

MEDIA RELEASE
For Immediate Release

BLAME IT ON SWINE FLU: HAND SANITIZERS RIVAL PENS AS MOST POPULAR
PROMO PRODUCT

TREVOSE, PA - December 16, 2009 - The Advertising Specialty Institute® announced today that hand sanitizers now rival pens as one of the most popular logoed items that companies are giving away to clients and employees.

Indeed, searches of the key words "hand sanitizers" by promotional products distributors via the Advertising Specialty Institute's promotional products database jumped 439% for the period between October 2009 and October 2008. Only searches for pens - which for years have been the best-selling logoed product in the promotional products industry - were higher that period. In addition, searches for sanitizer products of all kinds jumped by triple digits this year.

"Certainly, there's been a dramatic increase in sales of sanitizer sprays, gels and other anti-bacterial products," said Larry Wilhelm, chief executive officer of Custom HBC, one of the many suppliers of customized health and beauty care products for the promotional products field, and the first company to introduce a "Pocket Sprayer™" to the industry in 2005. The \$1 item is now a best-seller, Wilhelm said. "Since May, sales on this item have increased from about 400,000 to 750,000 units a month," he added.

Sales of all logoed sanitizing products surged in early spring, and then again in September, at the start of flu season, Wilhelm said. Sales of flu-related items, like facial tissues, have also increased. H1N1 (also called "swine flu") is a new influenza virus first detected in people in the United States in April 2009. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests that when soap and water are not available, alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers may be used to help prevent the spread of germs.

Wilhelm says sanitizing products aren't just used as promotional giveaways. Increasingly, more human resources departments are buying them for employees to reduce absenteeism caused by illness.

Sales of promotional products were nearly \$20 billion in 2008. Buyers identify such products as the most effective medium among all advertising, next to the Internet, according to a recent study from the Advertising Specialty Institute.

For more information, contact Scott Fuhr, corporate communications director, at sfuhr@asicentral.com.

About ASI

The Advertising Specialty Institute is the largest media and marketing organization serving the advertising specialty industry, with a membership of over 26,000 distributor firms (sellers) and supplier firms (manufacturers) of advertising specialties. Supplier firms use ASI print and electronic resources to market products to over 22,000 ASI distributor firms. Distributor firms use ASI print and electronic resources, which contain nearly every product in the industry from more

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