

CRAFT TODAY *January 2008*

The newsletter of the Craft Retailer's Association For Tomorrow

Presidents Column

January 2008. What happened to 2007? How come I didn't get done half of what I intended to do? I've come to the conclusion that to be in retail is to be overwhelmed. We prioritize with a vengeance. It means living with lists. It means snips of paper that I stick in my pockets when I remember something I need to do because if I wait to add the thought to my list I will have forgotten what the thought was by the time I find the list again.

I worry about the number of CRAFT members who haven't taken advantage of all the wonderful cost saving programs we offer. And I think it's just because we are overwhelmed. We have so much to do that we don't make time to take advantage of the things that are in our own best interest. I do the same thing. Even though I use Constant Contact, I haven't signed up for the part that saves me money! Duh?? It's on my list. It's been on my list for 6 months. Well, I'll get there 'cause it's on the list.

So, starting with this issue and in every future issue, we're going to list the names, phone numbers, and emails of every contact for every program that will save you time and money. Add them to your list. One of these months you and I will do everything we can to save money and improve our businesses!

See you at the Shows! - Karen Hohler HohAssoc@aol.com

CRAFT Marketing Plan to be unveiled at Annual Dinner

Friday, February 15 6 pm cocktails, 7 pm Dinner at the Loew's, Philadelphia

Register online at www.CRAFTonline.org click on Register now online

How can C.R.A.F.T. help your business grow? Attend the annual meeting and dinner at 6PM, Friday, February 15, at the Loew's Hotel, Philadelphia to hear exciting news!

Haven't we all wished that we had the advertising budget of that big retail chain down the street? And great ads designed by professional designers? And sophisticated in-store graphics? And the instant recognition and power of a great brand like the Target "bulls-eye"? Think of how our businesses could boom if we had that kind of pull with consumers!

The C.R.A.F.T. board of directors has spent much time over the past year thinking and talking about how we can more effectively market American craft to consumers, and do that in a way that specifically benefits our C.R.A.F.T. members. To help guide us in this project, the board has worked with Chuck Ruhr as a marketing consultant. Chuck founded and built one of the Midwest's largest and most award winning agencies. Over the course of 30 years his agency won scores of National creative awards including several CLIOS and a TV industry Emmy Award. His agency created much of the original, landmark advertising for Target, including their current longtime theme line. He also served as top advisor to the Governor of Minnesota and a U.S. Senator.

Chuck has guided us through a thorough and professional process similar to what he has done for major corporations to help them develop a "brand" that can then be used as the basis for a wide variety of advertising and marketing programs. At the C.R.A.F.T. annual meeting and dinner, Chuck will present the results of our market research, unveil the new visual identity that has been developed on the basis of that research, and discuss how it can be used by C.R.A.F.T. members to grow their businesses.

Although Chuck oversaw the work of a team of marketing professionals - including a market researcher, graphic designer, and advertising copywriter - who were formally retained and paid by the C.R.A.F.T. organization, he had kindly donated his own time free of charge to C.R.A.F.T. on this project. His daughter, Ann Ruhr Pifer, who is a member of the C.R.A.F.T. board and owner of The Grand Hand Gallery asked him really nicely if he would help out with this, and we are grateful to him for his time and expertise.

Register online for the CRAFT annual meeting and dinner now by going to: craftonline.org See you in Philly!

