

CBA's Role Through the Decades



CBA was formed in 1950 during a time of peace after WWII that saw a boom in evangelistic zeal.

CBA established a three-fold purpose:

- 1) To encourage wide distribution of Christian Bibles, literature and supplies
- 2) To offer members practical merchandising assistance and marketing aid
- 3) To be a liaison among members to promote cooperation and understanding between groups.



Through seven decades, CBA has supported the ups and downs of the Christian products industry through offering industry gatherings, educational publications, product reviews, trends analysis, legislative advocacy, operational advice and more.

1950s: The need was recognized for a common understanding in the Christian products industry. CBA was established so suppliers and retailers could network and work together.

1960s: Young Christian stores were growing. CBA offered training and resources such as seminars, directories and industry meetings.

1970s: Christian store numbers doubled in the wake of catalysts including The Jesus Movement and Contemporary Christian Music. CBA served the growing network with activities such as an exhibit caravan that took the products on the road to various cities.

1980s: Christian products became lifestyle products (people wanted them for themselves instead of just church leaders). CBA saw the direction the marketplace was headed and helped stores adopt POS systems, even when they were expensive and received much skepticism.

1990s: Christian publishing and selling experienced a heyday with titles such as *Left Behind*, *Prayer of Jabez* and *The Purpose-Driven Life*. CBA understood that the industry must work together or succumb to challenges from general market pressures.

2000s: The Internet changed business models. CBA drove innovation for affordable third-party services to get retailers online and helped the industry adapt to new realities such as digital music. CBA led development of new supply chain standards for increased operational efficiencies, and CBA marketing research changed how retailers came to market.

2010s: CBA continues to lead the industry through changes. The association championed major initiatives that increased sales while delivering ministry support to Haiti and sending millions of Bibles to soldiers in the Middle East. CBA drove initiatives for e-book solutions during the rise of digital content. CBA launched a strategic partnership, bringing products exclusively to CBA members to increase competitive advantage for the Christian products marketplace.