way is to set up a checkout counter like a grocery store. This way you can assign a volunteer who is fast on the calculator and have all your cash in one place. To assist the check out person the other volunteers could list a child's purchases on a sheet of paper that would be given to the cashier. There are many ways to handle this issue but whatever you decide make sure that everyone knows the system so things will go smoothly.

**Important! Please schedule your shoppers so that the youngest children are the first to visit the Holiday Gift Shop.** Because of their age they benefit the most from this program. Older children are more likely to be able to shop on their own in town, but for the little ones this shop will be their only opportunity to shop a like grown up. Letting them go first will give them the best selection and the older kids will still have many items to choose from.

Another good idea is to run your shop over 2 days. This will allow for those shoppers who, in spite of your intense advertising campaign, forgot to bring their money. It will also allow them to pick up those gifts they still might need after thinking about it.

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## RE-ORDERS

You have been shipped an assortment of merchandise to provide your shop with a large selection of items. The decision as to how many total dollars of product to ship you was based on your last year's sales (if available) or by comparing your school to one of last year's customers with a similar location, enrollment, etc. Ideally, we expect you to sell all but 20% of the merchandise sent, but we ship you 25% more than we expect your total sales to be. In a perfect world you have exactly the right number of every item so that everyone could buy the gift they want, but unfortunately, we are faced with making educated guesses to meet your needs.

I'm sure everyone has experienced the frustration of shopping for a popular new toy just advertised on TV. Sometimes we get lucky, but more often than not we pick another suitable gift which is appreciated just as much. Please keep this in mind as your shop progresses. You may run out of some gifts but you will still have a pretty good selection so don't let it bother you. For those rare instances where you absolutely must have more of an item you will be covered, but with certain restrictions. Fun Services will ship you re-orders with the following conditions:

1. Re-ordered items are not on consignment. You may not return them or any of the original items for credit. (We assume that you would not re-order an item unless the original stock was sold out.)
2. Fun Services will pay for our regular service Expedited Parcel Post shipping charges. Quicker methods of transportation are the sole cost of the customer. Please note that unless you live in a major metropolitan city Next Day Service is unavailable at any cost. Two day service is the norm for rural Canada, even though you pay Overnight rates. We will be more than happy to let you know the cost of shipping your re-order via these quicker services and

you can then decide what you'd like to do.

We regret that this is the best we can do, but the cost of Overnight and 2nd Day Service leaves us no choice. Remember, the one way around this is to hold your shop early enough so that we can ship your re-order by our regular service. In any case please keep these restrictions in mind when you start to make promises to your young customers.

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## CLOSING THE SHOP

Here's where having followed our planning suggestions will really pay off! You will need your **Master Invoice** and some of the boxes you received your merchandise in. Since you set up your display based on the value of the items you can now start packing up your returns by starting at the table with the most expensive items and following the tables around the room. The Master Invoice also lists the items in descending value, so they will be easy to find when listing your returns.

Select a box and carefully pack your returns into it to minimize breakage in transit. As you place the items in the box list the total number of each item you are returning (pack and list damaged items also) on the Master Invoice. Continue the process until the box is completely filled and then start a new box. Please use as few boxes as possible. As a general rule pack heavy items on the bottom, leave as few gaps between items as possible and fill the box completely. This will keep things from getting crushed or shifting around which is the usual cause of breakage. You may find this hard to believe but we have seen boxes come back where the person packing them must have literally swept the merchandise off the table into the box with their arm. Needless to say the contents were largely unusable when we received them. Please pack with the same care you expect from us.

When you are ready to close the last box please make sure that you put a copy of the Master Invoice inside. We cannot process your returns if this is overlooked. Please one of the UPS CALL TAG's on each box and then list each Call Tag serial number on the form provided. You are now ready to call us at 1-800-665-5656. We will log your return serial numbers and instruct United Parcel Service to pick up your parcels the next day. **You must call us as UPS will demand payment for freight charges unless the return request comes from our office.** Remember, to avoid being billed for the return freight costs, you must have this done within 7 days of the end of your shop.

The final step to wind up your shop is to do the calculations on your Master Invoice to figure your bill. **Simply call us and we will have our computer do it for you.** When you call we will need your complete list of items returned so please have it ready. Once the total bill is determined place a copy of the Master Invoice and your cheque (payable to Fun Services) in the pre-posted envelope provided and drop in the mail. You should still have one copy of the Master Invoice for your files. We will quickly verify your figures and mail you a computer generated receipt.

**Remember, we are here to assist you every step of the way. Please don't hesitate to call if we can be of help.**

For Assistance Call:

## Fun Services



**1-800-665-5656**

Fun Services is on Pacific Coast time so remember if you are calling from the east (Toronto) your 12:00 Noon is our 9:00 AM.