

### When is the best time of year to hold a Market?

Alternative Gift Markets (AGM) are usually held during November and December. Many multi-faith congregations, schools, and organizations are now holding Markets around other important times of the year such as Lenten season, Earth Day, or in association with school projects. We encourage you to select the time of year best suited for your vision. **Plus!** You can also pair your on-the-ground market with a Crowdfund. (see page 3)

### What is the ideal location for a Market?

A large hall, gymnasium, or school multi-purpose room often provides enough space for display tables, chairs, and an open space for people to mill about, gather, shop, and share in the experience. Some Markets also provide food or coffee service, so table seating would be necessary for patrons.

### What time of day is a Market event held?

A typical AGM is open from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Some Markets are open for a few hours on Saturday or Sunday over a 3 or 4 week period. Or just one weekend. Each coordinating team should determine the most suitable time frame for their Market.

### Do all catalog projects need to be represented at Markets?

Market Coordinators select the catalog projects for representation at their respective Markets. AGI encourages Markets to represent all the catalog projects however we understand this may not always be feasible. AGI strives to raise awareness and funds equally for all of our agency projects.

### What is the cost to host a Market?

AGI asks that participating congregations, schools, and organizations purchase the supplies needed to stock the Market. These supplies are at minimal costs and by sharing in this cost, your organization helps AGI control our operating costs. See the Market Registration Order form for prices. Many Markets offset expenses by offering baked goods, food services, and crafts for sale.

### Is AGI available to help me?

We always have staff and volunteers available to answer any questions about preparing for your market. We also have seasoned market hosts ready to help guide you. These may be Market Coordinators in your region, or close, who have first hand experience with coordinating markets.

### What makes AGI different?

Since 1986, AGI has inspired volunteers to launch Alternative Gift Markets throughout the US and Canada, 'bringing the mission to the people' as we like to say. We carefully select causes that inspired volunteers can confidently present and promote to communities, and 90% of all funds raised go directly to support the projects in our catalog.

### How are agencies and projects selected for inclusion in the AGI catalog?

Alternative Gifts International (AGI) maintains contractual agreements with each non-profit agency whose respective project(s) are featured in our annual catalog.

Each agency selected for inclusion in the catalog must:

- 1) Be 501 (c)(3) certified non profit organization
- 2) Send a proposal an active project, with proven results and has been running for 12 months.
- 3) Provide proposals, budgets, annual reports, and supporting documentation.
- 4) Sign an agreement restricting funds to the proposed project only.
- 5) Submit reports on the continued viability of their respective project.

### How are the Market funds distributed?

90% of the funds generated through AGI Markets, online, and from individual donors is distributed directly to the project or cause for which it was raised. AGI retains 10% of all donations for operations and administration.

### What is the history and location of AGI?

Alternative Gifts International was founded in 1980 and incorporated in 1986. Growing from a single Alternative Gift Market in California, AGI has since expanded to include over 300 Markets throughout the United States. Our operation is headquartered in Wichita, Kansas.



# The alternative gift market guide

a guide on planning and hosting a gift market

We invite you and your community to become a part of the life-transforming Alternative Gift Markets. At Alternative Gifts International, we believe hope for the world begins in our local communities. By hosting an Alternative Gift Market (AGM) you can inspire your local congregation, school, or organization to change the way gifts are exchanged, and as a result, **change in the world**. An Alternative Gift Market brings the mission to the people by presenting a variety of vetted causes that promote self-sufficiency for the world's poorest people. Shoppers (donors) visiting Alternative Gift Markets give directly to the causes featured in our annual catalog. When you host an Alternative Gift Market, you are connecting people with those who need help around the globe. And the best part is, by hosting an Alternative Gift Market you can also help a local food pantry or homeless shelter program! Read on and find out how!

### 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.

### WHAT IS AN ALTERNATIVE GIFT MARKET?

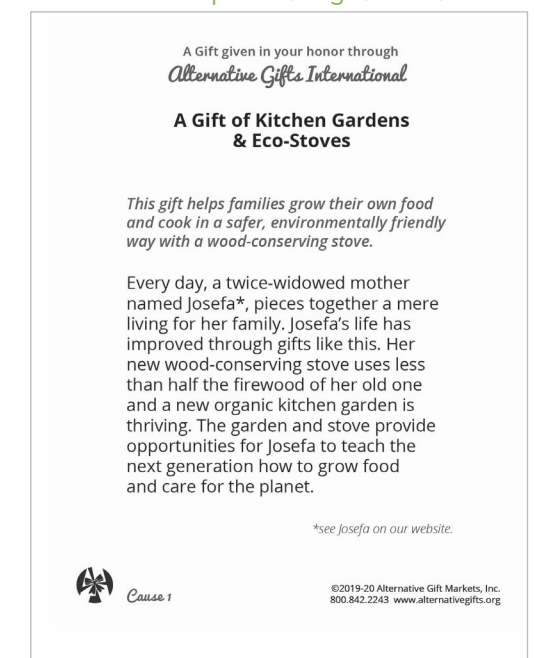
An Alternative Gift Market is an event hosted by churches, schools, homes or businesses where Shoppers (donors) are invited to support causes adopted from our catalog. As an 'alternative' to traditional material gifts, a donor can choose a complimentary greeting card to accompany a gift insert that states the specific gift made to a cause. Both the gift insert and card, may then be presented to the recipient. Each year hundreds of volunteers decide they want to band together and raise money for the causes they are passionate about. The volunteers decide on which projects they will feature at their market and AGI sends them all the things they need to plan and set-up their market. By hosting an Alternative Gift Market the volunteers bring about change in a BIG way to the most impoverished places in the world. Through their efforts, trees are planted, clean drinking water is made available, women have equal rights, the sick are healed, and people can grow food for a sustainable future. Our fellow global citizens need our help and a community gift market gives them HOPE. **Start your market!** Choose your causes by visiting [www.alternativegifts.org](http://www.alternativegifts.org).

