



# brandwise bulletin

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW

March 2021

Volume 3

Volume 3 of the Brandwise Bulletin is officially here! During this edition we'll have a focus on closing 2020 and introducing you to all the ways we opened the first quarter of 2021.

## Closing 2020 and Opening the First Quarter of 2021

Todd Litzman, CEO & President of Brandwise, said it best in our internal yearly update so we're going to kick things off with an opening quote from him:

“

Let us start off by acknowledging that 2020 has been the most bizarre year any of us has lived through. That said, there are many silver linings to this past year, including the stories that will be told for countless generations to come.

So, what happened besides Covid-19 in 2020? Plenty! At least at Brandwise.

Just as we were finally settling into our newly remodeled office, we had to shut it down and move everyone home. The result – a very productive year!

”

We welcomed new team members during 2020, including Lisa Rickard, Tonya Jantzen, Shane Easley-Tracy, Alex Tallon, Ari Lowenstein, and Kelly Bristol.

We hosted - wait for it... **ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN WEBINARS**, including our *first ever* Virtual User's Conference: Brandwise Evolved 2020 and Virtual Sales Rep Festival!

### Brandwise Evolved Virtual Conference - October 27th - 29th, 2020

#### Session One: Brandwise Annual Update (Recording)

This one-hour session was comprised of information regarding the Brandwise Ecosystem (powered by all of you), how it's evolved over the past year, recognized many of our stakeholders for all their hard work, and gave you a sneak peek of what to look forward to in the future! Hosted by Todd & Jannetta Litzman, Ari Lowenstein, Kalleigh Easley-Tracy, Ron Petroff, Lisa Rickard, and Dillon Womack – this session is full of all the stats you've been looking for and a fun announcement from Kalleigh.

#### Session Two: Play Innovation (Recording)

This session lasted just over an hour but it's the update you've been looking for regarding our flagship order capture system used by over 4000 salespeople across the country. Led by Dillon Womack and our iOS team, this session covered some of the "greatest hits" that launched each month in 2020 and provided you with a glimpse for what to expect in 2021!

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## **Brandwise Evolved Virtual Conference - October 27th - 29th, 2020 (cont'd)**

### **Session Three: Reach Innovation (Recording)**

This one-hour session was hosted by Lisa Rickard, Todd Litzman, Iris Gagne, and Kalleigh Eisley-Tracy to review why so many transitioned to this new platform, how to get started on the new Reach Marketplace, and the road map for where we're headed next! We saved all the talk about the newest marketing functionalities that this platform will provide for you toward the very end.

### **Session Four: A big announcement (Recording)**

The Brandwise Global Marketplace, aka bigmap, has been in the making for years and this highly requested session blew us away with over an hour's worth of Q&A! This big-reveal session was led by Todd Litzman and Ari Lowenstein to share how bigmap will strengthen and protect Sales Reps, Agencies, Suppliers, Associations, and Retailers.

## **Sales Rep Festival - December 28th - 30th, 2020**

This virtual festival was envisioned as an opportunity for Sales Reps to pick up some valuable tips, techniques and ideas in preparation for 2021.

### **What's new on Play? (Recording)**

2020 has seen many advancements in Play. Do you know them all? Learn more about what we covered during this 45-minute session!

### **Vision for iPad and Vision 360 (Recording)**

An opportunity for Sales Reps to learn how to use this tool that puts valuable insights at your fingertips! Miss the live session? Catch the recording now!

### **Virtual Selling Tools (Recording)**

Many of the Brandwise tools that you use every day are filled with features to help you work remotely. Are you using them? Watch the recording to find out.

### **bigmap (Recording)**

One of the most anticipated sessions that answered what every Sales Rep questioned about the global marketplace. Learn all about how it's built to strengthen and protect your work by checking out the recording.

### **Reach and the Power of Brandwise Passport (Recording)**

Learn more about this exciting moment in the evolution of the Brandwise Ecosystem and what a Reach Marketplace has to offer you! There's a reason 35% of our customers have started to make the switch... watch the recording to learn more about why.

### **General Session Topics**

Included live discussions on In-Person Sales Calls, Virtual Meetings, Wholesale Selling through Social Media, and Perfecting your Home Office. We did not record these sessions.

