

Offer Gift Certificates and Grow Your Business

Once considered the lazy shopper's present, gift certificates and gift cards now make up more than 11% of holiday budgets, according to a 2004 survey by the National Retail Federation. Today's hurried and finicky consumer not only enjoys these convenient gifts, but prefers them. In fact, 50.2% of consumers polled by the NRF said they hoped to receive them during the holiday season.

Great as they are for customers, gift certificates are even better for your business. Benefits include:

- **Extra purchases** by customers who might otherwise hesitate to buy for another person.
- **New customers**, as gift recipients arrive to redeem their certificates – and keep coming back for additional goods or services.
- **Fewer product returns.**
- **Immediate cash** without providing an immediate good or service, effectively serving as an interest-free loan until redemption.

Virtually any product or service can be enhanced by a gift certificate program, and NEBS offers a large array of [personalized gift certificates](#). As you embark on your own program, here are some points to consider.

Personalizing Pays

Blank gift certificates are available everywhere, including office-supply stores. But what does a generic certificate say about your business – or the person giving it?

Your certificate must be an attractive gift people are proud to hand to their friends or loved ones. So it's almost impossible to overstate the importance of expert personalization, quality materials and a design that fits your company image.

NEBS gift certificates are personalized free with your business name, address and phone number or other key points. Not only does this make it easy for people to find you, but it offers protection against forgery. You can even add your logo for a consistent company image, or choose one of our hundreds of [free designs](#) for extra graphic impact.

For added effect, NEBS offers a variety of special touches: heavy paper stock for luxurious feel, silver or gold foil embossing for dazzle and prestige, matching envelopes and a wide range of colorful designs for any image ... fun, fashionable, lighthearted or distinguished.

Managing Your Gift Certificate Program

What kind of certificate is best for you? Options include:

- Booked certificates in handy tear-out sets of 50 or 100.
- Individual certificates with detachable stubs for details such as the recipient, purchaser, value and date of purchase.
- Spiral-bound certificates for consolidated recordkeeping.
- One-write certificates that record transactions automatically.

To help you record all gift certificates purchased, NEBS offers certificates that are numbered sequentially. Each time you make a sale, simply record the number of the certificate, the name of the purchaser, the dollar amount and the date of sale.

Later, when the certificate is used, be sure to check it against the accompanying log and record it as "Redeemed." This prevents confusion and duplication of certificates, and allows secure replacement of a certificate if lost.

Promoting Your Program

Before you can sell gift certificates, you have to let customers and passers-by know about them. That's why every NEBS gift certificate order includes:

- "Gift Certificates Available" display signs that can be placed at high-traffic areas such as checkout counters or display racks.
- A matching door/window decal to attract passers-by.

You'll find that gift certificates are typically an easy sell, thanks to their convenience and flexibility. So be sure to mention them to the people you do business with. They're the gift that keeps on giving – not only to customers, but to you!