

Crain's 2003 Executive Gift Guide



Expert advice on
gift-giving

15+ amazing items
under \$50

Great gifts for the
office, business travel
and more

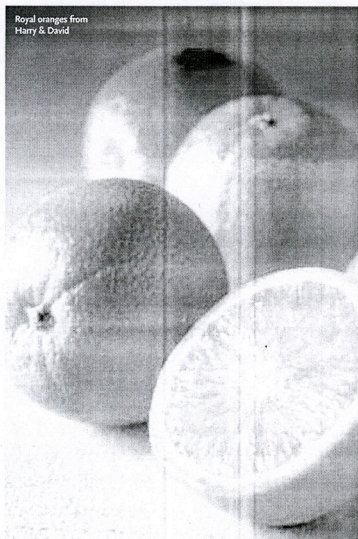
Tips on buying online

How to make your
presents stand out
from the crowd

meaningful connections



GIFT REPORT 2003



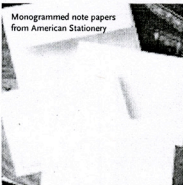
4 KEY TRENDS

WITH THE HOLIDAYS APPROACHING, NOW IS THE TIME TO DECIDE EXACTLY which gifts will be appropriate for all of those on your list. After all, you want to reward loyal employees and show them your appreciation as much as you want to let business associates and customers know how important they are to you. And since gifts have an enormous ability to bond people, what you choose and how you offer it is extremely important.

Help is at hand, however, to make the process easier and more rewarding for both giver and giftee alike. One of the country's leading authorities on gift-giving, Robyn Spizman (www.robynspizman.com), television and radio personality and author of *The A-Z Reference Guide for Solving Your Gift-Giving Dilemmas...Forever!* (St. Martin's Press: 2003), says there are 4 key trends in gift-giving this year:

Make It Personal.

Making a business gift personal simply involves examining your purpose in giving the gift. To drive the message of appreciation to an employee or client, you have to make them feel the gift is specifically for them.



An easy way to do this is by adding a personal touch. You could say it with a ribbon or card that has the recipient's name and the company's message as well as a compliment about the recipient. On a basket filled with cookies, the message might read, "To Alice, the smartest cookie we know. Happy holidays from X Corporation."

Monogramming is another way of personalizing a gift. Just be sure you get the initials or spelling of the name correct.

Make It Practical.

At this point in time, Spizman says it's often more about the time you spent thinking about how to personalize the gift than the gift itself. One of her favorite tips is to supply handwritten personal notes to be included. She also believes that a gift doesn't have to be expensive to be practical. This can be achieved by letting the message count more than the medium and adding humor without being silly. On a gift

certificate to Starbucks, she suggests writing, "Thanks a latte for your business."

Be Price Conscious.

For those times when price *does* matter, offer a gift with staying power. There are a wealth of them in this issue, from desk clocks in varied styles to some very unique electronics at all price levels.



Give It A Purpose.

Keep in mind who the gift is for and why you're giving it. If yours is a company that sends items with your logo, be aware that there may be those who may not want to display a logo. What might be more powerful is an inspirational quote signed with your logo or, make your initials stand for something. Likewise, it helps to know a colleague or a client's interests or passions and recognize it with your gift. Dog lovers will appreciate a pet object or, a devoted family man or woman would appreciate a gift certificate for a family portrait...and the list goes on.

Keeping all that's said in mind, the most important trend is letting your gift come from your heart. If you do, whatever you choose will be greatly appreciated. ■

GIFT CERTIFICATES

the gift of choice

WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW THE RECIPIENTS WELL, DON'T HAVE the time to shop or want to be sure your gift will not only be treasured but used, gift certificates make sense. Size or taste is irrelevant and the giftee will receive exactly what he or she desires.

Says Cathy Nelkin Miller, President of The Garden City Hotel, "My favorite gift for the holidays is the Garden City Hotel gift card because special occasions here create life long memories."

