



Alternative Gifts International | Alternative Gift Markets, Inc.

# alternativegiftmarket

## an introductory guide for gift market coordinators

We're pleased you and your organization are considering or planning to join the network of Alternative Gift Market Hosts. This is not just a run-of-the-mill Christmas Bazaar, nor is it an Alternative Christmas Fair. An Alternative Gift Market is an educational event and experience that should be different from shopping, as we have come to know it. It is educational and works best when volunteers of all ages are involved. We know it only takes one person to inspire many others to do something important or different. It is not really difficult when several like-minded people join the enthusiasm. The results of your efforts will be rewarded as you help shoppers find a new alternative to giving gifts. Blessings & Peace in your endeavors! —LM

### OUR MISSION

Alternative Gifts International is a non-profit organization that inspires support for humanitarian and environmental causes. We offer donors the option to designate charitable gifts through carefully selected agencies in the name of their relatives, friends and associates.

**The AGI Vision is to be a trusted conductor of transformative gifting.**

In other words, AGI believes its purpose is to help people better experience the real joy of giving and receiving gifts and to be inspired to continue the practice of giving alternative gifts.

### STEPS TO HOLD AN ALTERNATIVE GIFT MARKET (AGM)

- determine date & place
- order materials! (see back page)
- after materials are received, begin recruiting display sponsors
  - delegate the volunteer coordination, publicity and cashier
  - training: cards/inserts, computer stations
  - set up the AGM
  - accounting
  - volunteer recognition
  - follow up reports to host organization, supporters and media

### GOALS OF AN AGM (may include any or all these factors)

- to promote a 'one-stop' charitable shopping center where multiple gifts can be purchased in honor of recipients without excessive advertising, wasteful packaging, or concern about the suitability of a gift
- to provide donors confidence that their gifts will be used as advertised
- to educate about the needs and locations where agencies are working
- to involve diverse people or interest groups and increase the awareness of 'alternatives' to what they may find in daily life
- to allow shoppers of any age to give an affordable gift

## A FEW WORDS ABOUT SHOPPERS & ALTERNATIVE GIFT MARKETS

A distinctive shopper attends an Alternative Gift Market. These markets are held in the US and Canada, hosted by faith groups, schools and service clubs. It has similarities to a fair trade market, but provides education more than gifts which must be wrapped and carried. All AGM “gifts” are tax deductible because they are donations designated to organizations that are monitored and selected by AGI as credible projects, and provide:

**Joy to the donor & shopper**

**Global awareness & education to the recipient**

**A great benefit for the environment and people living in poverty**

The shoppers in this market are people of every age who enjoy many advantages. Because of their compassion, however, they generously share their resources with their global neighbors. They purchase *gifts that inspire change*.

## VARIOUS MODELS OF GIFT MARKETS

### Catalog-only Market

- An easy & common alternative to holding a scheduled AGM.
- Have plenty of catalogs available. This gives people the option to take the catalog home and browse at their leisure—all year long.
- Give information about AGI in newsletters and other media.

### Community or Ecumenical Market

- Form a large or multi-day market with other similar organizations.
- Include several local non-profits and/or civic education on recycling, etc.

### ‘Express’ Market

- Set up a table with one project at another community event. This will help build awareness for future larger markets. Small businesses (beauty shops, ice cream stores) where people wait, can have a static display and have catalogs or order sheets available. Employees should be coached on explaining the concept.
- Select a project to highlight each week or month of the year.

### School-based AGM

- Each project is a ‘natural’ for teaching about world issues: social science, economics, environment, health.
- Students can use Study/Info Sheets to learn more about each country, the project, and the solution offered by AGI’s partner agency.
- Skits, games, and holiday plays can also be used to teach information
- College student groups appreciate the ease of buying gifts on a budget, especially during the busy holiday season.
- Plan a market with student organizations (fraternities, sororities, etc.)

### Home Party

- Families can use the AGI catalog for gift exchanges.
- Small gatherings (study groups, book clubs, etc). Highlight one or more of the projects for gift-giving.
- Select several project categories if a series of meetings are held.

### Community Fair or Church Bazaar

- Offer to gift wrap the gifts purchased for a donation to a selected project.
- Sell AGI holiday card packs, while giving away the catalogs.

### Year-Round AGM

- Provide AGI Gift Card Packs for sale throughout the year in brochure displays.
- Place AGI catalogs in brochure displays in doctors’ offices or lobbies of churches, synagogues, mosques.

### Vacation Bible School or Latchkey/ Summer School

- Create a “World Fair” using the AGI catalog with the VBS curriculum and/or Children’s Activity Pages
- Find Bible stories or world culture’s proverbs as teaching tools.

## FAQS

### ***How and when should supplies be ordered from AGI?***

Use the AGM Market Material Order Form provided on page 7 anytime after July 1, 2009. Additional copies of this document can be downloaded on the AGI web site (download: “How-To” 2009). Call 1-800-842-2243 with any questions or to register your market.

### ***What does AGI provide?***

AGI’s Market Support team works to connect Coordinators with other AGMs in their region, or those who have experience with specific types of markets.