Philadelphia BMAC Show Feb 2008

Table Topics Breakfast Seminar

Sunday, Feb 17, 8:30-10AM

Room 201A \$25 in advance, \$30 at door

TOPICS

TABLE 1: Customer service and beyond. Create a reputation for outstanding customer service that will make your customers return again and again. Tips and ideas will be shared to help you stand out from the rest. Led by **Pam Corwin, Paper Scissors Rock.**

TABLE 2: Hopping on the Green Bandwagon. How to sell high style, earth friendly home furnishings and gifts. What works - What doesn't. A discussion on how to incorporate environmentally friendly items into your inventory from a store that's been doing it for eleven years. Led by **Jenn Sem, Home and Planet.**

TABLE 3: The basics of Web marketing (a beginner course for retailers). Designed to meet the needs of retailers just beginning to establish their web presence, these web-savvy leaders will share basics and practical tips to help you market your business on the web. Led by **Diane and Madis Sulg, Maddi's Gallery.**

TABLE 4: E-newsletters using Constant Contact (an affinity partner.) Why you should do it right now! Don't hesitate any longer. Learn why, when and how to accomplish this. Facts and figures from Constant Contact will be given and story ideas and examples will be handed out. Led by: **Donna Milstein, Hanson Galleries**

TABLE 5: What you need to know to sell your Craft Business. What is involved in getting your business shaped up in order to try to sell it. Hear how three craft stores were recently able to accomplish this. Led by **Gloria Brooke, Brooke Pottery**

TABLE 6: What I wish I knew my first two years in business. (Retailer's point-of-view). Want to cut your learning curve? Attend this inspirational welcoming into the craft retail business loaded with content to make your first few years easier. Led by **Karen Hohler , Whippoorwill Gallery.**

TABLE 7: What I wish I knew my first two years in business. (Artist point-of-view.) Same as above Table 6 but from an artist point of view. Led by **Bonnie Blandford, Concepts in Metal.**

TABLE 8: Take the "cons" out of consigning. How to establish consignment relationships that work for artists and retailers. We'll discuss incentives, ethics, and accounting and explore how fresh inventory can increase the bottom line for everyone. Led by **Douglas Brugger, Show of Hands.**

TABLE 9: The Elephant in the Room. Are retail sales of American Crafts in decline?

If so, why? And why isn't anyone talking about it? A discussion directed towards artists and retailers. Led by **Tony Serviente, Serviente Glass Studio**

TABLE 10: Advertising and public relation strategies for galleries. You need to get the word out about your fabulous craft gallery ...but what works? Discussion will include strategies for creating a marketing plan that fits your business, your market, and your budget as well as print, radio, direct mail, e-mail and PR (attracting unpaid editorial coverage by local media). Led by: **Ann Pifer, The Grand Hand.**

TABLE 11: Closing the sale! Salesmanship can make or break your business. Take away valuable tips on setting your store's salesmanship standards to get the best results. Includes training help. Led by **Larry Williams, Hanson Galleries.**

Register online at <http://store.buyersmarketonline.biz/tatospbyc178.html>

Sponsored by CRAFT

Do you have ideas for Table Topics or would you like to present a Table Topic? Please contact Education Committee - Donna Milstein, Chair at 713-984-1242 - crafts@hansongalleries.com

NYIGF

Are you going to the New York International Gift Fair the first week of February?

Once again, the show is offering benefits to CRAFT members that make our lives easier, provide opportunities for networking and education.

Use of the Club Lounge at Javits 1E03. This is the room on the basement level past the food services. We can hang coats, leave luggage and use the seating and computers! Retail members: pick up some lunch and join us everyday at 12:30 to chat and exchange exciting finds. Artist members: exhibitors are not allowed in the Lounge. However, they are letting us use the attached meeting room on Monday at 12:30 for you to join us. We'd love to see you if you can get away.

NYIGF is giving all members the opportunity to attend one educational session free. Go to www.nyigf.com/invite to sign up. Use promo code - NYIGF 208.

Donna Milstein will be on the panel "**Made in the USA: Sourcing and Selling American-Made Products**" on Friday 2-3 PM, Javis A02-03. If you would like to attend free and support Donna email Cathy Steel for free tickets (in addition to the free one above) cathysteel@cathysteelassociates.com by Jan 25.

Also - in searching the show site I found a few interesting things. Will you be in NY on Friday? There is a **free breakfast sponsored by Crafts Report** 8:30 - 10 am in the Lobby Hall 1D.

