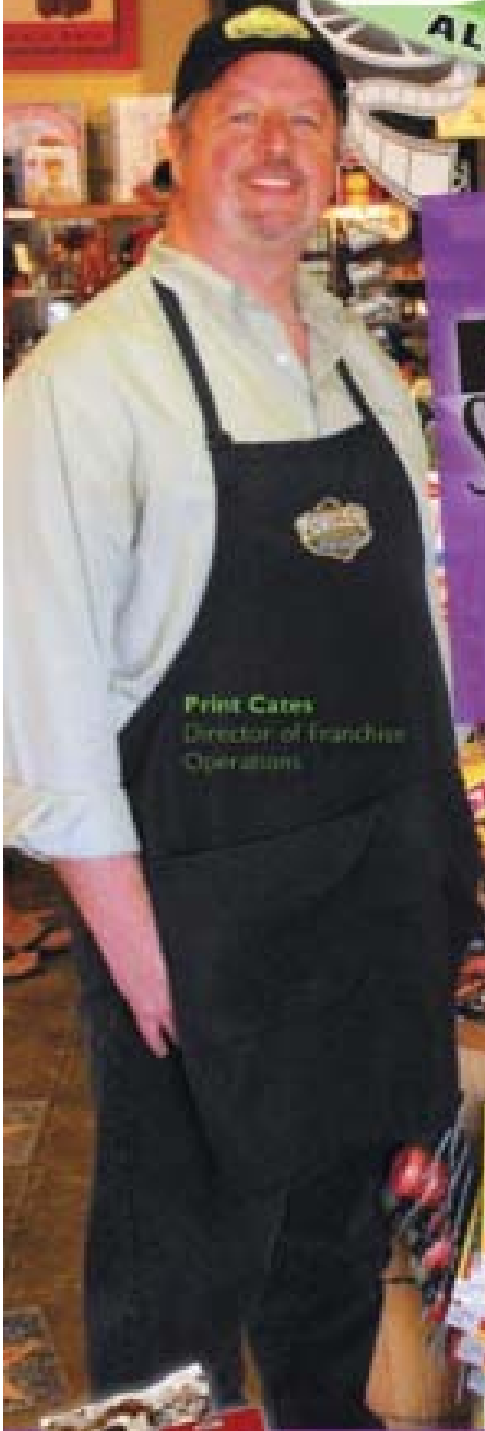


PROFESSIONAL Candy BUYER

ALL ABOUT SWEETS & SNACKS



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Sweet TWEETS



Candy companies and retailers sweeten the social net by joining Twitter, Facebook, and MySpace.

By Liz Wheeler

Surf Sweets has more than 530 Facebook fans and more than 5,450 Twitter followers. The company makes gummies that are virtually allergen-free with no corn syrup, gluten, or artificial colors in a nut-free facility. The company's core consumers are generally mothers of 5- to 13-year-olds.

Clearly, Facebook and Twitter play a big role in Surf Sweets' online marketing, but the company has found the blogger network to be invaluable to its products' promotion. The company sent samples of its products to between 50 and 100 bloggers. "We've gotten a ton of reviews from the blogging community, especially a lot of moms [which was] really, really helpful for us in terms of awareness of our product," says company President Bert Cohen.

"For us and the nature of our company—a new entrepreneurial, socially-conscious business—a lot of these new technologies made sense; they're cost effective, don't require a lot of paper resources," Cohen says. In addition, "we just find that our core consumers are

spending a lot of time on Facebook, on Twitter, and a lot of time reading blogs. For us, it's the best route to go right now."

While Cohen says it's "hard to put an exact ROI" on his company's online involvement, "looking at overall numbers, it's definitely having an overall positive impact," he says.

Surf Sweets