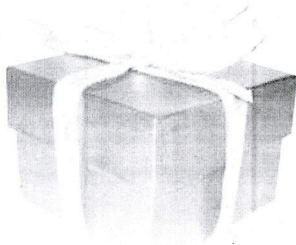
All of these reasons are why gift certificates are growing in popularity at a rate of almost 20 percent a year. In fact, the National Retail Federation says gift certificates are now on the Top 10 list of presents consumers would most like to receive.

Virtually every resource listed in this guide has a gift certificate program. Some however, elevate their program to an art.

Macy's, for example, markets its gift cards as the perfect gift choice year-round, explains Jackie Leone-Streiker, Corporate Services Manager, Macy's By Appointment. "Gift card recipients have the freedom to choose whatever they like from our unparalleled selection of merchandise in any Macy's location—nationwide or online at macys.com. And with denominations available from \$10 to \$10,000, that could be just about anything!"

"A gift certificate from Oasis Day Spa is the perfect gift for any busy executive on the go," points out Bruce Schoenberg, owner of Oasis Day Spa. "It can be redeemed for any preferred spa or salon service and serves as a thoughtful treat for a spouse and loved ones too." Among the favorite treatments at this haven are a range of massages (\$90 for 60 minutes), including the La Stone Therapy Massage (\$115, 60 minutes) and facials—the men's facial is extremely popular (\$135 for 75 minutes).

Make an executive decision to give prestigious gifts



The Garden City Hotel Gift Card is an inspired solution for all your corporate gift-giving occasions!

Appreciation for recent accomplishments.
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For a complete selection of our Garden City Hotel Gift Cards, please visit us at www.gardencityhotel.com, or call 516-747-3000.



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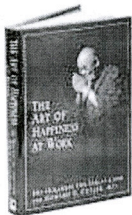
THERE'S SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE AT THE PERFECT GIFT STORE! Reward your clients and associates with everything Macy's is known for... the best designer names, fabulous fashion, home innovations and more! And every Macy's Gift Card comes with something special; the shopping convenience of over 400 Macy's stores nationwide! Makes perfect sense, doesn't it? To find out more about our free service, call Macy's Corporate Sales & Services at 1-800-452-4440. Volume discounts are available.



THE BEST GIFTS FOR LESS

154

gifts
under \$50



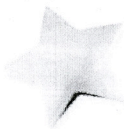
AS ROBYN SPIZMAN POINTS OUT, "LOOK FOR WAYS TO BREAK THROUGH the clutter." This can mean being as creative with wrapping and card inscriptions as with your gift. Think Geek (www.thinkgeek.com) is a resource for witty offerings that appeal to the geek in everyone. Their FM Radio Pen (\$19.99) is a little jewel and ideal for those who need a little mental escape during a slow meeting. Smart Mass Thinking Putty (left, \$11.99) is a fun essential for anyone who's stressed (and who isn't?) and quite a conversation starter.

Another tension reliever might be a book: *The Art of Happiness* by the Dalai Lama and Howard C. Cutler is one sure bet (above, about \$24 at Barnes & Noble), or a fitness gift, like a Black Jump Rope with sculptural silver handles (left, \$25 at Saks Fifth Avenue).

The old adage, "When you look good, you feel good," is the reason for offering a handsome Brooks Brothers classic Repp tie (\$42.50). Beautiful, yet practical (and ultra personal, if monogrammed) is a sculptural silverplated Letter Opener (\$15) and a Glass Coaster Set for wine, with a silverplated border, (\$15 for a set of two), both (pictured left) from Saks Fifth Avenue. Unusual tools are what sets Takashimaya's offerings apart: a Travel Lint Brush with Hanger folds up ingeniously (\$30); The Faux Pas Set—a great conversation piece—consists of an eraser and unique round black and silver paper clips (\$35).

