

## Business is Heating Up HotSheet

It's heating up outside and summer anticipation is infecting business owners and school kids alike. As entrepreneurs prepare for the summer, Business.com is noting spikes in interest for summer-oriented business needs ranging from slush machines to koozies.

Business.com's newly released "Lemonade Stand Index" tracks B2B topics associated with all the common entrepreneurial needs of running a summer-centric, consumer-oriented business.

**Promotional koozies ranked 2,020 for the month of April. Just two months earlier, it was ranked 33,511 — a jump by 1,728%**

Out of the 65,000 business topics available to search on Business.com's proprietary B2B taxonomy, items such as commercial ice machines and commercial coolers have rocketed up the ranks of popularity. For instance, in April, commercial ice machines rose to the rank of 114 and commercial coolers to 186. Other hot contenders? What else, but bottled water — rising in popularity to 68.

"This is a common phenomenon associated with seasonality," states Lane Soelberg, VP of Marketing and Consumer Insights for Business.com. "B2B trends often break well ahead of B2C demand. As businesses

prepare for summer activity, they first make investments in products and services within the B2B marketplace."

For companies to ride the seasonal wave successfully, it takes strategy and planning. Just ask Bret Bonnet, co-founder of Quality Logo Products (QLP) of Oswego, Ill. Bonnet founded (QLP) in 2003 with college friend Michael Wenger and the two see a "huge surge" in business during the summer months. Bonnet learned that in order to meet his client's summer needs, he had to adjust employee contracts.

"June to August is our busiest season. I don't want any employees taking vacation time — I need every warm body in the office. In fact, it's in the employee agreement to not take vacation time in summer. I reward my employees with great vacation time that they can take at any other time," explains Bonnet.

Bonnet's business clients often order corporate branded products like promotional koozies and coolers for company picnics and summer events, like the Indy 500.

Another strategy for small businesses affected



"In 1956, my family decided to also sell baked goods and candy. The Cincinnati store has a bakery and candy shop that does a big business during Halloween and Christmas — huge sales for Valentine's Day and Easter. By then, it's back to our main business of ice-cream. It's a carefully woven application of products to bring customers in year-round," explains Graeter, who runs the business with his two brothers.

Graeter's advice for small business owners with a summer-oriented business model? Try to offer a few other products that sell year-round, but continue to focus your marketing on your main summer product — as that will most-likely always be the bulk of your business.

### Categories Experiencing Breakout Growth for the Summer Season



by seasonal shifts is to carry other products with year-round appeal, according to Richard Graeter, owner of Graeter's Ice Cream, a family-run business since 1870.

### THE BUSINESS.COM HOT LIST

Based on the increase of searches and click through to clients on the Business.com Network, below are the Hot List companies poised to ride the summer wave.

- [www.qualitylogoproducts.com](http://www.qualitylogoproducts.com) • **Quality Logo Products** • Provides a variety of custom can coolers, including bottle koozies and more.
- [www.bushrefrigeration.com](http://www.bushrefrigeration.com) • **Bush Refrigeration** • Provider of quality refrigeration equipment including coolers, chillers and display cases for floral shops, grocery stores, bakeries and restaurants.
- [www.euphoriasmoothies.com](http://www.euphoriasmoothies.com) • **Euphoria Smoothies** • Franchise smoothie and juice bar.
- [www.polarpod.com](http://www.polarpod.com) • **Polar Pod** • Provider of walk-in coolers and freezers.
- [www.sevelusa.com](http://www.sevelusa.com) • **Sevel USA** • Offers high quality ice cream/gelato display cases as well as deli, wine and pastry display cases.
- [www.acitydiscount.com](http://www.acitydiscount.com) • **A City Discount** • Food service equipment provider offering commercial ice machine and other equipment.
- [www.dtpxpress.com](http://www.dtpxpress.com) • **DisplayXpress** • Provides 75dpi billboard print quality and 24 hour turnaround capabilities.
- [www.branders.com](http://www.branders.com) • **Branders** • Sells promotional items with the ability to view logos on over 4,000 items.