## Closing 2020 and Opening the First Quarter of 2021 (cont'd)

As our *not-so-subtle* announcements regarding Play mentioned through these virtual sessions, the iOS team rolled out a bunch of new features for Play for iPad, including: Supplier Dashboard, Vision for iPad 360, integrated Customer Order History, New Product Search Screen, One App to rule them all [aka no more side-by-sides], Customer Credit Card Management, Tear Sheet Updates, and an overhaul of the Product Information Screen – just to name a few!

The Brandwise 2.0 team also rolled out more features for Brandwise Passport, Transit, and launched Reach 2.0! The first live site was Collective Home followed by our very first Association Marketplace – The Museum Store Association. We have three more Associations that are live or preparing to go live in early 2021, including: the Canadian Gift Association, the Greeting Card Association, and the International Housewares Association. We also have about 40 more Reach 2.0 Marketplaces for Agencies and Suppliers that have launched or are preparing to launch during Spring 2021!

And as if that is not enough, we introduced the concept of bigmap, the Brandwise Global Marketplace, currently undergoing preparations for its big debut.

Lastly in 2021, if these past few weeks serve as any indication, we are not slowing down any time soon! We’ve already released more exciting new features with the help of our Brandwise 2.0 team and also welcomed several more people to our team, including Neal Cynkus, Mark Johnson, Colby Iannazzo, Molly Gregerson, Craig Hayes, and Brenda Miller.

## Brandwise Ecosystem Data: July – December 2019 vs. 2020

### Focus on Data

Total Sales: Brandwise manages over \$2B of wholesale orders annually giving us a unique view into what’s happening within our industry. For this issue, we’ve pulled data for the second half of 2020 for total orders, total sales and unique retailers. From across the Brandwise Ecosystem, here are some statistics that we think you’ll find interesting:

Brandwise Ecosystem 2019	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan '20
Order Dollars 2019	\$262,921,564	\$199,716,146	\$173,622,858	\$196,336,714	\$146,513,593	\$103,137,776	\$332,066,145
Unique Retailers 2019	97,998	87,985	81,676	93,375	80,563	60,174	159,249
Brandwise Ecosystem 2020	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan '21
Order Dollars 2020	\$187,118,028	\$230,976,705	\$202,201,018	\$195,093,295	\$149,024,078	\$115,348,707	\$327,139,193
Unique Retailers 2020	67,703	78,858	76,586	81,952	71,315	56,843	138,174
Brandwise Ecosystem 20 v 19	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
Order Dollar Total	(29%)	16%	16%	(1%)	2%	12%	(2%)
Unique Retailers	(31%)	(10%)	(6%)	(12%)	(11%)	(6%)	(13%)

Here are a few takeaways:

- With trade show attendance at an all-time low, July continued the difficult trend of the first half of 2020.
- August showed a considerable rebound as Retailers placed orders for new products and placed reorders.
- In general, the trend over the past few years has been slightly fewer Retailers placing larger orders. This trend has continued through the second half and into 2021.
- January was down in terms of the number of Retailers due to decreased attendance at shows, but flat in terms of overall sales.
- February's initial numbers are very strong showing Retailers placing reorders and a surge in orders for new product. We forecast an increase of 8% over last February.

Online Sales: Brandwise provides Reach Marketplaces, our B2B platform, to over 100 Agencies, Suppliers and Associations. While they vary greatly in size and traffic, all of them are seeing a dramatic rise in activity, sales dollars, and number of users. Here's some data that we can share with you from the Top 30 of these Reach Marketplaces:

Top 30 Reach Sites 2019	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan '20
Dollar Total 2019	\$2,997,390	\$3,773,970	\$3,304,033	\$3,825,109	\$3,830,185	\$2,277,171	\$3,684,885
Dollars per Order 2019	\$803	\$866	\$797	\$766	\$740	\$728	\$892
Top 30 Reach Sites 2020	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan '21
Dollar Total 2020	\$5,030,779	\$6,969,220	\$7,482,018	\$7,670,121	\$6,485,084	\$5,088,441	\$10,929,444
Dollars per Order 2020	\$886	\$946	\$973	\$908	\$845	\$937	\$1,219
Top 30 Reach Sites 20 v 19	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan '20 v '21
Dollar Total 20 v 19	68%	85%	126%	101%	69%	123%	197%
Dollars per Order 20 v 19	10%	9%	22%	19%	14%	29%	37%

Here are our takeaways:

- The growth that began in June and July increased dramatically over the rest of the year.
- January set new heights and all indications are that February was hot, hot, hot!
- Order size is very healthy and stayed strong over the course of the year
- Additional Data: Unique users were up 108% 2020 vs. 2021.

