

GANDER TIMES

GANDERGROUP™

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND MERCHANDISING INSIGHTS

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DOING THE RIGHT THING IS WORTH IT

WEIGHING THE VALUE OF PROFIT AGAINST CORE PRINCIPLES

Making lofty purpose statements and claiming ethical business practices are easy to do until volatile marketplace conditions force tough decisions. But, when is it okay to increase prices, lay-off employees or cut back on services?

The recent trade war with China, which some economists suggest will affect up to 50% of US imports, ever rising interest rates, and a turbulent stock market have challenged US companies to ask such questions, and perhaps, rightfully so. The increase in cost of goods hits businesses of all sizes. That expense can create a domino-effect which has a lasting impact on entire industries but more importantly, it diminishes consumer confidence.

Gander Group is no different. As an international merchandiser and product developer, the recent set of tariffs have strained resources in two primary areas: plastic luggage and small electronics. Yet, although they could follow the trend of some competitors, Gander Group has chosen to avoid price increases by absorbing costs, finding alternatives, and therefore maintaining a fair cost structure its partners can rely upon.

Gander Group CFO/COO Bruce Batcheller explains, "Our core values are to be thoughtful, genuine and wise. We believe that financial transparency and maintaining our partners' profitability produce lasting mutual success stories."

As Unilever CEO Paul Polman told the *Financial Times*, "I discovered a long time ago that if I focus on doing the right thing for the long term to improve the lives of consumers and customers all over the world, the business results will come."



WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU'RE EXPECTING.... THE VERY BEST FROM THE YEAR AHEAD

A MESSAGE FROM CEO JOSH BLAKE

In 2018, Gander Group saw significant growth in a variety of ways; we added 20+ members to our growing family, successfully executed four toy drives with our partners, and debuted our promotional products website, *TheDailyPromo.com*. We secured partnerships with Hell's Kitchen™, kathy ireland® Worldwide and Mrs. Fields™, while enhancing our capabilities in merchandising, product development and manufacturing. High-quality product and retail-ready packaging created quite the buzz for us as we added hundreds of exciting programs focused on offering new on-trend services. In 2019, we will continue to align solid strategy with our partners in an effort to grow brand loyalty and larger ROI. I speak on behalf of our entire team when I say we are grateful for both your friendships and partnerships. Happy New Year!

DID YOU KNOW?

Manufacturing is a leading cause for the rebound from the "great recession," accounting for 29% of total economic growth in America since 2009.

REASON FOR THE SEASON

Gander Group partnered with kathy ireland® Worldwide in support of the 12th Annual Christmas Spirit Coat and Toy Drive organized by Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway, and its President/CEO, Timothy J. Rooney. The combination of efforts created the most successful event to date.

"For me and our entire organization, no part of this season has been more heartwarming than the expressions of joy from the children who received these coats and toys," says Josh Blake, CEO of Gander Group. "We are inspired by the continued generosity of the community and look forward to doing our part in the years to come."

