

# **BookPro of the Month: Sidelines 2007**

## **Intrepid Buyer Wendy Manning Shares her Recent Faves**

At this Spring's trade show, I facilitated my very first sidelines panel. I'd like to thank Pamela Yearby of Elliott Bay Book Company, whose incredible charm and style were an asset, and Suzanne Droppert of Liberty Bay Books. Without her enthusiasm and immense card knowledge, I would have found myself staring into the crowd. And, of course, thanks to everyone who showed up; all of your suggestions made the panel complete.

What *I* learned from this panel, is that what everyone really wants to know is where to get cool stuff. I could go on & on in an attempt to make my case against acrylic packaging . . . but instead, here's a list of my favorite lines:

**Knock Knock** - This is a solid backlist line. They always have fresh new products, but more importantly they have consistent sellers like Pro/Con pads, witty post-its and Slang flashcards. My current favorites are their small notepads of fashion and cell phone citations. [www.knockknock.biz](http://www.knockknock.biz)

**Ash Grove Press** – Their Pride & Prejudice board game is really cool and unique. It wasn't quite the hit at the tradeshow that I thought it would be . . . but I'm going to keep promoting it, because it's so unique and um, Jane Austen is pretty popular. <http://www.ashgrovepress.com/>

**Fred** – This is one of the coolest lines. Some favorite products are: monkey head keycaps, inanimate object stickers and the chopstick holders for boys & girls. They have great packaging and the products are smart and fresh. [www.worldwidefred.com](http://www.worldwidefred.com)

**Two's Company** – Gnomes! We just got in Henry the talking gnome, gnome soap, gnome aprons, gnome playing cards. Did I say gnomes?

**Blue Q** – This is another solid backlist seller. Not everything works for us, but some bestsellers are their tote bags, the Instant Irish Accent breath spray, Enjoy Your Mother gum and Cat Butt stickers. Oh, and they are in on the gnome game as well with gnome gum, lip balm, stickers and air fresheners. [www.blueq.com](http://www.blueq.com).

**Punch Studio** –All come with really slick packaging: box cards, file folders, nesting boxes and soap. [www.punchstudio.com](http://www.punchstudio.com)

**Natural Life** – This really cute line has the best embroidered linen hand towels, hairbrushes, keychain coin purses and magnets, which all do incredibly well for us. [www.naturallife.net](http://www.naturallife.net).

**Calypso Cards** – Selfish Kitty cards aren't for the faint of heart and definitely require a darker sense of humor. Here's a typical greeting: Outside: "Happy Birthday, you bastard." Inside : "In all seriousness though, you are a bastard." I'm not sure what this says about me, but I read this card when I need a little pick me up during the workweek. [www.calypsocards.com](http://www.calypsocards.com)

**The Unemployed Philosopher's Guild** – From Global Warming mugs to Frida Kahlo fingerpuppets, this line is one of my all time favorites and does really well for us. Other hits: Henry VIII disappearing wives mugs, funny mints, and sticky notes with fun names like Einstein's Gluons and Freudian Slips. [www.philosophersguild.com](http://www.philosophersguild.com)

**Galison** – These guys are the non-returnable Chronicle of the gift industry. Their products are well made, have great designs and are packaged perfectly. I don't think I have ever put one Galison item on our sale table. [www.galison.com](http://www.galison.com).

**Noted** –Eggings, an egg that hatches a plant; Nyokki, ceramic eggs with the faces of monkey, pigs etc. Grow Your Own Plant Kits for kids, like Dracula Plant and Venus Flytrap, are very popular. [www.notedco.com](http://www.notedco.com).

**Iota** – Great graphics. I love the Stationery Kits and their Pattern Tall Books, which continue to sell for us from their great POP display. [www.everyiota.com](http://www.everyiota.com)

**Anne Taintor** – Who can forget Anne Taintor? This woman sells amazingly well, especially since she's expanded her line and polished up her packaging. What is really moving now are her sticky notes, file folders and air fresheners in scents like whiskey sour and lemon jello. [www.annetaintor.com](http://www.annetaintor.com)

**Re-Marks** –Bookmarks with super cute designs, great packaging and POP displays including Monster Bookmarks and magnetic page clips that come in sets of four or individually. They are based in Seattle. [www.remarks.net](http://www.remarks.net)

These are just a few favorite and 'solid' lines. There are so many that work for us, it's hard to include everything. I hope this is helpful. Please contact me about with any questions on these lines, and please send me info on the cool products that you have found. Happy Buying!

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