

## **PARTY PLAN SALES**

### **A Veritable Gold Mine For Wealth Builders**

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## **PARTY PLAN SALES**

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Believe it! You can easily make \$50,000 in the next six months or less! After that, you can practically be guaranteed at least that much, but probably much more, every year for the rest of your life, without, really working!

The way to accumulate this kind of wealth is with your own business of selling merchandise via The Party Plan. Few other businesses can so easily give you this kind of wealth as quickly, and keep your income growing.

A recent questionnaire, circulated among hundreds of successful direct sales merchandisers across the country asked this questions: "If you were to start over today, knowing what you know now and could choose the one method of merchandising that would make you really rich in the shortest period of time, which would you select?" Of these questionnaires returned, 94% stated they would go The Party Plan Method.

The sharp party plan operators (and the richest) simply hold motivational sales meetings for their sub-distributors about once a month. During these meetings, they are teaching their sub-distributors how to recruit new hosts and hostesses, or husband and wife host and hostess teams.

A host or hostess can be any person who is agreeable to holding a sales party at his or her house. Almost always, this person is rewarded for having the party with a percentage of the total business or an agreed upon special merchandise gift.

These people invite friends, neighbors and relatives to the party. Your sub-distributor doesn't have to do much more than make contact with people willing to hold parties, supply the merchandise, and sometimes offer to help or be there to make sure every thing goes smoothly.

Here's the kind of money you can realize with this business: Say you have ten sub-distributors, and each one arranges only five parties a month, and each party does \$200 in gross business. That's a total of \$10,000 per month in total volume. And from that total volume, you make only 30%. Figure it out for yourself. This would give you a personal income of \$3,000 for thirty days in which you did no more than hold one or two motivational sales meetings!

Besides, each party is almost guaranteed to give your sub-distributor at least two more hostesses for future parties, and those future parties will provide still more hostesses. This chain is endless, and will build as fast as you can keep up with it.

To get your start in this fabulous method of merchandising, become a host or hostess yourself. Give a few parties yourself, and learn the ropes.

Choose an evening for your party - any evening excepting Friday through the weekend. Generally 7:30 is the most convenient time for the greatest number of people. If it's inconvenient for whatever reason to hold a party in your home, arrange with a friend to hold the first couple of parties.

Make up a list of 30 to 60 people you can invite to the party. They can be friends, neighbors, relatives or people you know from work, even acquaintances with whom you do business such as the check-out clerk where you buy your groceries or people you meet at the bus stop on your way to work.

After formally inviting these people, you then call to remind them of the party at least a couple of days before the date of the party. This is important, because of the original 40 people you invite, at least 15 will not show because it slipped their minds, last minute circumstances that force a change in plans, and those that really weren't interested in the first place.

On the day of the party, get your merchandise display set up early. The party should be held in the largest room in the home - usually the living room - with the merchandise display the center of attraction.

The merchandise should be set out on a sturdy table covered with a good white or light colored cloth, and the merchandise should be arranged by group or type - the jewelry items together; perfumes, bath oils and colognes together; crystal together, and so on.

Try to put a bit of imagination and showmanship into your merchandise display. This will have the effect of making your merchandise look much more valuable than it actually is. Those that do put a flair into their merchandise displays find that it increases their sales by as much as 25 percent over an ordinary showing.

For instance, a high intensity light focused on the display will cause the jewelry to sparkle, the stainless steel to gleam, and the brass-ware to glimmer like valuable heirlooms.

Another idea would be to tack a piece of velvet onto a 4 by 6 foot piece of ply wood and use it to display rings, earrings, necklaces and watches.

In jewelry sales, another idea is to hang a mirror on a wall near the merchandise display. If you or your hostess has room, you might want to set up a card table, covered with an expensive looking piece of material, place a dressing table type mirror on this table, with a chair available for your guests to sit at the table while they try on the various items. The guests then make their selections after determining how each item looks on them.

Regardless of what you do to make it easier for your guests to select and buy, a hand mirror is an absolute must whenever you're showing jewelry. It would be wise to have several hand mirrors available - two for your merchandise display table, and an extra one on the "admiration" table.