Then head to the Piers. Go to the Transportation Desk and ask for a **free metro card to use in the city.**

First come basis until they last. Then **enter a raffle for a free dinner certificate for Friday night.** Enter by filling out a form at the rear of Pier 92, the 40,000 aisle of Pier 94 or the Special Events Booth at Javits by 2 PM. Winners will be called between 2 and 3 PM on Friday.

- Karen Hohler

Affinity Partners Cost-Saving Affinity Programs

The Craft Retailers' Association for Tomorrow (CRAFT), leverages the collective purchasing power of member retailers to find and offer high quality, favorably priced business services, all designed to meet the specific needs of American craft retailers.

Programs available as a benefit to CRAFT members include:

Bank of America Merchant Services

for preferred card processing discount rates . Through our partnership with Bank of America Merchant Services, we have negotiated a program that entitles every CRAFT member, regardless of size or volume, to the same low "interchange pricing" for their credit card processing.

Members have already compared these rates to their present programs and switched to the Bank of America Merchant Services/CRAFT program because of the cost savings. Every switch has resulted in annual savings far in excess of annual CRAFT dues.

We encourage you to contact Karen Black and discuss the program with her. She will explain "interchange pricing" and work with you to compute what cost savings, if any, this plan would provide for your business. There is no obligation, of course

Contact **Karen Y. Black, Assistant Vice President, BA Merchant Services , 443-418-5530 cell karen.y.black@bankofamerica.com**

Insurance for Specialty Retail Shops

Your insurance policy needs to cover:

Your inventory for sale (including jewelry and precious metals, which are typically excluded from insurance policies),

Consignment and others' merchandise

Your building, if you own it

Fixtures, furniture, and, if you are a tenant, the improvements you have made to the property,

Your business personal property in the building, such as computers, office equipment, and showcases, Loss of income when your business is interrupted by loss or damage to real or personal property caused by a covered peril, other than theft

Bodily injury and property damage (e.g., a customer slips and falls)

Medical payments (e.g., initial medical attention for a customer following a slip and fall)

Products and completed work (e.g., skin irritation caused by wearing jewelry)

Fire legal liability (e.g., fire damage to your rented property)

30 years of business insurance experience - Endorsed by CRAFT Association

For more information contact: **Len Zwas, The Insurance Marketplace, 708 North Winton Road,**

Rochester, NY 14609

(585) 482-9980 - (800) 724-4224 - ima@rpa.net - www.insmarketplace.com.

Be sure to identify yourself as a member of the Craft Retailers' Association for Tomorrow (CRAFT).

Packaging Specialties

CRAFT has partnered with Packaging Specialties to offer members one-stop shopping and superior customer service for all of your packaging needs.

Packaging Specialties can help you create Customized Packaging Solutions to meet your individual needs. Gift boxes, bags, tissue, ribbon, bows, labels, gift certificates, plastic bags, shreds and gift-wrap are all available from this unique source!

The Packaging Specialties partnership with CRAFT provides the following benefits to CRAFT members:

Last column pricing on in-stock products - Absolutely NO dollar minimums - Same day shipping for in-stock orders (if ordered by 4:00 PM EST) & Nationwide shipping.

Free to first-time customers: ink printing or hot stamping on in-house products - Unique small quantity imprinting -quantities as little as 500 bags - Three-week turnaround time for all in-house printed orders - Free plates on plastic bag orders (when ordering 10,000 of any size). Superior customer service.

For more information contact **Eric Shea, Packaging Specialties 800-722-7732 x152. www.pack-spec.com** Be sure to identify yourself as a member of the Craft Retailers' Association for Tomorrow (CRAFT).

Constant Contact

Use the leading email marketing service to connect with your customers.

CRAFT has teamed up with Constant Contact®, the leading email marketing service for small businesses, to bring you a new and exciting way to stay in touch with your most important audience, your customers.