## Association Marketplace Update

Since our last issue, we're excited to announce that we are working with four industry associations in offering their members and buyers a B2B Marketplace. Each Marketplace is offering the associations their first opportunity to offer virtual commerce to their constituencies and will soon be hosting virtual shows and conferences. Buyers attending those virtual events will be able to place orders with those suppliers in the Marketplace by using an "order now" button.

By this summer, these association marketplaces will be equipped with a new dynamic feature that can deliver orders directly to local territory sales representatives giving retailers the opportunity to work with these experts!



### Canadian Gift Association - CanGift 365

CanGift 365 went live in February in time for their Virtual Show with more than 100,000 products, and more products added daily.

25% of Buyers registered for the Virtual Show got their Brandwise Passports and have been shopping. It's been exciting to see so many orders rolling in! Though the Virtual Show has concluded, buying continues on CanGift 365.

CanGift 365 is open to CanGift Gold Members who are the suppliers.  
Brands on CanGift 365 include:

Bella Flor  
Canadian Art Prints & The Indigenous Collection  
Catherine Lillywhite's  
Elegant Gifts  
Jabco Canada  
Jacqueline Kent – Inner Circle Inc.  
Niagara River Trading  
Old Country Design  
Powder Design Ltd.  
Suzie Blue Canada  
Torre & Tagus Designs Ltd.  
...and many more!



For more information, read the [CanGift 365 Marketplace press release](#).



### **Greeting Card Association – GCA Marketplace**

The partnership with the Greeting Card Association is a great match, as the Brandwise ecosystem already includes over 25% of the GCA's membership. The GCA is currently in its staging phase, a time when suppliers are working on their product files. Thousands of products have already been loaded-in by members who are busy for a go-live date that is forecast for later in March.

The GCA Marketplace is open for member suppliers to sell, and open to all qualified buyers. Once the Marketplace is live, buyers who already have Brandwise Passports may simply request to connect to the GCA Marketplace, and if approved will be able to shop immediately! Buyers without a Passport will create one, and then request to connect. We expect card buyers will be especially excited to shop this focused Marketplace!

Participating companies currently include:

Blue Mountain Arts  
Crown Point Graphics  
Designer Greetings  
Fine Moments  
Good Juju Ink  
Quilling Card  
Umlaut Brooklyn  
Up With Paper  
UWP Luxe  
...and more!



The GCA recently announced that its virtual show, *Noted*, will take place May 20-21.

For more information, read the [GCA Marketplace press release](#).



### **International Housewares Association – Connect COMMERCE**

Our most recent partnership for an Association Marketplace is with the International Housewares Association. Brandwise has strong and long-standing partnerships with dozens of members of the IHA, and establishing this platform is a natural extension of that business.

Connect COMMERCE will integrate with IHA's Connect 365 and help meet the desire of retailers to both discover new products and purchase them directly online.

Connect COMMERCE is open to IHA's supplier members for selling, and to qualified buyers approved by IHA.

Participating companies currently include:

Artovida

Freeheart – Signature Drinkware

India Handicrafts

Lipper International

Maverick Industries

Menna Life

New Air Appliances

Raycop North America

Time Concept

...and many more!

home + housewares  
**connect**  
**COMMERCE**  
IHA'S E-COMMERCE MARKETPLACE

For more information, read the [\*\*announcement about IHA Connect COMMERCE as it appeared in Gift Shop Plus.\*\*](#)



### **Museum Store Association – MSA Marketplace**

The MSA Marketplace is an exclusive, members-only Marketplace. The MSA membership is comprised of both suppliers and buyers!

As you know, the MSA Marketplace was our first to go live! Launched on November 10, 2020, sales were taken the very first day. The MSA Marketplace continues to grow and now has close to 150 suppliers with more than 50,000 items available. We've seen an increase in sales activity since the middle of January and expect the momentum to continue.