Besides your merchandise display, be sure also you're organized with your refreshments. These usually consist of coffee, tea, soft drinks, cookies or other "nibble" items. The host or hostess usually makes arrangements in advance for one of the guests to assist with the serving of refreshments.

Be sure you have nametags for your guests, and a couple of felt tip marking pens. And don't forget the order forms. These should be standard two-piece self-carbon order forms - one copy for your customer and the other for your files. The best idea is to buy the order forms. All these items

are commonly available in stationery stores. Rubber stamp your name and address on each copy of each order form, at least a couple of days in advance of the party.

Still another item to remember is your merchandise catalogs. Be sure you have a good supply on hand, rubber stamped with your name and address. Later on, when you're established and the money is rolling in, you can have your name and address imprinted on the catalogs.

If you don't have a merchandise catalog, consider making one of your own. A valuable and easy-to-follow manual on "How To Prepare Your Own Catalog" (book #1203) is currently available. Another manual that will be of special interest to you is the "Close out Merchandise Money Making Manual" (book #1668). Both these manuals are available from the dealer who supplied this report.

While we're on the idea of catalogs, we'd like to point out that a lot of Party Plan Merchandisers are also dealers for the extra-income book catalog, "Unique Books." They feel that almost everyone is interested in extra income ideas, and the Unique Books catalog has a wide selection of reports and manuals describing supplemental income opportunities. Leaving one of the book catalogs with guests at the party results in an ongoing flow of book orders for months afterwards.

Back to the Party Plan. About a half hour before your guests are due to begin arriving, turn on all the lights in the room where the party is to be held. This will give the room a bright, warm feeling conducive to a party kind of atmosphere. And by all means, be sure to turn off all the radios, stereo and TV sets. Eliminate any and all noises from other rooms in your home that might distract the attention of your guests.

Every party should be planned, and follow a prescribed format or agenda. This is because without a plan, it will just be a gathering of people wasting time at your home instead of theirs. You must have a plan to know what to do next in order to achieve the desired results. Having a "pattern" is also the easiest way to teach others to duplicate your success, and the idea of following a successful formula is a proven method of making the most sales in the least time.

Phase one is the greeting and get-acquainted time slot - about thirty minutes. The hostess greets the guests as they arrive, prints a name tag for each, introduces them around, gives them a catalog, points out the refreshments, and leads them into conversation with the other guests.

The second phase is the "game-playing" portion of your part. This phase is used to relax everybody and get them involved in the party. It should last about 15 to 20 minutes.

Next comes the merchandise presentation by the hostess, who shows and describes each item on display. If you have jewelry available, ask different guests to try on particular items and show the others what these articles look like in use. The length of time spent on this phase of the party will depend in large part on how much merchandise you have on display, but generally, you shouldn't spend more than about 20 minutes showing and describing your merchandise. Then give your guests about 10 to 15 minutes to personally inspect and try on the items that have aroused their interest.

You should mingle and converse with the guests during this time period in order to answer specific questions or explain the possible uses of an item, where it might look good in the buyer's

home, and any interesting tidbits relating to where an item came from, how it was made, or the satisfaction of an earlier buyer.

When you seem to have answered all the questions, and everyone appears to have made their selections, start writing orders. Don't hesitate to ask for orders. Writing orders should take about 15 minutes, and then you should let the party begin to winding down.

During this time, mingle with your guests and anyone showing a spark of interest should be approached with an offer to serve as a future host or hostess. As each guest starts to leave, thank them for coming and walk with them to the door.

The total length of your party shouldn't be much more than two hours. Time and time again, it's been proven that you can do everything necessary, and make the most sales in this period of time. You lose effectiveness and make fewer sales with appreciably more or less time.

There are a couple of proven ways to recruit new hosts or hostesses from the people attending your party. First of all, watch the guests as they look over the merchandise, examine, admire and wish for something they don't quite have enough extra money to buy. When you've determined that a particular guest wants a specific item but can't quite fit it into the budget, simply take her aside to a secluded corner of the room, and explain privately that you're willing to give her the item she has been looking at and wanting, if she will agree to invite her friends and relatives to a party in her home.