For those 4 PM munchies, Dylan's Candy Bar's Tackle Box filled with goodies (\$19.95) slips right into a desk drawer. So does Vosse Haute Couture Chocolates from Bergdorf Goodman in a range of exotic flavors (a little purse with 2 pieces, \$8; boxes start at \$38).

Identify-at-a-glance plastic Bag Tags are a most-useful offering (\$29 for a set of 3, at www.americanstationery.com), while their Photo Clock (right, \$24), which can be personalized with any picture and operates on a AA battery, makes it a most-wanted one. Who wouldn't desire a beautifully Framed 4-Leaf Clover (\$28



from www.redenvelope.com), a symbol of wealth, fame and good health? Or redenvelope.com's handy Travel Office (\$28), a compact black zippered case, which can be personalized and filled with office essentials.

Decorative for anyone's desktop is Fortunoff's Godinger Silverplate Star Paperweight (bottom left, \$9.99), which can be engraved

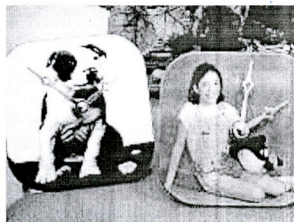


for a personal touch. Likewise, a Silverplated Beverage Holder (above)—perfect for keeping a bottle of water from marring any surface—is both handsome and useful (\$16.95 from www.giftcorp.com). The Sharper Image's great-looking Big Screen Travel & Desktop Alarm Clock (\$39.95) weighs only 5 oz. and folds to pocket size for portability.

At this time in history, can anyone have too many flashlights? Brookstone's Microbeam™ Flashlight (left) fits on a keychain but is so powerful it



can be seen a mile away (\$20, in a range of colors). For home or office, the SureFire G2 Flashlight is a lightweight powerhouse, less than five inches long but bright enough to temporarily blind an opponent. (\$34 at Paragon Sports).



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Crain's

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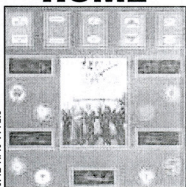
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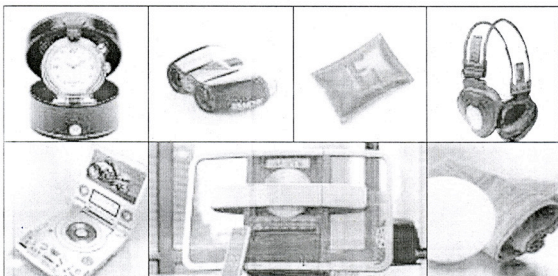
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Clockwise from left: The Mont Blanc Travel Alarm Clock, Simmons Ruby Translucent Binoculars and leather paperweight from Saks; SoundShield Noise Cancellation Headphones, Ambient Orb Stock Market Monitor and AcoustiClear Desktop CD System from Brookstone; The Sharper Image Personal Entertainment Center

For example, an extraordinary clock, like the Officine Panerai desk clock, made of pear wood with the historical dial of the original Panerai watch (\$950 at Tourneau), the handsome Italian Ormas pen of unique black resin composite with silver tone trim (\$225 at Tourneau), or The Mont Blanc Travel Alarm Clock (\$375 at Saks Fifth Avenue). Also notable is the Sharper Image Personal Entertainment Center (\$699), a DVD, TV, CD, AM/FM, TFT 7-inch LCD, Alarm Clock, Sound Soother together in one book-size matte-silver package.

There are many other phenomenal office accessories, however, that may cost less and still have the requisite impact. "I like to give inscribed crystal ornaments to commemorate a great deal or an achievement made by the recipient," says Bruce Mosler, president, U.S. operations for Cushman & Wakefield. In the same vein are Fortunoff Sterling Silver Frames from Carrs of Sheffield, England. Each frame is stamped with sterling hallmarks and can be engraved with initials or an inscription (3" X 5", \$85). An attractive leather paperweight that can help maintain the order out of a chaos of memos can be personalized with an initial (\$35 at Saks

Fifth Avenue), a 2004 Desk Diary (\$50 at Brooks Brothers) and a pair of Simmons Ruby Translucent Binoculars with wrist strap and 8 x 21 magnification (\$40, Saks Fifth Avenue) are unexpected treasures.

