

Ideas abundant

Retail confectioners meet in Michigan for fall regional



Small toy soccer ball is packaged with moulded chocolate ball as small gift for boy or girl.

— Henry's Candy



Chocolate pizza featuring candy crabs promotes a regional specialty.

— Moore's Candies



Tours of area candy shops, seminars and informal sharing of tips and tricks became a learning experience for approximately 80 members of the Retail Confectioners International (RCI) in Traverse City, Michigan, for the fall regional gathering.

The Candy Clinic, a session where all are welcome to share ideas, is held at each RCI gathering. Some of the concepts shown and shared are described here.

HALLOWEEN IDEAS

Alice's Kandy & Korn gives free caramel apples to all kids in costume at Halloween.

Bon Bons Chocolatier gives out a bag with milk and dark chocolate "spiders" to children at Halloween to enhance goodwill. In addition, the shop updated their packaging recently with a hot-stamped logo. It looks more expensive but isn't really.

Enstrom Candies used surplus clear boxes they had on hand for Halloween items; they packaged their own chocolate products within and tied them with fall colors.

Malley's Chocolates* urges retailers to think triangles for displays. Put base-color paper on an angle and build small and large patterns of triangles from there. Also, bagged and grouped stuff makes it easier for folks in a hurry: make it "ready to go." A quick idea for a parent gift for a college student: caramel corn, licorice, etc., packaged with plastic Halloween dish.

Old Kentucky Candies, Inc. offers Halloween pretzels which are dipped in orange coating, then bottomed in chocolate for a two-toned treat.

OTHER DISPLAY AND PRODUCT CONCEPTS

Callie's Candy Kitchen has a baby-related section in their shop; to highlight it they use ceramic booties and pastel colors. Confections displayed include chocolate cigars and pacifier-shaped baby shower treats made with LifeSavers.

The Chocolate Den demonstrated their idea of a fish stick — chocolate moulded in a fish shape on a lollipop stick — and their fish and chips treat — chocolate fish packaged with chocolate-dipped potato chips.

Henry's Candy* combines a small toy (car, ball, hockey puck, doll) with a chocolate item (either the same shape or a counterpart) for sale as gifts for children.

Moore's Candies* shared their regional (Maryland) specialty: crabs. The owner showed their crab pizza (drizzled with chocolate and sold in a box), blue crab (hard candy lollipop) and other confections with that theme.

Reid Candy & Nut Shop uses photos of historical sites from the region's archives to create a heritage series of boxes for their assorted chocolates. A store brochure is included in a tourist packet for those who take a trolley tour of their city.

*pictured here



Display tables use a base color and draw the customer's attention with triangular patterns.

— Malley's Chocolates