This approach works almost every time, and your only expense is the wholesale price of the item you give her as the free gift.

The second sure-fire approach is to offer a cash incentive. You do this by offering to allow 5% to 10% of the total sales volume resulting from the party staged for you by this type of new recruit. There's a plus factor for you on this one, because you'll be getting the enthusiastic participation of the host or hostess on the selling side. Once you've explained to them how your program works, they'll generally do everything they can to make the party a huge success, and thereby increase their pay for the evening.

When you give a gift to the hostess for having the party, the presentation should be a special ceremony staged with all the "Show Biz" flair you can muster, at the end of your merchandise showing. However, when your gift is a cash award, carry your presentation over to the next party and make a big production of it as well. Don't forget to invite the "guest of honor" to your next scheduled party for the big presentation.

During these presentations many of the other guests will be favorably impressed, and as a consequence will ask you for details.

Actually, your recruiting efforts should begin when you start taking orders. Every person you talk with should be offered the opportunity to hold a party of his or her own. Then just before the party begins breaking up, ask your guests as a group if any of them would be interested in holding a similar party in his or her home. You ask those who voice an interest to stay over for a few minutes in order to work out the details.

You should have an Appointment Book for this scheduling. Simply ask what date would be

favorable for them, mark that date in the book, along with the name, address and telephone number. Then assure each that you'll call in the next day or two to work out the details.

Many party plan merchandisers also use a letter. They write a letter extolling the fun and excitement of the parties, explaining briefly the opportunities to receive free gifts of their choice or big commission checks. Then they invite the letter recipients to call for complete details on how they can stage a party. These letters are usually printed in volume, and then slipped inside the covers of the catalog these merchandisers give to each person attending the parties. Sometimes these letters are handed to each guest as the party breaks up.

Some party plan merchandisers also run small classified ads in the area newspapers. Their advertising plays up the opportunities available to make regular commission checks (extra income) simply by holding parties in their homes. People interested are invited to phone for more details. Response to this kind of ad is generally very good, with the conversion rate better than sixty percent!

Most people tend to feel party plan merchandising is exclusive to women, but don't you believe it! It's true that women generally establish themselves more rapidly than men with this kind of sales operation, but over the long haul, there are just as many men operating successful party plan sales operations as there are women.

Men are usually not as adept in establishing social "chit-chat" relationships as women. Therefore, the man who wants in on the vast potential of party plan merchandising should consider working with a woman.

A husband and wife partnership is an ideal working arrangement. An acquaintance, girlfriend or relative will often work out just as successfully. The basic requirement is simply that the "couple" must function as a team, with the individual talents of one complementing those of the other.

Probably one of the greatest secrets of success with this kind of sales operation is that in order to make the sales, and talk about \$400 parties, you must have the widest selection of merchandise possible.

Many beginners, not understanding that offering the potential buyers a wide and varied selection of items to choose from is what builds your profits in a hurry, base their entire merchandising plan around a selection that's of special interest or particularly appealing to themselves. It's all right to include the items that you especially like, but don't base your entire merchandise line on the things you like; you're selling to others, not yourself!

Most successful party plan merchandisers advise that you should display at least forty different items, and more if you have the supplier contacts or the buying expertise. The actual decisions on which products to carry and display at your parties should be based upon these four factors: 1) The kinds of gift items, personal decor articles, and general merchandise the people in your area are buying; 2) The styles or fads currently in vogue in your area; 3) Contacts with enough suppliers who can furnish you with the kind of merchandise your potential buyers want; 4) Your ability to shop among the various suppliers, and verify that you are getting the very best merchandise value obtainable.

Still another important point to consider before buying merchandise to display and sell: Do the prices you're having to pay for your products wholesale allow you enough room for a reasonable profit when compared to your time and expense?

Do some market research relative to your ambitions; get answers to the questions we've set forth for you, and when you're satisfied that you understand the workings of Party Plan Merchandising, grab the opportunity and run with it!