

Moneris  ^{®/MD}

+

GINGERBREAD
TOYS



Moneris + Gingerbread Toys

- Gingerbread Toys is a specialty toy shop for children of all ages, located in Prince George, British Columbia.
- Co-owner Nancy Condon first opened Gingerbread Playhouse, later rebranding to Gingerbread Toys in 1997, after noticing a lack of local, quality toy stores for children in her area.
- The business is currently using the V400C terminal as their preferred payment solution.

Line of business:

Toy Store

Website:

<http://www.gingerbreadtoys.ca/>

Products used:

V400C Terminal



Moneris, sort of, reminds me of a rookie defenceman in hockey. If we don't notice them, then they're doing their job. And I can't remember the last time I had to call Moneris for anything related to our service. They're just reliable.



- Nancy Condon,
co-owner, Gingerbread



Background

In 1989, Nancy Condon noticed there was a lack of local toy stores in Terrace, British Columbia. She said to a friend, “I have young children, why can’t we get any good quality toys for kids in Terrace?” So, Nancy reached out to another friend with the idea to invest their own money into a toy store business, which they called ‘Gingerbread Playhouse’. The business opened in October of that year, but they made the difficult decision to close in 1999 citing issues with their location and growing competition.

Two years earlier in 1997, Nancy decided to open a new store located in Prince George, British Columbia under the name ‘Gingerbread Toys’. She successfully ran the business for 10 years until deciding to move the shop in 2007 to its current location – a residential neighbourhood on Domano Boulevard in College Heights. While Nancy opened a second Gingerbread Toys north of town in a smaller mall, it later closed in 2013, leaving their College Heights shop as the only Gingerbread Toys location.

“I used to play store all the time at my grandmother’s house. That was a big part of my life as a child. My family, however, were pretty much all dentists, so I worked as a dental assistant for a long time,” said Nancy. “But as I got older, I gained some retail experience, then ran a computer and wholesale business with my former husband. So, when I decided to open the store and start my own business, I knew this was what I wanted to keep doing.”

Today, Gingerbread Toys carries a wide selection of quality toys for all ages. Toys for teething, stacking and bath time for infants. Skill-building and development toys for toddlers. As well as puzzles, arts and crafts supplies, and educational activities for older children and families to enjoy. For collectors and toy enthusiasts, Gingerbread Toys also carries the full line of Schleich animal and dinosaur figurines, wooden train sets, and more.



Purpose

For Nancy, Gingerbread Toys is more than just a business. She is genuinely passionate about her work and cares deeply about the community that has stood behind her; a growing community which spans generations. “We’ve had many parents come into the store to tell me that they first visited Gingerbread Toys in Terrace as a kid. Now, living in Prince George, they’re coming into the shop to buy toys for their own children. It’s amazing. Certainly nothing I ever anticipated would happen.”

Going back to her beginnings in Terrace, Nancy was always determined to provide quality toys at her shop. Alternatives that won’t be thrown into a landfill or buried at the bottom of a toybox. “We need toys that children will play with over and over, and that they can pass down to their kids, and their kid’s kids and so on. Especially when I see things like wooden trains, I always tell people to hang on to those toys. Keep them for their grandchildren or even friends and family who have children of their own.”

The business also prides itself for having an incredibly loyal and passionate team who care just as much about the toys, and the community they serve, as Nancy. Some of the staff include long time friends and family members who play a big role in the shop’s success. “There’s a joke we have in the store. When you work for Gingerbread Toys, you never leave. We have people that don’t really work for us anymore who still come back to help out at different times,” said Nancy.





Community Support

Over the years, Gingerbread Toys has supported various community initiatives, such as their work with Sight & Sound – a musical instrument store in Terrace. “We do a band instrument rental program with local schools. So, in the fall, we’ll go to the schools, do a band night, and we supply the instruments through the rental program. That way, they don’t have to come into the store. And throughout the year, we’ll sell music books and accessories to the students,” said Nancy. Beyond this initiative, Gingerbread Toys helps schools and other community organizations through donations and provides teachers with a discount on regular priced toys.

The store also supports local daycare centres, helping them fulfill their wish list of toys by loaning out their supplier catalogues, and either selling them the toys directly from the store or helping them input their orders.

In the last decade, Gingerbread Toys has supported numerous corporate social initiatives led by other BC-based businesses, such as supplying wrapped gifts for toy drives. Nancy says that supporting these initiatives has been, “a really fun and exceptionally rewarding experience. But the best part is getting to build so many wonderful relationships with different groups and organizations that we work with.”

Why Moneris?

When Gingerbread Toys first opened its doors in the late 90s, the store used manual payment machines and cash for all transactions. One day, after a conversation with their financial institution, Nancy recalled being introduced to Moneris. “When we were first told about what Moneris could offer, we realized that we couldn’t turn it down. Especially because we really wanted to start taking debit and credit card transactions,” said Nancy.

At the time, there weren’t too many options for payment processors that Nancy could choose from. But even as payments have evolved over the years, she never felt it was necessary to make a change. She stuck by her decision to remain with Moneris. “We’ve been with Moneris since the beginning. They were just the way to go. In recent years, we’ve received a lot of calls from alternative payment processors, selling us their business and telling us why we should switch over. But everything has been running smoothly, especially in the last year, and we’re happy with our experience.”



Looking ahead

Nancy is satisfied with where the business is today, and incredibly proud of how much it has grown over the years. This year, she'll be entering her late 60's and is hoping to retire soon. Maybe even sell the business. "But it's a hard thing to let go of, it's like my child. And everyone in the toy store business has just been so nice to us. It will be hard to walk away from it, one day," said Nancy. While there are no plans for expansion, Nancy will continue to support schools and daycare centres, new and old, and looks forward to where the business will take her next.





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