With Constant Contact, email marketing is easy, affordable, and effective. In just minutes, you can:

Communicate consistently with your customers and prospects

Send great-looking, professional email newsletters, and announcements

Track which customers are opening your emails and what links they are clicking on

Build and manage your email addresses

As a CRAFT member, sign up for Constant Contact and get an extra 10% discount when you prepay. This becomes a 20% discount for 6 months and 25% for 12 months.

Sign up for a 60 Day Trial by visiting <http://craftonline.constantcontact.com>

If you are already a Constant Contact user, all you need to do is send your username to info@craftonline.org and CRAFT will take care of the rest.

Matching Service- a new service of CRAFT

CRAFT is continually looking for ways that it can provide additional service to its members. The association recognizes certain unique qualities of craft retailing that make the sale of a gallery distinguishable from the sale of other businesses.

CRAFT believes that it is in the best interest of the entire American craft community that viable galleries continue in business after the founders of that gallery decide it is the right time for them to retire or move along. Sale of a going American craft retailing business at its "fair market value" is preferable to liquidation and closure or distress sale. The entire craft community, other American craft retailers and artists alike, suffers when an otherwise viable gallery closes merely because of the hassles and inconveniences of locating a qualified buyer. Who else is more likely to personally be interested in or know others not now in the business that might be interested in acquiring a going concern than a CRAFT member? somebody who knows what it is all about.

Starting with this issue, CRAFT offers space in its quarterly newsletters, other email notifications and on its website to any member wishing to publish a notice (ad) indicating that their business is for sale. This listing is now offered free of charge. CRAFT will upon request agree to reasonable procedures for placing of the notice and handling responses in such a way as to keep the identities of sellers and interested purchasers confidential.

CRAFT will not receive a fee for the listing nor will it engage in any activity relating to negotiations between parties. All potential sellers and interested buyers are advised to seek the advice of their own lawyers, accountants or other professionals in any negotiations, contracting or closing of any transactions relating to the purchase or sale of a business.

If any member would like additional information they should contact Laurie Wickham at CRAFT via email at info@CRAFTonline.org.

Craft Gallery For Sale

Established fine craft gallery FOR SALE in Southern California resort area. Owners have built the gallery to its current status as a destination gallery for tourists and vacation home residents from greater Southern California. Broader market includes San Diego, Orange and Los Angeles Counties. Consistent annual growth in sales has resulted from a move to a larger and newer space, expansion of the represented artists to over 150 and programs of special shows and events attended by a loyal, repeat customer base.

Sales for 2007 were approximately 33% glass, 32% art jewelry, 12% clay and 23% other crafts. Long, established mix of consignment and reserve purchase relationships with artists ensure new work on a regular basis. The gallery has been recognized by NICHE Magazine jurors.

Turnkey operation insures smooth transition. Custom fixtures, lighting, carpeting enhance the 1200 square foot leased space.

Serious inquires welcome to info@CRAFTonline.org, subject line "California gallery". No brokers, please.

Save the Date! Friday, February 15

CRAFT Annual Dinner

CRAFT Marketing Plan to be unveiled

6 pm cocktails, 7 pm Dinner

at the Loew's, Philadelphia

Sign up at www.craftonline.org

“To everything , turn, turn, turn.

There is a season, turn, turn, turn...”

Remember that old Byrds song? It popped into my head when I was talking to someone recently about after-holiday sales - how far to take them, how to get ready for the next round of wholesale shows. To everything there is a season. And turn is the name of the game. Sounds like some good retailing principles in that song to me!

After several years in business (back in the dark ages when we learned by the seat of our pants and there was no one to talk to, network with) I began to realize that every inch of space is valuable. If an item is not selling, has stopped selling, is seasonal it's costing money. It's taking up the space of something else that will sell.

It is impossible to make the right product choices all the time. Sometimes wonderful work just isn't going to sell to your particular clientele. After moving it within the store at least three times and trying it in the windows and it still doesn't sell it's time to consider moving that work out of the store.

