



## Swag, for the celebrity who has everything

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What's a film festival without a swag lounge?

Roots was arguably the first out of the graft gate with its gifting lounges at the Sundance Film Festival, where the Utah air was so thin it made the celebs doubly giddy to be amassing all those freebies.

Debra Goldblatt, president of Rock-It Promotions, instituted the practice at the Toronto

International Film Festival five years ago with her Tastemakers Lounge, when her boldfaced clients kept getting so many goodies they couldn't use.

"We got tons of swag sent to the office to give to celebs. Things like leather jackets, perfume," she says.

"They'd say they were vegans or allergic to fragrance and so I had to take it all back."

She mentioned it to Lisa Butler, wife of a client, who suggested a lounge. It was just six weeks before the festival and Goldblatt called the Hotel Intercontinental in Yorkville (where Tastemakers is still based). They happened to have a suite open and voila, Goldblatt and Butler were in the gifting lounge business.

This year's sponsors include Joe Fresh Beauty, AMC, PC Home, Mattel, eco-conscious apparel from Guats, Bring Your Own Bag totes, Didier, P&G and Sexy Gourmet Food Co.

Goldblatt says the lounge gives celebrities brands they may not be familiar with.

"American talent comes into our lounge and sees what they don't in Cannes, and Canadian talent is so grateful for it because they are not used to gifting."

Even in recessionary times, there is no cutback on the number of sponsors or goodies, but there is more social consciousness: PC Home is giving away water-filter bottles to fill up



RICHARD LAUTENS/TORONTO STAR

NKPR's Natasha Koifman holds one of the loot bags she'll be handing out at her annual IT lounge, which this year has an added dose of charity.

with tap water and Tastemakers is making a donation to War Child Canada.

Other swag spots:

The IT Lounge, founded by Natasha Koifman, who heads NKPR, set up shop at the Windsor Arms a year after Tastemakers and this year it's all about giving IT back.

All their participating brands – which include Fila, Brooks, Teva, Goody, Please Mum, Kiehl's, Richart Chocolate, J. Rox Originals, Sou! Foundation, Penny Protein Plan and Sharpie – will be contributing to a charity such as Big Brothers Big Sisters of Toronto, Sick Kids Foundation, Waterkeeper Alliance, Canadian Cancer Society and Artists for Peace and Justice.

"It is a tough year for charities," Koifman says. "Some of their fundraiser events were cancelled. While the lounge has always had a charity of choice, this year we decided that in a recessionary economy, it was important to contribute in a bigger and bolder way.

"The trend is not to do a big grab; for us, it is to make the connection with the celebrity and the brand."

Besides, a big fat grab is so un-Canadian. On the other hand, there is an expectation of glitz and glam. Who wants to see a beige carpet?

The Style Box at the Smashbox Suite at Hazelton Hotel supplies celebs with outfits made by Canadian clothing and accessory designers like Jason Meyers, Nadya Toto, Magpie Designs, Cocolily, Pam Chorley from Fashion Crimes and Hillberg & Berk Jewellery.

Co-founders actress Amanda Brugel and stylist agent Gail McInnes operate it on a rental basis at the nominal cost of \$50 for the entire ensemble, which just covers the dry cleaning.

"I know as a Canadian actor how difficult it is to show up at an event and look smashing with not enough money," says Brugel.

And you need to walk the red carpet with the right hitch in your get-along.

Linea Intima is providing 911 Red Carpet Lingerie Emergency Kits to A-listers in the CBC: The Hour Made in Canada Swag Lounge in the CBC Broadcasting Centre on Front St.

The kit includes Eucalan delicates wash, Prima Donna lingerie bag, Forever New body tape, Flaunt "Umph" silicone bra inserts and a Claire Pettibone thong.

The lounges have got it all covered.