

BOOK *smarts*

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Students Find In-Store Kiosks Useful and Fun

IN 2000, NEBRASKA BOOK COMPANY'S

(NBC) Marketing Services launched a new generation of in-store kiosks for independent bookstores. NBC seized an opportunity to adapt technology that would help bookstore management run their operations more efficiently during the busiest times of year – Rush and Buy Back. These kiosks were state-of-the-art models at that time, enabling students to enter into the store and retrieve class schedules, as well as add and drop classes without waiting in long lines – creating a win-win situation for both students and bookstore management.

New advancements in technology enabled NBC to introduce new kiosks to bookstores earlier this year. A distinctive customer service tool, these high-tech kiosks feature advanced customer service capabilities, enticing students to visit bookstores year-round. Bookstore management can take advantage of these kiosks with NBC dollars.

“NBC realized that these kiosks benefit bookstores by doing more than alleviating traffic flow during the busy times of year,” says Chris Rodgers, Director of Marketing Services. “They have become a store attraction. The camera feature has really piqued interest with students; they love to e-mail their pictures to friends and family.”



Features of the Innovative Portable Kiosks

The 3D Stand and Printer, KT-125, and 3D Desktop are three new kiosk models currently available. Each model provides high-impact interaction for students.

Overall the models provide the following features:

- Free e-mail for students to correspond with friends and family
 - Class registration online
 - Downloading of class schedules
 - Textbook reservations
- Direct links to bookstores' Web sites
- Portability that allows the units to be moved within the store

Additionally, a clever new benefit is available on each kiosk: cameras enabling students to take head-and-shoulder photos of themselves and send them to family and friends via e-mail.

These newer models are maintenance-free for bookstore management as well. All service is managed online at Nebraska Book Company. Additionally, the company supervises the programming, which is done by the same corporation that handled the 2002 Winter Olympics. Each model can be customized to meet the needs of students.

According to Rodgers, 63 kiosks have been installed in college bookstores nationwide. NBC tracked

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more than 64,000 minutes of usage by students in May alone. "Our customers have given us a positive response, and they say their students love it."

"We have purchased four more kiosks: two more for our main store to meet the demand; one for our Vancouver bookstore; and one for our Spokane store," says Chuck Morrow, bookstore manager for Washington State University bookstore. According to Morrow, the students are always using the kiosks, and that is the best

feedback he can get. And, Washington State was able to pay for their kiosks entirely by using NBC dollars.

NBC expects sales of the kiosks to double in 2003. Marketing Services plans on displaying and demonstrating the new models at the upcoming Super Regional Event. If you are unable to attend the event, or would like information beforehand, contact Chris Rodgers, at 1-800-869-0366.

NBC's Marketing Services Is Dedicated to Keeping You Strong

Snapshot of a Marketing Services Promotion

Nebraska Book Company's Marketing Services is always available to assist your store. We can provide you with Freshman Mailers to be distributed in the Summer of 2004. The mailers include textbook reservation packets for incoming students, allowing them to reserve their books prior to the beginning of the semester. Educational information on Buy Back, coupons and information on important phone numbers on campus provide added value to incoming Freshman students.

Stats from Marketing Services:

- Bookstores that utilized the Fall Freshman Mailer reaped the rewards of textbook reservations from students increasing by 92%



- The pick-up rate of textbooks by students averaged 72%

"Our mailers had an 11.4% redemption last year, which is very good considering most direct mail pieces average 2%,"

says Chris Rodgers, Director of Marketing Services.

If you are interested in finding out more about what NBC's Marketing Services offers for your upcoming promotions, call Chris at 1-800-869-0366.

Tablet PCs: The Evolution of the Portable Computer

THIS YEAR THE COMPUTING WORLD mourned the passing of a visionary genius: Adam Osborne, the inventor of the portable computer. (“Portable” is a relative term in this case, as the computer weighed almost 24 pounds.) Osborne’s original model cost a then-whopping \$1,795 and featured a five-inch CRT display and 64k of RAM. Though initial sales were brisk, his company was poorly managed and filed for bankruptcy protection in 1983.

Flash-forward to 2003. Portable notebook computers have been an integral tool of business, science and education for more than a decade. While processor speeds have been increasing, the basic design of the common notebook computer hasn’t changed—that is, until recently. With the proliferation of PDAs and the ubiquity of notebook computers, it perhaps isn’t surprising that someone had the bright idea to combine the two. The result of this technological union is the Tablet PC, a notebook that acts like a PDA.

The primary advantage of a Tablet PC is its ability to accept input from a stylus, just as a normal computer would from a keyboard and mouse. This means that not only can you jot down your notes, but you can also sketch images that will be recognized by your computer. This is a tremendous boon for engineers and archaeologists alike, or anyone, for that matter, requiring the ability to quickly input both text and images while on the go. In other words, the Tablet PC is perfect for many college students.

Another advantage is its ability to record information while the operator is holding the unit. This capability is ideally suited for many types of fieldwork. For example, a Tablet PC would be perfect for a sociology student conducting a door-to-door survey or for a structural engineering student taking notes on a building site. And, a college bookstore manager can use it to place orders and check inventory while on the sales floor.

The Tablet PC may not be right for everyone, however. As with any emerging technology, Tablet PCs, for the moment, aren’t cheap. In fact most retail for more than \$2,000. (By comparison, many notebook PCs can be purchased for around \$1,000, sometimes even less.) There’s also the issue of true portability. At an average weight of around three pounds, they tend to be a bit heavy for their stated purpose. And with their batteries usually only lasting from two to four hours, they

need frequent recharging, something that isn’t always possible in the field.

So, for now, Tablet PCs aren’t quite ready to relegate their notebook cousins to history’s dustbin. But when you consider what an impact they’ve made in many niche markets, it’s clear that as they improve in performance and come down in price, Tablet PCs will continue to find converts among portable-computing students.



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NBC Sought by Michigan State University To Operate Campus Bookstore

NEBRASKA BOOK COMPANY (NBC) has been awarded a five-year contract to provide bookstore management services to Michigan State University bookstore. NBC assumed management of the Michigan State store in June from Follett Corporation, which had leased the store since 1998.

"This was a unique situation. We have had a large presence in the market for several years, and most of the business was being done by either our stores or the

other off-campus operator. As a result, both of us were very interested in the on-campus store and NBC was fortunate enough to win the bid," says Barry Major, Chief Operating Officer of NBC. "When a university has made the decision to lease their bookstore and the lease is up for renewal, we will consider those opportunities on a case-by-case basis. This provides us an opportunity to build the used textbook market for our wholesale accounts."



NBC Thanks Advantage Program Participants

NEBRASKA BOOK COMPANY is thrilled with college stores' participation in the NBC Advantage Program. Currently, there are 475 college stores participating in 2003, and they have earned more than \$2.5 million in Advantage rebates, which convert to more than 3.8 million in NBC Dollars. The Advantage Program is one of the many opportunities provided by NBC for independent bookstores to stay strong. Thank you – we appreciate your business.

WE WANT YOUR BUSINESS—NOT YOUR CUSTOMERS

- We believe the student is your customer.
- We believe the bookstore is our customer.
- We believe in integrity in business dealings.
- We believe college bookstores should be independent.
- We believe in providing solutions to keep your business independent.



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