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### Nu-Tone No-Dex Electrolytes

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proper balance



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Alfalfa Based



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1 qt.



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Natural  
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protection



NEW!

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Scrapes and Cuts



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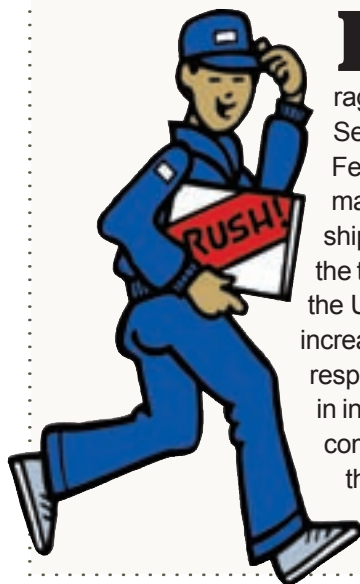
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## Not Really Sick

Employees calling in sick have hit a five-year high, and three-fifths of them aren't sick at all, according to a survey conducted by CCH Inc. Most of them are tending to personal needs or just feel they deserve a day off. Another survey conducted by Kronos Inc., a labor-management and consulting firm, says more than a third of workers admit to having lied about their need for a sick day. The fibbing goes beyond sick days. Entities that track federal family leave use say more employees are embellishing their reasons for taking time off, with some even claiming that a common cold is grounds for a medical leave by law (it's not).

One study says as many as 12 percent of resumes employers receive today contain at least some phony information. Lies in the workplace have hidden costs, including damaging teamwork and lost productivity.

## Devouring Competition



Retailers who regularly ship items to customers are aware of the battle raging between FedEx and the United Parcel Service. According to the Wall Street Journal, FedEx Corp. is growing wildly and gaining market share from UPS. FedEx ground shipments rose by more than 15 percent for the third consecutive quarter. Air deliveries in the U.S. increased 6.1 percent. UPS posted increases of 4.1 percent and 1.5 percent, respectively. FedEx also showed strong gains in international shipments. Both delivery companies and their competitors are feeling the pinch today because of increased costs for fuel, which will likely result in additional fuel surcharges going forward.

## You Think You've Got It Bad

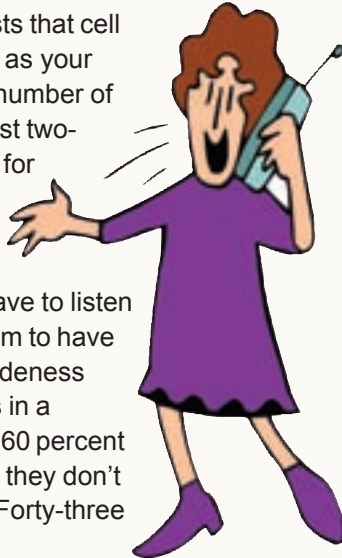
Retailers in the United States are doing considerably better than their counterparts in the United Kingdom, according to a report published by the British Broadcasting Corp. Retail sales from the Christmas holiday onward have been lagging. Among the poor sellers were sporting equipment, books, toys and computer equipment. The retarded sales outlook is expected to mean that retailers in the United Kingdom are purchasing less product, which is problematic for manufacturers in the long run. Retail sales account for less than 50 percent of all household spending in the United Kingdom.

## Considering Cell Phones

**A** growing body of evidence suggests that cell phone use in public places, such as your retail outlet, is extremely annoying to a number of people. Cell phone chatter annoys almost two-thirds of Americans, and of those polled for Cingular Wireless, 80 percent said they overhear cell chat in stores and restaurants.

While it's annoying for shoppers to have to listen to the conversation of others, diners seem to have the greatest aversion to it. Cell phone rudeness was the number one complaint of diners in a recent Zagat Restaurant Survey. Nearly 60 percent of those surveyed by LetsTalk.com said they don't turn off their cell phones in restaurants. Forty-three percent leave them on in theaters.

So, how do your customers feel about it? It might be time to ask them, before unbridled use of cell phones in retail settings drives even more customers to online shopping.



## Avoid These Scams

**A**s if there weren't enough to worry about as a retailer, the Better Business Bureau has released its latest list of the most popular scams being perpetrated on small businesses.

One is the Labor Poster Solicitations in which an organization using a government sound-alike name sends a letter warning that businesses are required by federal and state law to post notices to employees explaining certain employee rights. The posters are offered for anywhere from \$24.75 for a federal poster to \$49.50 for a state poster. No state or government agency charges for these

posters. The scams use phony invoices, such as one for "solid waste consulting fees" or a similar service not requested by the business. Fraud artists count on the basic honesty of businesses, many of which pay without questioning the invoice.

Businesses should alert their bill-payers to be on the lookout for disguised solicitations.

Finally, avoid companies offering advertisements to help local sports teams unless you've contacted the organization directly to find out if it is aware of the ads being sold and if it will, in fact, derive financial benefit from the advertisement. ☒



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