At the end of each year, we rank sales not only by dollars per line but by dollars per shelf space. That sure changes the rankings. Some things you know need more space because they are bulky and you make the decision to carry them anyway, but other things are a surprise. That's the “there is a season” part. Maybe the time has passed for them to prove themselves. Maybe they just aren't worth the space. Don't think twice about this. Sometimes wonderful work just isn't going to sell. If it's not selling, it's not selling!

It took me a while longer until I got cutthroat about getting rid of work that wasn't

selling adequately. We do silent markdowns by retagging the item with a lower price with no indication that the item is on sale. This often moves product. We run only one obvious sale in January because we do not want people waiting for things to go on sale or to have that image of the store. Charity donations are cheaper in the long run than having deadwood on the shelves. Take it home. I never buy anything that I wouldn't like to own. As a last resort - off to the storeroom.

In January we run “The Great Whippoorwill Tent Sale.” Since it's January and it's Boston we had to get a bit creative about the “tent”. We hang colorful banners from the 13' ceiling to designate the sale area inside tent. Holiday items are 50% off, the boxes from the storeroom are 50-70% off, over stocked items are 20-40% off. After running inventory and sales reports, discontinuing lines are 30-50% off. Individual items within good, working lines that show up on the zero sales report 50% off. Ruthless. I want shelf space back and my money out of the item. That's the “turn, turn, turn” part. And any retail advisor or even your accountant will tell you turn is the name of the game. How many times a year do you turn over your money and your inventory. It's doing no good sitting on the shelf. Get rid of your mistakes and move on.

My customers always want to see what's new. Keeping stock up to date makes the store fresh and exciting, frees up my money to try again at the wholesale shows and keeps my customers happy.

BULLETIN/BULLETIN

THIS JUST IN: The Travel Section of the Sunday New York Times for January 13, 2008 included an article recommending visitors check out a usually missed neighborhood in Philadelphia called Fish Town. Those interested should check out the article at:

[http://travel.nytimes.com/2008/01/13/travel/13dayout.html?scp=1&sq=fish+town%2C+philadelphia.](http://travel.nytimes.com/2008/01/13/travel/13dayout.html?scp=1&sq=fish+town%2C+philadelphia)

USA - United States Artists

In 2003, the Urban Institute published Investing in Creativity: A Study of the Support Structure for U.S. Artists, http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411311_investing_in_creativity.pdf. This 107-page report was funded by 36 different foundations and apparently somebody not only read it but did something about it.

In 2005, USA, not the country but the charitable organization, United States Artists, www.unitedstatesartists.org. was founded. By 2006, the organization had rounded up \$20,000,000 in seed money from the likes of the Ford, Rockefeller, Prudential and Rasmussen Foundations with more coming in from some individual donors.

USA has a stated mission: To nurture, support, and strengthen the work of America's finest living artists

And a stated vision: To ignite and endow the creative potential of America

So what does that mean where the rubber meets the road? For USA, one thing that those statements of "mission" and "vision" meant immediately was creation of USA Fellowships "to honor and award an artists' unique vision as a whole rather than funding a particular project." How do you do that? Well each year, beginning in 2006, USA has given, and will give, grants (taxable income)not loans--to 50 artists, chosen from approximately 300 nominees, in 8 fields of \$50,000 each - that's \$2.5 million dollars each year. "Craft and Traditional Arts" are among the 8 fields of endeavor for which artists may nominated. A review of the roster of 2006 and 2007 Fellow shows 11 craft artists (jewelry, ceramics, carving, textiles), (photography and other visual arts are in another category) among the first 100 recipients - that's \$550,000 in grants to craft artists.

What does the artist have to use the money for? No strings apparently. Some use it for health care, nearly half the recipients used at least some to cover housing and meals, 60% bought art supplies while others used it as "venture capital" or, low and behold, "paid it forward". See NY Times article of 10/10/07, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/10/arts/design/10gran.html?scp=1&sq=united+states+artists>.

