



trendspotting.....

The Toy Fair Report



by Lisa Orman

There's a tremendous amount of anticipation before and during American International Toy Fair. So much money, creativity, time and energy go into prepping for it, traveling to New York, and being there. Vendors pour their hearts and souls into creating their booths because the outcome of Toy Fair can make or break them for the year. Buyers approach the show with excitement, curiosity, and a desire to be delightfully surprised. Smart storeowners arm themselves with detailed analyses of the previous year – especially fourth quarter – along with lists of items and categories that sold well.

This year, it all paid off for both parties. All 19 of my vendor clients who exhibited at the show, and one e-commerce client, reported a strong, upbeat show on all counts. Other friends in the business and media contacts reported the same thing. What a relief!

We attended “Rethinking the Gender and Toys Bias” conference and picked up some fascinating insights about how toys such as ride-on cars, games and science kits, are marketed toward boys or girls. Three cheers for science companies like The Young Scientists Club. Its Magic School Bus science kits featuring Ms. Frizzle give girls the message that serious science is fun and cool for them, too. Afterwards, as we walked the aisles, we noticed many companies who could rethink their gender biases in terms of packaging and marketing, and even product content (why do “girl” science kits have to make bubble bath and lip gloss?).