Scrapbooks Turn A New Page On Holiday Gifts

(NAPS)—Rushing to the mall, attending holiday parties, and wrapping gift after gift can turn anyone into Ebenezer Scrooge. This season break the norm by making gift giving less stressful and more rewarding.

Anna Griffin, renowned scrapbooking expert and product developer, recommends creating meaningful, one-of-a-kind gifts. “Why fight the crowds and pay outrageous prices for a gift when you can relax and make memorable handcrafted presents at home?” said Griffin. “Pour a cup of hot cider, set up your work space in front of a warm fire and let your creative juices flow. And don’t forget about the family—involve them as well!”

Griffin emphasizes that when creating scrapbooking gifts, it’s not necessary to make a traditional book, but to instead create items people can enjoy every day. She recommends smaller projects such as making a special recipe book featuring family photos next to recipes or creating a personalized coffee mug using an Aladdin scrapbook travel mug, which includes a removable paper insert for easy scrapbooking.

To encourage this idea of personalized gift giving this season, Griffin created to help people get started. “To “The Aladdin and Anna Griffin Scrapbooking Challenge.” The challenge asks entrants to submit their best holiday gift idea using the Aladdin Scrapbook Travel Mug. The grand-prize winner will receive a trip to New York City to shop with Griffin and five friends along with an $800 gift basket, which includes Anna Griffin supplies. Entries must be postmarked by Dec. 2nd. For more rules and information, visit www.aladdinscrapbook.com.

For more information on inkjet printers, or for printing tips, visit www.dell.com/printers.

**Holiday Shoppers Flock Online, Small Businesses Follow**

(NAPS)—U.S. small-business owners expect consumers to spread holiday cheer with more online purchases this year—and many will do it online.

According to a recent survey, 62 percent of U.S. small businesses said they anticipated a strong holiday season. That’s a slight increase over last year’s 60 percent. To better serve the expected high turnout of holiday shoppers, more small businesses will run seasonal promotions—mostly online.

The annual 2006 Small Business Holiday Outlook survey was conducted by Constant Contact, an e-mail marketing service for small businesses, associations and organizations.

The majority, 81 percent, of small businesses polled also expect consumers to make more holiday purchases online in 2006. But from this viewpoint, small-business owners is great news for the upcoming holiday season and the overall health of the U.S. economy,” said Gail Goodman, CEO of Constant Contact. “It’s also encouraging to see the increasing importance of online marketing for today’s small businesses, as they continue to look for new ways to stay in front of current and prospective customers.

To capitalize on this, many small businesses will use online marketing “in the dream again; and this inter- dependence produces the high- est form of living.”

—Anais Nin

Man is harder than iron, stronger than stone and more fragile than a flower.”

—Turkish proverb

For more holiday crafting tips, visit: www.annagriffin.com or www.aladdinscrapbook.com.

What we call reality is an agreement that people have arrived at to make life more livable.

—Lorraine Nevelson

Be Prepared—

Don’t be afraid of the space between your dreams and reality. If it can dream it, you can make it so.

—Belva Davis

Many consumers are taking a smart step before they shop for floor covering. They’re visiting a site that provides insight into which floor will look in their own home.

What makes the www.sfca.org site so popular is that they can get all the information about a particular floor covering they need in an unbiased way, before they even enter a store. The site, recently launched by the Wood Floor Covering Association, lets floor shoppers “kick the tires” before they choose a floor covering.

To learn more and to find retailers near you, visit www.sfca.org.

Scrapbooking experts and product developers at Anna Griffin encourage creative paper and use rub-on letters, letter stencils or alphabet stickers to create clever titles or fun phrases for your scrapbook photos.

For more holiday crafting tips, visit: www.annagriffin.com or www.aladdinscrapbook.com.

Small Business News & Notes

Eighty-two percent of small businesses will use e-mail marketing to build relationships with customers and increase sales this holiday season, according to a new survey.

When beginning e-mail marketing, it’s important to find a service that’s the right fit for your business or organization. A good e-mail marketing service will provide list management services (opt in, unsubscribe, etc.), professional-looking e-mail templates and mailing, and reporting functions and help get your e-mail delivered.

Using a third-party service is inexpensive and will ensure that you look professional when you send out your e-mail newsletter.

More than 80,000 small businesses and organizations use Constant Contact. They offer affordable, monthly plans, are easy to use, and allow you to test your messages to see what works best.

This season break the norm by using a third-party service to make the most out of the holiday shopping season. They must stay in touch with customers with frequent communications.

E-mail marketing is a fast, easy and affordable way to do this. Accord-

To help you get in the Yuletide spirit, Griffin recommends these simple tips:

• Capture Traditions—Preserve cherished family heirlooms by making copies of original wedding invitations or postcards. Carefully cut out the copied image and adhere it to projects such as greeting cards, Aladdin travel mug inserts, gift tags or bags.

• Be Prepared—Plan out your paper projects by taking your photos shopping. It’s much easier to choose the right materials, color and paper-frame sizes for your project when you can match them on site.

• Get Inspired—Host a get-together with a group of friends to share tools, tips and festive paper.

• Finishing Touches—Use a pair of decorative edge scissors to cut out squares or rectangles from plain cardstock. Mount an illustration on a piece of your favorite decorative paper and use rub-on letters, letter stencils or alphabet stickers to create clever titles or fun phrases for your scrapbook photos.

For more holiday crafting tips, visit: www.annagriffin.com or www.aladdinscrapbook.com.