Don't spend the money just yet. Artists don't just get in line or fill out an application. First you have to be "nominated". According to the USA website, "Each year, USA invites arts leaders, critics, scholars and artists to serve as nominators." and "They do this important work anonymously." (It's tough to figure out how that really works.) Only then are "nominated artists" "invited to apply" via an online application procedure. Discipline specific panels of artists and experts pick "finalists" and the USA Board of Directors approve the final recommendations.

Well somebody is trying something. For more on United States Artists, check out www.UnitedStatesArtists.org and <http://www.guidestar.org/pqShowGsReport.do?partner=justgive&npold=100709924>. You can contribute to USA at <https://www.unitedstatesartists.org/Public/USADonors/SupportanArtistToday/index.cfm?&app=usartists>

ACC in Baltimore

Are you going to Baltimore? For the first time CRAFT will have a booth there. Can you spare an hour and help us cover the booth?

This is an important opportunity for CRAFT. There will be buyers there who do not come to Philly. Please help. No experience necessary other than your usual wonderful self! Please email Karen Hohler at hohassoc@aol.com

EATS

There are two things CRAFT members do every February, go to shows and eat - not necessarily in that order.

Wouldn't you know it? Craffees just can't catch a break when it comes to gastronomical bargains while making the show rounds in early 2008. Not one of the likely itinerary stops, Philly, Baltimore or NYC matches up with a "Restaurant Week" this year. (OK if you go a little early to NYC you can catch the tail end of one, January 28 through February, check out www.opentable.com for participants and deals.)

C'est la vie'. You are still going to eat, so lets see what Zagats and Open Table and other unreliable sources suggest as new, different or funky.

NYC---Not enough room to list but here are some places to consider:

1. **db Bistro Moderne**, 55 W. 44th Street, 212-391-2400, www.Danielnyc.com. Daniel Boulud food in a "casual and convivial" (that means a little loud) atmosphere at one half the price. Don't pass on dessert.
2. **Nobu 57**, 40 W. 57th Street, 212-757-3000, www.noburestaurants.com. You heard about the original but it was downtown and hard to get a reservation, so you never tried. Well now its near your hotel and supposedly a little easier to get a reservation, so check it out but still call as far ahead as possible.
3. **The Cottage**, 360 Amsterdam Avenue at 77th, 212-595-7450. If we are talking oriental, why not give a plug to the little guy. This shoebox size neighborhood place might be worth a try. It's always full (not hard), the food is inexpensive and good and the wine is free yes free---you might not remember the food.
4. **2nd Avenue Deli**, 162 E. 33rd Street. One of the legends of the deli world is back open but not in the same place. If you are thinking of deli though, you might want to make the trip to Katz's, 205 E. Houston at Ludlow. If 2nd Avenue is in the book, Katz's **wrote** the book.
5. **The Burger Joint**, inside the Parker Meridien Hotel, 118 W. 57 between 6th and 7th Avenues (you can also enter from W. 56th). Once you are in the hotel, you still won't find it down the hall, behind the curtain through the hole in the wall door so ask the security guy in the lobby, the one with the earphone. Truly a joint located in a closet of a spiffy hotel. Hamburger, cheeseburger, hot dog, fries and drinks that's it cheap, burgers are \$6.50. All cash, short on seats so plan on hovering. If you are really over it, start early for breakfast at chi-chi Norma's across the lobby (it's worth it) and stay through lunch. An alternate recommendation for burgers is Pop Burger, now with an out post at 14 E. 58th Street off 5th Avenue.

(Please note that we often note the cross street with an NYC street address. It is a good idea to know the cross street for any location you are going to before you get in an NYC cab not every cab driver is from there.)