Long a source of fascinating desktop items, Brookstone has what could be an investor's dream (aside from having prayers answered about the market going up): the Ambient Orb Stock Market Monitor (\$150). As the market fluctuates throughout the day, the Ambient Orb gradually transitions between colors, giving an at-a-glance picture of the recipient's financial position. It can also be programmed to track weather, instant messaging, or even homeland security. Featuring the revolutionary sound of transparent flat-panel speakers, the AcoustiClear Desktop CD System (\$195) is also a marvelous example of a great design vision. And for those who want to block out noise whether on a plane, train or even in the office, SoundShield Noise Cancellation Headphones (\$200) are a must. Using active and passive noise-cancellation technology, ambient noise is canceled out, helping anyone relax in noisy areas, enhancing the audio he/she is listening to, and improving overall concentration.

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ONLINE GIFTS



Clockwise from left: Think
Geek's LED Binary Clock and
USB Memory Watch, Giftcorp's
Burlwood finish CD Holder,
Levenger's Meeting Master and
Post-It® Memo Packs

LAST HOLIDAY SEASON,
ONLINE SPENDING JUMPED
MORE THAN 24 PERCENT
year-over-year, up from \$11 billion spent
in 2001, according to the *eSpending*
Report from The Goldman Sachs Group,
Inc., Harris Interactive®, and
Nielsen/NetRatings.

What accounts for this growth?
Convenience, ease of shopping and the
tremendous choice the Internet offers
are the primary reasons. Consumers also
feel confident about paying by credit card
because of advances in encryption
procedures.

Although the survey also showed that
consumers bought at both ends of the
shopping spectrum, some at the
beginning and others procrastinating
until the very last week before Christmas,
the best way to get exactly what you want
presented just the way you want it—
whether embossed, monogrammed or
otherwise—is to order early.

"We encourage companies to place
big holiday orders by Thanksgiving to
ensure prompt holiday delivery and a
personalized note or holiday greeting can
be placed in each gift," says Kristin West,
Sales and Marketing Coordinator of Very
Vera, a company that makes homemade
cakes and goodies. One of their most
popular offerings is the Strawberry Layer
Cake (\$48 at www.veryvera.com).

A nifty little burlwood finish CD
Holder, available in two sizes (small, \$25;
large, \$40 from www.giftcorp.com) can
be personalized with a name or initials
and is a pretty ornament for home or

office, while two items from
Think Geek (www.thinkgeek.com) are
certainly novel. The LED Binary Clock
(\$19.99 - \$22.99) is perfect for computer
geniuses—and much too complicated to
explain here. You have to see it to believe
it. The USB Memory Watch (\$89.99-
\$139.99) allows the wearer to tell the time
and carry valuable data with him/her at
all times. It has a wealth of other
advantages, including its good looks.

Can anyone ever have enough Post-
Its? According to those we asked, the
answer was a resounding, "No!" These
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plentiful, but they're personal, printed
with the recipient's name. Imagine, 10
pads in each of three sizes, 30 pads in all
(\$38 at www.americanstationery.com).

Another site known for its range of
office indispensables, www.levenger.com,
has many desirable items this season.
Readers on your list will appreciate the
Light Wedge (\$34.95, also available in a
paperback version, \$24.95), which
concentrates more light directly where
needed when reading in dimly lit planes
or underlit hotel rooms. The Shirt-pocket
Briefcase (\$29.99) has a pocket beneath
the writing surface for fresh note cards; a
pocket in back for completed note cards
and a center compartment that's closed
on both ends to hold receipts. Who needs
an office when you have a Napa leather
Meeting Master (\$129)? This filer is also a
folio containing five sections to organize
paper by meeting, a mesh folder in front,
labels, notepads, and places for business
cards and a pen.