

LIVING IN A POLITICALLY CORRECT WORLD: The world we live in is dramatically different today from a few years ago. Whether this is “good” or “not good” depends on your point of view. However, your bank—like most businesses—is probably not in the business of promoting specific religious beliefs anymore than your bank would promote positions on controversial political issues.

Therefore, the subject of Christmas is worth addressing this month. Today, as in years past, your market area is probably predominantly Christian. However, your market area is also changing. Today, people from other countries and cultures now call the U.S. “home.” Many of these people are not Christian—they may be Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, “spiritual” or even non-religious. In fact, some of your bank’s staff may be non-Christian as well.

This is but one reason why many banks and other companies are now publicly celebrating “the holidays” rather than Christmas specifically. It is a wise move—some would call it a politically correct move—both with your employees, your customers and your market. December is a time of year where holiday decorations fill the air and most people of different faiths celebrate the spirit of the holidays. This is why decorated trees, wreaths, lights and other holiday ornamentation are still appropriate to display. It is also appropriate to play non-religious holiday music through your lobby sound system. However, Christmas cards with a religious message, nativity scenes at the bank and other religious messages will offend some people, even if they do not let you know.

Rather than focusing specifically on Christmas, some banks now choose to focus on other events during the holiday season running from late November through early January:

- So-called holiday parties (including families and children) are held during December, but they are not called Christmas parties.
- Thanksgiving parties (as a way of thanking friends and customers) are an option because they are not held during December when so many other parties are scheduled.
- New Years parties (held just before or just after January 1st) are also a good idea. Even though there is a Jewish New Year, a Chinese New Year, etc. the world still recognizes January 1st as the start of the traditional New Year.

So, in the spirit of the holidays, those of us with CBAO, IBAT, IBAT Services and The Genesis Group wish you and yours a wonderful holiday season and a Happy New Year.

NEXT MONTH: WHAT TO DO ABOUT YOUR DONATIONS BUDGET



THE GENESIS GROUP

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