MSA supplier members include:

Art & Fable Puzzle Company  
Allport Editions  
David Howell & Company  
Destination PSP  
eeboo  
Italianissimo  
Kamibashi  
Morris Magnets  
New York Puzzle Company  
Peter Pauper Press  
Popcorn Movie Poster Company  
RainCaper  
Schiffer Publishing  
Whitney Howard Designs  
WorldFinds  
...and so many more



The MSA is gearing-up for its virtual conference taking place April 28-29.

For more information, read the [MSA Marketplace press release](#).

We're excited to be working with these great associations and looking forward to working with more associations in the near future! Stay tuned!



## **bigmap**

As the Association Marketplaces go live, we have attracted more than a thousand new buyers who have created Brandwise Passports and started shopping, and hundreds more brands have uploaded products in Reach 2.0! Since the first Marketplace went live on November 10th, some quarter of a million products have been uploaded for buyers to shop. Our work in offering Association Marketplaces is crucial to the foundation of bigmap.

Retailers who get in the habit of shopping these new marketplaces using their Brandwise Passport now will ensure that when Agency or Suppliers stand up their own Reach Marketplace, and when bigmap launches, a critical mass of buyers will already have their Brandwise Passports and know how easy it is to shop on the platform. All of these Marketplaces offer Retailers a robust, easy place to shop across thousands of Brands with the option of involving knowledgeable, trusted salespeople - which will result in better orders and reorders.

## **What's New on Brandwise Passport, Transit, and the Reach Marketplaces?**

### **Brandwise Passport**

Brandwise migrated 50,000 Retailers to their new Brandwise Passport back in June last year, and an additional 4,500 Retailers created their Brandwise Passports by August 2020. With the launch of these Association Marketplaces, and 35% of our Agencies & Suppliers transitioning to the new Reach Marketplace, an additional 22,000 Retailers have created their Brandwise Passports for shopping online bringing the total to over 75,000! Brandwise Passport allows each Retailer, Supplier, Association, and Agency to manage and control their information from one central location. As a result, we've also seen 100% engagement from our Agencies and Associations in the Brandwise Ecosystem in the use of Brandwise Passport and well over 1,500 brands set up on Brandwise Passport.

New Features on Brandwise Passport include:

- Agencies & Associations can edit their Business Information.
- Retailers can edit their Business Information.
- Suppliers can edit their Business Information as well as manage additional critical settings for use on the Reach Marketplaces, including:
  - Update Lifestyle Image. [Learn more.](#)
  - Update Brand Profile. [Learn more.](#)
  - Manage Payment and Shipment Terms for use on Reach Marketplaces. [Learn more.](#)

## Transit

The two most exciting features to make their way into Transit in 2021 include Product Categories, as determined by the Suppliers, and Multiple Currency Codes. Transit now accounts for both US and Canadian pricing during the product file upload process, and the correct pricing is shared with your designated Agencies and Associations, depending on which currencies they accept for use on selling platforms. Simply select which currencies your product file includes using the check boxes on Step 3, and map them to the appropriate fields during Step 4. **Download our latest product file template here** (also available on Transit), and reach out to us if you have additional questions about how to use these new features. *Our Support Team is available Monday - Friday from 6 am - 6 pm Mountain Time via phone at **303.788.9970 x1** or email at **support@brandwise.com**.*

## Reach Marketplace

Our Reach Marketplaces seem to be evolving before our eyes daily, and online sales continue to increase as well. Some new features include:

- Enhanced Search Functionality
- Ability to filter a Brand's products through the use of Categories
- Enhanced Browse-Mode functionality for Suppliers that provides them with access to share their unique brand shopping link, logo, and lifestyle image to promote more engagement on the Reach Marketplaces

Stay tuned and up to date for the next round of updates on the horizon by becoming a Brandwise Insider today!

## 2021 webinars you may have missed!

### Categories are here!! (Recording)

Brandwise has introduced Product Categories for all Reach 2.0 Marketplaces, including Agency and Association Marketplaces.