PHILLY (Don't forget the CRAFT Annual Dinner) Let's concentrate on new - very new:

1. **KAIZAN**, 1420 Locust Street, 215-735-1144, www.thekaizan.com. Zagats calls

this a "sleek", "modern Japanese newcomer" (opened 12/07) and "trendy" eatery specializing in multi-course tasting menus (Kaiseki style) while also offering ala carte selections as well as sushi.

2. **UGLY AMERICAN**, 1100 Front Street (South Philly) 215-336-1100.

www.uglyamericanphilly.com. Feeling hungry? you might want to give this a try. Called "hearty and mid priced" the menu supposedly (could not find it) features a "messy" specialty, attributed to the culinary stars of Rochester, NY, known as the "garbage plate, a burger on top of a bunch of "sides - can't you just picture it.

3. **BINDI**, 105 S. 13th Street, 215-922-6061. If it's Indian (some reviewers called it "Indian inspired") you are in the mood for this BYO may be for you. Reported to be homey and mid priced, the serving of entrees in "kadaisi", decorative copper pots, seems an interesting touch. There is good news and bad new - sthe GOOD is that Bindi is owned by the folks at LOLITA a very popular eatery across the street - the BAD is that LOLITA is a popular Mexican/Latino restaurant - that might be a stretch. Lolita is cash only so Bindi might be the same, so be prepared.

4. **TINTO**, 114 South 20th Street, 215-665-9150, www.tintorestaurant.com. This new creation of hot chef, Jose Garces, AMADA, may be the new Philly location generating the most buzz. Located in the Rittenhouse Square neighborhood, this wine cellar like space specializes in tapas style offerings inspired by Basque cuisine of Northern Spain.

Other considerations might include Estia, with great fresh fish and a few reservable private rooms for groups of 8 to 15, any thing Steven Starr has his name on, Sabrina's where breakfast is the best, now with 2 locations and Taconnellis where you call to reserve the pizza, not the table.

Don't forget, its Valentines weekend - make reservations early.

Friday Night go to the CRAFT Annual Dinner at the Loew's - sign up at www.craftonline.org

BALTIMORE--After you remove chain steak and seafood houses, Open Table's Top 10 for Baltimore, based on reservations made include:

1. **PAZO**, 1425 Aliceana Street, 410-534-7296, www.pazorestaurant.com,

Mediterranean cuisine.

2. **THE BICYCLE**, 1444 Light Street, 410-234-1900, www.bicyclebistro.com. Eclectic,

a long time favorite, hard to get a cab back.

3. **GERTRUDES**, 10 Art Museum Drive, in the Baltimore Museum of Art, 410-889-3399,

www.gertrudesbaltimore.com. American/Chesapeake seafood, a special menu from 5-9 on Tuesdays (called Gertie's Café) featuring \$10 and \$12 dinners.

4. Not on the list, but looking like it would be worth checking out is **SASCHAS**, 527 N.

Charles Street, 410-539-8860, www.saschas.com. Gotta try "Fries in a Cone", "tall cone of homemade fries, w/old bay crème fraiche and chipotle barbecue sauce.

Report back if you try any of these to uscrafft@aol.com

Marketing Through Networking

Two and a half years ago I moved Whippoorwill 4 blocks and you would have thought I had set up shop in another country. After 25 years at one location I found myself running a "new" business. I could fill this newsletter with great marketing ideas, campaigns and dollars spent that didn't bring in new business.

This fall I ran into two ideas that did work both generated by loyal customers and both involving women seeking to network.

Long time customer Bonnie wanted to meet other women working in Boston's Financial District. She asked if we would consider hosting a networking night. Yes, we certainly would consider it and did, twice. What is it? It's an evening of cheese and mulled cider and talking. We ran it from 5 6:30 PM so women could stop by after work. We put out an invitation through Constant Contact to our mailing list. We handed out invitations to every woman who came into the store. We asked them to take invitations back to their offices and post them on bulletin boards. We offered them a 10% discount for anything they wanted to purchase that night. We pulled names for door prizes. We got everyone signed up on our mailing list and gave them a Whippoorwill Advantage Card (our loyalty card). Then we schmoozed and introduced and smiled. The first networking night generated no sales and 5 women (who made some great connections, however). The second networking night captured a dozen women and \$500 in sales. Regular customers brought friends who had never been in before. I see a trend here! We can grow this concept. We are now thinking about running them monthly as First Thursdays. They are easy, fun and friend building.

