



## **BUILD-A-BEAR WORKSHOP® IS TURNING BUYERS INTO BEAR-EVANGELISTS, ACCORDING TO NEW BOOK**

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ST. LOUIS, MO (January 21, 2003)-While some companies rely on advertising bucks to market themselves, Build-A-Bear Workshop® continues to gain popularity at breakneck pace through its most valuable asset: its customers. And it may soon gain even more popularity in the newly published book, **CREATING CUSTOMER EVANGELISTS: How Loyal Customers Become a Volunteer Sales Force** (Dearborn Trade Publishing, December 2002), which uses Build-A-Bear Workshop as a model company that successfully markets itself through word-of-mouth advertising.

"We feel very privileged to be included in **CREATING CUSTOMER EVANGELISTS**," says Maxine Clark, Build-A-Bear Workshop founder and Chief Executive Bear. "The people who come into our store each day to make a bear, or a bunny or kitty, are our true evangelists. We consider our customers our Guests and very often our Guests become our friends as we develop a relationship with them. We know how special this connection is and we don't take it lightly. Our responsibility to our Guests is the core of our success-it's where the fun and the business come together.

According to authors Ben McConnell and Jackie Huba, Build-A-Bear Workshop creates customer "evangelists," or advocates, because it focuses on four core items: a memorable experience, customer feedback, a sense of community, and its fast and responsive event-driven marketing. McConnell and Huba are the founders of Wabash & Lake, a marketing consulting firm that helps create global communities of evangelists for client companies.

**CREATING CUSTOMER EVANGELISTS** provides the framework for building a strong force of passionate salespeople by deepening customer relationships. The new 240-page book is available at neighborhood and online booksellers or by calling 1-800-245-BOOK (2665).

Build-A-Bear Workshop® is an interactive, entertainment mall-based retailer that invites Guests of all ages to create their own customized stuffed animals. The company currently operates 109 stores in 34 states coast-to-coast and plans to have over 150 locations by the end of 2003 including a very successful e-commerce business. Build-A-Bear Workshop is the innovator and leader of the make-your-own-stuffed animal concept for mall-based retailing. The premier store opened in Saint Louis Galleria in October 1997. For more information, call (888) 560-BEAR or visit the company's award-winning web site at [www.buildabear.com](http://www.buildabear.com).

To schedule an interview with Maxine Clark, or authors Ben McConnell and Jackie Huba, please contact Jill Saunders at 314-423-8000 or [jills@buildabear.com](mailto:jills@buildabear.com).