### ***When is the best date/time of year to hold a market?***

Most AGMs are held in the last 2 months of the year, but there are advantages to considering other options. Having the event during the holiday season or around Mother’s or Father’s Day can provide a valuable gift-giving option that many would not consider otherwise. When a date is chosen, confirm it on your organization’s calendar, and begin to talk it up in various publications!

Be certain to allow adequate time for volunteers to read the instructions and project display tips. There are also alternatives to make your AGM less complicated, so don’t despair!

### ***How much time will be required for the market?***

A typical AGM is open for 3–6 hours, if held on one date. Shorter time-frames may work, depending on many factors such as average attendance for an event that accompanies the AGM.

### ***Where is an ideal location?***

A space large enough for multiple display tables, chairs, and open space for people to mill around and gather—like a small ‘trade’ fair—or outdoors, like a farmer’s market. Hallways or corridors are not always the best for full markets, since people will want to ‘browse’ the display booths and cannot do so in a busy hallway. However, wide hallways could be effective for a small “mini-market” or Catalog Market.

### ***What is required of display booth sponsors?***

In short: planning time and interest in or enthusiasm for the project. Volunteers should be in charge of booths, from the research stage, to the creation of the display, to the “staffing” and clean-up of the booth at the market. The Study Sheets on the back of each project poster include information about each project and factors that create the need or problem. Display Tips are provided for marketing the project and creative suggestions for recipes, posters, and ornaments to draw attention to the display. Poster backs can be copied for multiple volunteers.

Spending time to learn about the project and the location of the project helps volunteers become more aware of the needs of others and global challenges. The volunteers’ creativity and knowledge about the project improves any project’s “selling power.”

### ***What expenses can be expected when hosting a Market for AGI?***

AGI requires a “Registration Fee” from each Market location. This provides instruction and items necessary to hold a market, including several catalogs, publicity tips, inserts and posters for your market. Each host organization pays the costs to ship these materials from the AGI office in Wichita, Kansas. Most orders are sent via ‘Ground’ which takes 3-4 business days, but can be expedited for higher rates.

AGMs are encouraged to offer AGI gift cards and envelopes, along with the gift information insert(s) as a courtesy to shoppers. Cards have AGI’s web site & mailing address and toll-free number on the back, so that a card recipient (honoree) can learn more about AGI or become a donor.

### ***How might expenses be offset?***

Some markets sell food and use the net income to defray their shipping and material costs. Alternatively, some Coordinators claim their personal credit card receipt for shipping as a charitable gift to the host organization.

## MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

### What is an Alternative Gift?

Describing an Alternative Gift is not easy to explain to people who have never given or received one. AGI considers an alternative gift as a charitable donation given to honor or remember a person or event that is special to the donor or recipient. They are often purchased in lieu of traditional 'material' gifts. AGI gifts provide joy to the giver, the recipients, the agencies that administer funds, and the people whose lives are changed by such gifts.

### AGI policy on designated gifts & partner agencies

*In order to send designated gifts to poverty areas around the world, it is necessary to cooperate with many non-profit agencies. AGI chooses organizations with excellent reputations and track records to deliver services and accomplish the work necessary to improve our world.*

### AGI sets standards of credibility and accountability for non-profit agencies, and the projects that are represented in each AGI Catalog.

AGI's reputation for keeping administration & fund-raising costs as low as possible makes an exceptional impression on donors—especially new ones. Through 2008-09, our policy remains that AGI will keep 10% of each designated gift; 90% goes to the agency for the projects as described in the catalog. See the Annual Reports from previous years to better understand the kind of impact that many small, simple gifts can have.

### Reminders

AGI materials attempt to be user- and eco-friendly.

All of the information in this booklet, along with the Market Registration & Materials Order Form, are now available on the AGI web site.

If you are not a computer user, or the web site is confusing, call 800.842.2243 to talk with an AGI staff member.

AGI materials are copyrighted and copyright laws apply to their use.

Permission for use of the materials is the primary reason that each organization holding a market is asked to use the Registration Form that is included with the Materials Order Form and pay a registration fee for the materials. Most of what is necessary to hold a first year AGM is included at no extra cost.

The name 'Alternative Gifts International©,' as well as 'Alternative Christmas Markets©,' are copyrighted. Copyright laws apply to their use.

### Instead of keeping the catalogs and recycling them, encourage shoppers to use them through the June expiration.

In the planning team, each organization may consider how to include local agencies that want to sell products or raise funds in the AGM. Suggested ways to validate or certify any agency or project that might be considered locally are to request:

- Mission Statement and/or by-laws
- Copy of the 501(c)(3) tax-exempt non-profit IRS determination letter
- Most recent annual report/financial statement
- Brochures about their projects & purpose
- Written description of the designated project they wish to promote
- Signed statement that the funds raised will only be designated for that project.

### AGM fund-raising should not be to support the general expenses of local non-profits or any specific project within the organization hosting the AGM.

AGI requests that Market planners limit supplemental projects and vendors to no more than 20% of the total booths (AGI sponsored projects) in the total AGM. Use the space on the registration form to list any additional agencies that will be represented.

