



Castle Megastores Generate Mainstream Press

By: Eddie Adams

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PHOENIX -

The adult retail chain Castle Megastores has been bustling though Valentine's Day, and Arizona's leading daily newspaper recently covered some of their progress.

"Couples seeking to boost the level of romance and intimacy within their relationships are the largest group of consumers entering the stores," said Castle Megastore president and CEO, Mark Franks.

To enhance the experience of its customers, Castle Megastore gave each customer a rose with any size purchase on Valentine's Day - at any of the six store locations in the Phoenix metro area.

Castle made a recent appearance in the *Arizona Republic*, citing that older couples are still staying sexually active. In the story, a 65-year-old man walks into the Castle Megastore adult shop in north Phoenix, looking for a device that would enhance his sex life.

For several minutes, the story reported, he followed a clerk around the brightly lit store, stopping to compare one item with another. He wanted to know just how the item functioned, how it differed from the one he didn't pick off the rack. Tom could very well have been comparing hammers at a hardware store.

Before long, he had what he needed: a device that will allow him and his partner to have intercourse.

"I need a little assistance," Tom told the *Arizona Republic*.

Franks said in the story that he has seen an increase in the number of older clients. "We do a tremendous amount of business with seniors, and our (baby) boomer business is just enormous," Franks said.

The 16 stores in the five-state chain offer new and innovative products in the industry, from an assortment of merchandise including 97,000 items. The breadth of adult products ranges from the "mild to the wild."

Castle Megastore has designed its upscale retail stores to also appeal to large numbers of female customers and couples, the fastest-growing segments of their chain's largely suburban business, according to Franks. With that in mind, shoppers can experience a "boutique within a boutique," where softer merchandise is displayed near the front of the store for easy access.

Each store, which is designed with a castle exterior, carries various styles of lingerie, different types of lotions, potions and gels, and a diverse assortment of novelty items, in addition to magazines and DVDs.

Castle Megastore operates 16 company-owned stores in the states of Arizona, Oregon, Alaska, Washington and New Mexico.