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THE MICHAELS COMPANIES

Survey Says Homemade Holidays Ahead

Consumer poll by Michaels guides the retailer's holiday strategy

IRVING, Texas, Oct. 30 /PRNewswire/ -- An online poll conducted for Michaels Stores, Inc., says more holiday shoppers plan to spend their money on homemade gifts while cutting back in some of the season's most popular categories, including electronics, toys and travel.

Fifty-eight percent of respondents in the survey of over 1000 people stated they were more likely to make gifts this year versus last year, and 41 percent said handmade gifts were the best use of their holiday shopping dollars this year. Meanwhile, 59 percent said they were either likely or very likely to reduce spending on travel, 57 percent said they would spend less on electronics and 41 percent would spend less on toys.

"Clearly, our customers are more likely to enjoy their holidays at home and are looking for ideas for giving personalized gifts from the heart," said Michaels' Chief Marketing Officer Stuart Aitken. "We are making sure that we provide inspiration and ideas to help our customers have a wonderful, festive holiday on any budget."

On November 2, Michaels will launch a holiday gift and decor idea website at WhereCreativityHappens.com that will feature a series of how-to videos with Michaels' creative expert Jo Pearson. She will demonstrate techniques for making the holidays easy with unique personalized gifts and affordable holiday decor.

Throughout the holiday season, all 1000+ Michaels stores will also host free weekly holiday workshops where customers can come in and work alongside Michaels craft experts to make beautiful wreaths, centerpieces, gift baskets, ornaments and more.

"About 42 million U.S. households craft for the November - December gift giving season," explained Craft & Hobby Association CEO Steve Berger. "This year with the economic crunch we anticipate that even more people who may not have considered making gifts in the past will be turning to crafting and creative leaders like Michaels to help them learn new skills and save money this year."

"With a little creativity, our customers will find that they can have a very memorable and special holiday season without spending so much," said Aitken. "We think people will be surprised at how much fun they can have making gifts and holiday decorations with their own hands."

About Michaels

Michaels Stores, Inc. is the world's largest specialty retailer of arts, crafts, framing, floral, wall decor, and seasonal merchandise for the hobbyist and do-it-yourself home decorator. As of October 24, 2008, the Company owns and operates over 1000 Michaels stores in 49 states and Canada and 164 Aaron Brothers stores.

Media Contact: Kristen Kauffman or Holly Scimeca
(817) 329-3257

kristen@spmcommunications.com

holly@spmcommunications.com

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