The popularity of our Markets during the holiday season is due to the many thousands of people who choose to mark the holiday season by giving people a way to purchase 'alternative gifts' at Gift Markets.

Our gifts, however, are appropriate for year-round occasions and provide joy to the donor, the recipient.

**NEW!** You can also pair your on-the-ground market with a Crowdfund. (see page 3)

### An example of the gift insert



Not actual size

## HOW CAN AN ALTERNATIVE MARKET HELP MY LOCAL COMMUNITY?

Hosting an Alternative Gift Market allows your congregation, school, or organization to nominate a local food pantry or homeless shelter to receive an AGI grant. Each year the AGI project, "Nourish the Hungry & Homeless," raises thousands of dollars which are distributed back into the communities where Markets are held. By hosting a Market, you are helping the world and in turn you can help a food pantry or homeless shelter in your community. For many volunteers, this giving-back benefit is the incentive needed to help recruit and inspire more volunteers. Request our Market Materials Packet for more information about pantry or shelter eligibility guidelines.

## WHO CAN BECOME AN ALTERNATIVE GIFT MARKET COORDINATOR?

Anyone can. Alternative Gift Market Coordinators are inspired volunteers who believe in helping the less fortunate people of the world. They possess empathy for humanity, value social justice, and support preservation of the environment. They view their role as bringing awareness to their community. Market Coordinators connect those people and causes in need with people who care to help.

## WHAT STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN TO HOST A GIFT MARKET?

AGI provides the template for designing your Market and the materials needed to accomplish it. No two will be exactly alike. As the Market Coordinator, you and your team of volunteers have the freedom to design a Market that reflects your vision, ideals, and sense of celebration. All you need initially is a little faith and the desire to help others, but most Market Coordinators generally follow the steps listed:

- 1) Order the Market Materials Pack from AGI.
- 2) Recruit an inspired planning team of three to five members.
- 3) Invite volunteers to join and represent projects featured in the catalog.
- 4) Choose a time and place for the market.
- 5) Promote, promote, promote! (see publicity kit in Market Materials Packet)

**NEW!** You can also pair your on-the-ground market with a Crowdfund. (see page 3)

# 3 Steps to hosting an Alternative Gift Market



Visit our website to find a Market near you!



Alternative Gift Markets, Inc. Office Address: 1020 E. English St. Suite B., Wichita, KS 67211

Mailing Address: PO Box 3810, Wichita KS 67201 Ph: 316.269.0635 Web: www.alternativegifts.org Email: agi@alternativegifts.org

## TYPES OF ALTERNATIVE GIFT MARKETS

### Churches, Temples, Synagogues, all places of worship (all faiths)

- Form a large multi-day or one-day market as a day of service to the world
- Invite other congregations to represent projects from the catalog
- Invite local non-profits and fair trade organizations to join
- Organize food sales and musicians to enhance the shopping experience
- Does your organization have a Facebook page? Create an online fundraiser through the Alternative Gifts International page by clicking on Fundraisers.

### Schools & Colleges

(fraternities, sororities, class projects)

- Learn about world issues: geography, poverty, and the environment
- Provide hands-on projects for every age and skill level
- Foster community & teamwork through service-learning teams
- Does your school have a Facebook page? Create an online fundraiser through the Alternative Gifts International page by clicking on Fundraisers.

### Catalog Markets

- Display several AGI Catalogs and invite people to give
- Set up a display table in your church, school, or business
- Display catalogs in corporate lunch rooms
- Does your organization have a Facebook page? Create an online fundraiser through the Alternative Gifts International page by clicking on Fundraisers.

### Service Group Market

- Choose projects for a fundraiser (car wash, trade show, special event, etc.)
- Plan a fundraising challenge for a specific cause at your school, congregation, or workplace
- Represent AGI at women's fairs, community festivals, Earth Day celebrations
- Do you have a Facebook page? Create an online fundraiser through the Alternative Gifts International page by clicking on Fundraisers.

### Corporate & Employer Matching

- Invite employers to match employee giving
- Provide employees with a copy of the catalog to choose a gift
- Set a fundraising goal and hang posters
- Display catalogs in bookstores, coffee houses, and music venues
- Does company have a Facebook page? Create an online fundraiser through the Alternative Gifts International page by clicking on Fundraisers.

### Crowdfund Market

(online fundraiser)

- Employers, Students, Congregations can set up a personalized Crowdfund page at [www.alternativegifts.org/giving/crowdfunding](http://www.alternativegifts.org/giving/crowdfunding)
- Celebrate with a Crowdfund: Birthdays, Anniversaries, Company Milestones, Graduation, are all great occasions to create an online fundraiser. Plus, it's easy and convenient!
- Just visit the crowdfund link above, choose your cause(s) and then in a few minutes, create a personalized page to share on social media or via email to invite others to support your selected causes. You can also pair your crowdfund with your on-the-ground market.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**When should I start planning a market?** Large multi-organizational Markets start planning 6 months in advance. It is wise to allow at least 2 to 3 months of planning time, but a Market can be organized in a few weeks. You can register your market and order your materials anytime after Aug 1 at [www.alternativegifts.org/Register](http://www.alternativegifts.org/Register) a Market.

**How should a market be organized?** You can be as creative as you want to be! As the hosting group/organization, you can go solo or invite several other churches/groups from the community to join and plan the Market. Each participating congregation chooses one or two causes to represent from the catalog. AGI supplies posters and promotional items to help you promote the event. Also, consider asking musicians and artists to perform at your Market and if you wish, use the back of the posters to engage children and to teach about the importance of giving.