What does this mean for you? As part of your product upload through Transit, you now have the ability and the opportunity to categorize your products in a myriad of ways using our four-tier sub-category system. Categorize by format, theme, season/holiday, material, or however your customers shop your lines.

Did you miss the live webinar? Catch the recording to learn why this feature will help you sell more, how to configure your data, where and how to load your data and review the results, and the best practices across different schools-of-thought.

Whether you sell greeting cards or rain ponchos, you categorize your products for your customers. On your website, in your catalogs or in your booth, you guide your customer in how they should shop your line. Use this powerful tool to replicate this valuable practice.

## New Employee Highlight



### **Kelly Bristol** **VP of Association & Buyer Engagement**

Please join us in welcoming Kelly Bristol to Brandwise! Kelly joined our team in December 2020 as the Vice President of Association & Buyer Engagement. She is a gift, home and stationery industry veteran with more than 20 years of experience in the sector.

Most recently, she was Vice President, Tradeshow Business Development at the Dallas Market Center, where she was responsible for producing the Total Home & Gift Market Temps. Prior to this, Kelly worked on the National Stationery Show for nearly 20 years, most recently as Show Director. In these roles, she produced 21 trade shows, and worked on an additional 60+ in a support capacity. She is experienced at walking the aisles of trade shows, with a keen eye for great products and vendor potential; she's visited hundreds of shows across the country and around the world in her role to find and recruit the best brands to bring to her markets for her shows' buyers to discover. Over the years, her work has attracted approximately 250,000 buyer visits to market. Kelly also served as General Manager and Membership Director of the Greeting Card Association for three years (2010-13) concurrent to her position on the National Stationery Show, and subsequently served on its board of directors. Over the past 2+ decades, Kelly has adeptly navigated the shifts in the gift, home and stationery industries all while maintaining key client and industry relationships and forging new ones. She has strong relationships with manufacturers, buyers, agents, and press from all over the world including: The United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, China, India, Turkey and Taiwan. Kelly was first exposed to the gift industry beginning in 1995 while in her role at amfAR as the Foundation's liaison to the board of Gift for Life, a partnership between the gift, home and stationery industries to raise funds supporting HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and education. In that position, she supported Gift for Life in creating and organizing its special events raising funds for AIDS research during industry markets, including in Atlanta, Dallas, Los Angeles and New York. In 2017, Kelly was named one of 9 "Most Gifted Women" by Gifts & Dec Magazine. She is well-known and respected in the industry. Kelly was a volunteer fundraising member of the Team Gift for Life for the 2020 virtual AIDS Walk New York, and also is a volunteer remote reader for Society for the Blind in Sacramento, CA.

She resides in New York City with her partner Larry and mischievous cat, Murray.

## Updates and Notices



# Brandwise Insiders

### Brandwise Insiders

In the past 5 months, 114 members have joined Brandwise Insiders and there's been 135 posts. It's becoming such a common practice for many of you to check in with others in the Brandwise Ecosystem to gather best practices, share ideas, and ask questions.

We've also gathered so much insight regarding the types of features you'd like to see next, and I know that's been so helpful for our 2.0 Team to hear that feedback firsthand. We know there's so many more of you out there and that our community keeps growing, so we encourage all Sales Reps, Agencies, Associations, and Suppliers to join us! Simply search **Brandwise Insiders** on Facebook to join us here or opt in to text/emails by texting **INSIDERS** to **33777** today!

### Note from the Editor

Thank you for tuning in and staying up to date with our latest Brandwise Bulletin.

Finishing 2020 and opening 2021 has been full of so many exciting changes, and I can only imagine how much more we'll have to share in a few months! As some of you know, especially if you watched our Annual Update session during the Brandwise Evolved Virtual Conference, I'm preparing to go on maternity leave for a few weeks to welcome our little boy into the world. With that said, look out for our next Brandwise Bulletin in June 2021 and please make sure you're subscribed to receive our other email updates in the meantime to stay up to date with our communications in my absence.

♡♡ *Kalleigh Easley-Tracy*

### About Brandwise

At Brandwise, our mission is to provide Sales Reps and Suppliers with best in class tools to grow their business. Founded in 1997, Brandwise integrates digital product presentation, order capture, order management, order delivery, and analytics on the ONLY platform that builds on the strength of our industry's past and the potential of our collective future.

