


[Tools & Services](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Books](#) | [Business Opportunities](#)

Search


[Home](#) | [Startups](#) | [HomeBiz](#) | [Franchise](#) | [Biz Opps](#) | [Money](#) | [Marketing](#) | [Management](#) | [E-Biz](#) | [Tech](#) | [Magazine](#)
[How-To Guides](#) | [CareerJournal Center](#) | [Bookstore](#) | [Women's Center](#)

Topics A-Z

It's a Gift Making Your List

Who should be on your gift list?

Generally speaking, anyone who has helped your business grow is fair game—clients, employees, friends or special vendors, such as a landlord, postal carrier or printer. In the American Express survey, more than half of small-business owners said they thought gift-giving led to increased sales, while 71 percent said corporate gift-giving was an important part of their annual marketing efforts. In other words, you probably can't go wrong by being too inclusive.

Once you've decided who gets gifts, what do you give? Gifts should reflect your business, says Robyn Spizman, a gift expert in Atlanta. "For example, if you own a travel company, consider giving something like the latest travel clock or gadget," Spizman suggests. Whatever the gift, she says, "the key is the words that go with it to illustrate your thoughtfulness, like 'Working with you has been a wonderful adventure.'"

It might not be inappropriate to do a little self-promotion in your gift-giving as well: maybe a well-placed company logo? "Every business is looking to promote itself, even when giving a gift," says Mike Levin, who sells customized corporate gifts for iGo Promos in Boynton Beach, Florida.

This year, food items are expected to make popular personalized gifts. Boxes of cookies or chocolates, or popcorn tins imprinted with your company's logo are in demand, according to industry-watchers. "Food has always been a standard for a holiday gift," says Marvin Spike, vice chair of the Advertising Specialty Institute in Trevose, Pennsylvania. "It can be shared, and people remember you if it tastes good."

To make promotional gifts stand out, put a twist on old standards. For example, if you're giving a coffee mug, opt for an unusual material (such as stainless steel) instead of ceramic, suggests Kelly Dugan, owner of Dugans Inc., a customized gift company in Kent, Washington.

A good starting point for information on personalizing holiday presents is the [Advertising Specialty Institute](#), a trade organization and one of the largest players in the promotional products industry. Also, click on the [Promotional Products](#)

» advertisement

CareerJournal.com
EMPLOYER CENTER

Featured Opportunities

[Pillar to Post](#)
[Business Card Experts](#)
[Health Career Agents](#)
[Isoldit](#)
[Grout Doctor](#)
[Certa Pro Painters](#)
[Maintenance Made Simple](#)

[more opportunities >](#)

Article Tools

[E-mail this](#) [Print this](#)

Related Articles:

[Natural Order](#)
[Out-of-Towners](#)

[Association International](#) site.

There are other factors to consider when developing your gift list. You can't give every client the same gift—some will receive less expensive presents, some will get pricier ones. From the outset, categorize your recipients and determine what kind of gift they'll get. Take shipping expenses into account, too, when developing your gift budget; this cost is often overlooked.

Keep track of what you've sent in the past, because repeating yourself can be something of a faux pas. Choose gifts that are professional. If dealing with overseas recipients, be careful not to violate their cultural or business protocols.

There are lots of issues involved in choosing the perfect gift. If you feel overwhelmed by the effort, consider hiring a corporate gift consultant. These professionals can find creative presents that fit your budget while still making the statement you want. A gift consultant can also help you make decisions such as whether to include your company's logo on a gift or when to send a present. He or she can also handle the logistics that you and your employees may not have time for, such as wrapping, shipping and tracking packages.

Presentation is key to a successful gift. This includes the box, the wrapping, the message and even the timing. A creative customized present delivered a day late is less effective than a trite present given on time.

Even if your client doesn't reciprocate with a gift (or more business), Uncle Sam will reward your generosity. You can deduct the value of a business gift up to \$25 per person annually. Keep records of all your gift purchases, and consult with an accountant before declaring these items on your taxes.

Of course, if you're giving presents just to take a deduction on your income tax return, you're probably missing the point. "We don't give [gifts] for the sake of a deduction, but for their powerful effect to create a warm feeling about our company," says Phenix. "So rarely do [entrepreneurs] remember to sincerely say 'thank you.' These two words are extremely powerful and work wonders in creating long-term, mutually satisfying relationships."



Visit our gift guide

• [Desk Accessories](#)

• [Travel Gadgets](#)

• [Tasty Treats](#)

• [Tech Toys](#)

◀ Page [1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [5](#) [6](#) ▶

[Reprint & E-Print information](#)

NEWSLETTERS & SPECIAL OFFERS

Newsletters

- ☐ Starting a Business
- ☐ Growing a Business
- ☐ Tech/Ebiz
- ☐ Franchise News
- ☐ Sales & Marketing

Special Offers

- ☐ Biz Opportunities
- ☐ Technology
- ☐ Home Business
- ☐ Entrepreneurs
- ☐ Sales

OPPORTUNITY FINDER

Find franchises and business opportunities at Entrepreneur's Opportunity Finder

Quick Browse:

- ☐ Low-Investment
- ☐ International
- ☐ Retail
- ☐ Food & Restaurants
- ☐ Homebased
- ☐ Part-Time