

Retailers, Suppliers Back Christian Retailing Pledges

✖ Retailers and suppliers have welcomed a *Christian Retailing* initiative to promote support for and unity in the industry.

They have signed rallying point pledges committing to the ministry of Christian bookselling and helping to ensure that it continues. The effort has spread overseas, with store and publisher representatives in the U.K. promoting the pledges there.

The drive was launched in July by *Christian Retailing* Publisher Steve Strang, as part of a move to help stores in the face of ongoing changes in the industry, "to encourage and equip and support them as they renew their faith and vision."

Store owners, managers and frontliners are urged to renew their calling to Christian retailing, while suppliers are invited to recognize their unique partnership with Christian retailers and support them in any way they can.

Among the first retailer signatories was John Desaulniers Jr., who with his two sons recently took over Wellspring Christian Resources in Urbandale, Iowa.

"I think the pledge is a positive statement to and by our industry," he said. "More than half the battle for independent Christian retailers is attitude. We must not lose sight of why we did what we did years ago; it's the same reason why we do what we do today."

"The niche which independents fill is distinct, and it's worth reconsidering periodically."

Desaulniers said he planned to hang a copy of the pledge—available online for printing—in his store.

"I want it to be a reminder to our employees and an encouragement to our customers," he explained.

Among supplier signatories have been representatives of Destiny Image, FaithWords, Kregel Publications, InterVarsity Press, Standard Publishing, Warner Press and Worthy Publishing.

Rick Tocquigny, president of card company Artbeat of America, said he signed the suppliers pledge because it resonated with the company's mission and vision. The pledge "works as rallying point as long as we stay authentically centered on recognizing God's voice amid the din of leadership," he said.

Both pledges are open for signing at ,

where a complete list of signatories can be found and a PDF of the Christian Retailing Pledge can be downloaded for stores.

