

BEST PRACTICES

Best Practices #009: Chapter Store Heading: Meetings



The Bay Area Woodturners operates a store during chapter meetings. The store provides attendees with good quality consumable items at a discount and also generates money for the chapter.

The chapter purchases woodturning consumables such as CA glue and sandpaper in bulk at wholesale prices (often over the Internet). The chapter seeks out items and brands that members have identified as desirable, but difficult to find or expensive in small quantities. About 20 different items are handled (CA glue and sandpaper are each counted as one item although there is variety within these items).

Chapter members repack the items into retail portions using zip-lock plastic bags also purchased at wholesale and in bulk. The sale price is usually near the midpoint between wholesale and retail (based on the chapter's review of woodworking catalogs). This generates a profit for the chapter and a savings for the buyer. The store manager, an appointed position, oversees the store operations. The manager has four assistants who serve as cashier and handle the setup and tear down of the merchandise at meetings. Items are stored and displayed in clear plastic bins to avoid handling. The plastic bins are subdivided so that only one item is located in each cell. Each cell has a reorder level and a reorder list is prepared at each meeting based on a physical inspection. The store manager places all orders. Orders must be approved by the chapter treasurer beforehand. Payment is made using a chapter debit card to avoid having to handle cash and the hassle of personal reimbursement.

Between meetings, the inventory is stored in a locked closet at the senior center where the chapter meets. Twice a year, the store manager conducts an inventory. Since inventory shrinkage is very small, no effort is made to reconcile orders, inventory and sales (too much work).

The chapter has a state resale license. The store manager documents purchases, sales tax paid (if any) and sales. Once a year in accordance with state law, the chapter treasurer pays sales tax owed. For 2004, the chapter budgeted \$3,600 for purchases and \$4,800 for revenue. The chapter expects to realize the difference of \$1,200 as 'profit' (minus sales tax owed). Meeting attendees are expected to realize about \$1,200 in annual savings.

Submitted By: Steve Miller, Bay Area Woodturners
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