# 2009-2010 AGI Market Registration & Order Form

800.842.2243  
Fax: 316.269.1292  
markets@alternativegifts.org

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Market Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Coordinator Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Coordinator E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 this is a residential address

Billing Address (if different): \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Market: \_\_\_\_\_ Date(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Market:  Catalog Market  Sunday School Market  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Item	Description	Price	Total
<b>Market Registration</b>	All registered markets will receive: posters/ project info sheets, inserts, publicity kit, cashier's instructions, shopping list & remittance form	\$15.00	\$15.00
<b>Electronic Resource Pack CD</b>	All of the information included with registration plus a PowerPoint of all 40 Projects & Excel version of the remittance form I would like _____ electronic resource pack CD(s)	\$3.00 each	
<b>Catalogs</b>	5 FREE Catalogs included with registration I would like _____ additional catalogs	\$0.25 each	
<b>Publicity Poster</b>	11 x 17 in. poster to promote your market I would like _____ market publicity posters.	\$0.25 each	
<b>Gift Card Packages from Order Form</b> (50 cards & envelopes)  <i>View cards online! www.alternativegifts.org</i>	H-1. Let It Snow _____Qty. H-2. Partridge _____Qty. H-3. Star of Bethlehem _____Qty. H-5. Earth/Grow <b>NEW</b> _____Qty.	A-1. Leaves _____Qty. A-2. World Tree _____Qty. A-3. Love & Strength _____Qty. A-4. Blossoms _____Qty. A-5. Simple Gifts _____Qty.	New Cards \$8.00
			Existing Cards \$6.00
<b>Other Cards &amp; Discount Card Packages</b> (50 cards & envelopes) <i>while supplies last!</i>	H-4. Joy to the World _____Qty. H-6. Angels _____Qty. H-7. Joy of Heaven _____Qty.	A-6. Love Given Grows _____Qty. A-8. God's Hands on Earth _____Qty. A-10. Children of the World _____Qty.	\$4.00 pack
<b>Gift Card Variety Packs</b> (5 cards & envelopes)	Use these cards to thank volunteers or sell packs for income. I would like _____ pack(s) of variety gift cards	\$1.00 pack	
<b>Weight</b>	Shipping/Handling charges will be added according to weight (circle): 3-Day Ground      2-Day Ground      Overnight	\$	

**TOTAL:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

AGI will send an invoice after adding shipping charges. Please bill the:  Sponsoring Organization  Market Coordinator

Please charge this credit card:

VISA OR MASTERCARD:      EXP. DATE

Name on card (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this form and mail to: **Alternative Gifts International, P.O. Box 3810, Wichita, KS 67201-3810**

OFFICE USE

Order Taken By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Sent: \_\_\_\_\_

## THE HISTORY OF ALTERNATIVE GIFTS INTERNATIONAL

In 1980, at the Pasadena (CA) Presbyterian Church, Harriet C. Prichard was the Director of Christian Education. The children of the church had expressed a desire to find gifts they could afford to give their family members for Christmas, and Ms. Prichard also wanted them to better understand the Christian meaning for giving gifts at Christmas. She hoped they would learn empathy by being more aware of the great needs of children and families around the world. They decided to hold a market of gifts that would help others. These gifts would be offerings and they could actually know what would be purchased with the “gift.” As a result, more than \$8,000 was sent to several international agencies.

The concept and enthusiasm grew as other groups of concerned people heard of the Alternative Gift Market success, and soon many churches and some colleges had replicated the AGM concept. In 1986, Ms. Prichard recruited a board of directors and completed the non-profit incorporation of **Alternative Gift Markets, Inc.** in California, also recognized as **Alternative Gifts International (AGI)**. In 2003, the offices were moved from California to Wichita, Kansas.

What has become known to many as the AGI catalog has always been “My Shopping List for the World.” The catalog is published each year with descriptions of projects for which donations are received.

## WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

*“It’s a wonderful opportunity, especially for children to learn about missions and how they can help people.”*

First Presbyterian Church, Akron OH

*“We are very happy to be able to teach some valuable lessons about giving to those in need as well as learning to work with a defined amount of money and prioritizing gifts.”*

Bethel Lutheran School, Cupertino, CA

*“Many people are looking for a less materialistic way to celebrate the holidays & it is a wonderful way to educate students about the world.”*

Bethany College, Lindsborg KS

*“We would encourage all schools to host a fair – it’s the perfect philanthropy project for engaging students, emphasizing a myriad of global causes and cross curricular topics.”*

Wichita East High School, Wichita KS

*“With such a great package of materials, posters, and information sent to you, it’s really easy! My students are very proud of the market that they created.”*

Salt Spring Centre School, Salt Spring BC, Canada

*“We like that we can tailor the gift to the recipient: wheelchairs for the developing world—for a friend whose MS limits her mobility; food pantry stocking in the USA—for a brother who prefers to address the needs on the domestic front.”*

Ann Jones, Groveland, MA

*“Hosting an Alternative Gift Market is a rewarding experience where not only do you help the world and your community financially, but you develop wonderful personal relationships within your church and other churches you work with, achieving a common goal.”*

Southminster Presbyterian Church, Richmond VA