

Experience This!

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excitations n. Beach Boys parlance (as in, “She’s giving me excitations”); an experiential gift-giving company.

There is a connection between the two. “That was the origin of the name,” says Kim AuBuchon, COO of the innovative, two-year-old company, with a laugh. “It was unbelievably hard to find a ‘.com’ that wasn’t taken!”

AuBuchon and her two partners had been in the high-tech world for 20 years—while it was still booming—and were looking for something new and exciting to do, “something to put a smile on someone’s face,” she says.

The result was Excitations, a Virginia-based company that offers a terrific variety of experiences that are perfect for showing appreciation to clients and speakers, rewarding team members and creating an incentive program.

The gifts range from a stock-car racing experience and sky diving to a spa treatment and a picnic lunch in the vineyard for two. Prices start at \$50. “There’s obviously something for everyone at the top end,” AuBuchon says, “but most are fun things to do at midrange.”

In addition to ordering a specific experience, you can personalize the selection with one of the Circle Choice Gifts, which allow recipients to choose an activity that appeals to them (you pick the price category). This works particularly well for environments with attendees of various ages, abilities and interests.

“We’re not an event-planning company,” AuBuchon says, but “we’ve paired our experiences with the theme of a reward or incentive program or meeting.” For example, they’ve done a weekend in a Ferrari for a group of auto dealers and a star-gazing opportunity for a “shoot for the stars” client event. “We have a lot of ideas and we’ll work with you,” she adds.

Making your selection is easy: log onto excitations.com, where you can order online, or talk to their business department about customizing an experience that suits your needs. The pretty gift



box, which encloses a photo of the experience and the details, can be customized with your logo, as well. (Redeeming the gift is equally easy—just three steps and you're done.)

Currently, the organization has seven locations countrywide, including Los Angeles and San Francisco in the West. "But we're undergoing a pretty rapid rollout," she says. "We're working on San Diego right now." For the remainder, think Seattle, Denver, Phoenix, Las Vegas...

We might add a few adjectives to that definition of "excitations": exotic, expressive, extraordinary. In other words, memories with good vibrations.