

## *Your Bookstore As An Event Venue*

by **Stephanie Bond**

People are always looking for unique places to hold events. You and your staff are already versed in hosting autographings, storytellings, and other in-store events—why not host events for other groups and organizations to introduce new customers to your store? Let the group provide people and refreshments, you provide space, unique props, and a great atmosphere!

Hosting parties and stand-up events is a great way to increase business during slow traffic times, or off-season. With one table and limited seating you could host household/bridal showers, children's birthday parties, business networking events, wine-tasting clubs, travel clubs, nature (bird-watching) clubs, and singles mixers, just to name a few possibilities. The advantage to the event organizer is a free, interesting, convenient place to meet, and the advantage to you is potential customers with specific areas of interest. You can plan displays of books and other items to cater to the milling crowd. You might even want to offer discounts the night of the event.

How can you get the word out about your bookstore as an event venue? Start with family and friends. Also, put up notices in your store and put flyers in customers' bags. Plus check the newspapers for events and club meetings, then call the organizers and offer up your store at a potential meeting location in the future.

Department stores, clothing stores and restaurants have realized the advantage to hosting non-retail events in their stores. But think of it—everyone loves books, and you have books to match every interest. Hosting events in your bookstore is a natural fit! ~**SBond**

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