The second request was from a professional women's group that wanted to do a networking/shopping night. They have 400 members and do this every year at different shops. First, for their fall meeting, they bought \$300 worth of Christmas ornaments to use as table decorations to advertise the networking night. Then, they took care of all the food and wine. What they asked was that I donate 20% of all sales to the charity of their choice. Seemed like another no brainer to me. Where can you spend that kind of money that you're assured of getting new customers into the store and to spend! About 60 women came and spent \$5,000 in less than 2 hours! They made sure they spent enough to reach the point where we would donate \$1,000 to their charity. Again, we did door prizes and they were thrilled. They have already asked if they can come back to us next fall. I couldn't say yes fast enough.

So now I am researching women's groups and charities. I am going to send them letters offering to host an event for them. Thank goodness women like to talk to each other!!

CRAFT(ING) ON LINE

Who am I?

1. I am 2 ½ years old and come from Brooklyn.
2. I have over 70,000 "members" around the country.
3. 90% of my members are women.
4. I "sold" approximately 2,000,000 items, worth a total of about \$26.5 million, in 2007.
5. I "sold" 300,000 items for a total of more than \$4.3 million in November 2007 alone.
6. I charge a listing fee of 20 cents for each item and receive a 3.5% commission on every sale.
7. I am a member of the Handmade Consortium (<http://buyhandmade.org>)
8. My investors include Union Square Ventures and the founders of Flickr and del.icio.us
9. I anticipate being profitable sometime in 2008.

Who am I? If I could talk I might say "I'm Etsy, or more precisely, www.Etsy.com, and have been described as a "cross between Amazon and eBay" or an "online craft fair" in such publications as the New York Times Magazine (Handmade 2.0, 12/16/07) and Business Week. If you were to ask me, I may just be the next big thing in American craft. And no, I won't tell you what the name stands for."

Well Etsy may be a little full of itself. A grizzled veteran of American craft, looking at the site might say that your offerings are less "craft" and more "crafter". One might argue that it is more in keeping with the DIY (do it yourself) movement than the craft movement or that it is more church bazaar than "craft fair".

In any event it is out there, and it is growing and it is bringing in money and maybe, just maybe, it's going to be a good thing/sign for American craft retailers and artists. Or is a "bad sign" or just plain irrelevant. It probably depends on what you do with it.

Look at it, think about it and let CRAFT know how you see it, info@CRAFTonline.org.

(If you find Etsy of interest, you might want to check out buyhandmade.org its Handmade Consortium and its Handmade Pledge as well as the Austin Craft Mafia (there are now 42 officially sanctioned Craft Mafias around the country.), The Renegade Art Fair (Chicago), the Bazaar Bizarre (Boston) and the Girlie Show (Oklahoma City).

Kentucky Crafted - The Market

KENTUCKY CRAFTED: THE MARKET 2008

Open to the Public Saturday, March 8, 2008 9:00 am to 6:00 pm

Sunday, March 9, 2008 10:00 am to 5:00 pm (EST)

Open to the Trade Thursday, March 6th, 3 - 7 pm EST Friday, March 7th, 9 am - 6 pm

South Wing B Kentucky Exposition Center Louisville, Kentucky

Kentucky Crafted: The Market is produced by the Kentucky Arts Council, the state arts agency that creates opportunities for Kentuckians to value, participate in and benefit from the arts. Funding for the Kentucky Arts Council is provided by the Kentucky State Legislature and the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art.

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