

ALL U NEED

 **TG**
EDITION

GOING TO CONFERENCE

FOR

NEWBIES

**MAKE
FRIENDS,
LEARN LOTS,
HAVE FUN, GO
HOME AND
MAKE MORE
PROFIT**

**SHY? SO WAS I
'TIL I LEARNED
ALL THIS!**



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GOING TO CONFERENCE

Make friends, Learn lots, Have fun...

Then Go home

And Make more profit.

ACTUALLY, TBH...

To be honest, this booklet's title isn't completely right. *Going to Conference* isn't written just for newbies, or just for those attending [NARTS](#) Conference for the first time.



It's for those thinking of attending but unsure if it's worth the time and dollar investment;

it's meant for those who have attended in the past but have felt a little overwhelmed with all the educational information provided;

and it's also meant for my co-attendees: those who come when they can, relish every moment, and who have gone home renewed, refreshed, and ready to tackle the challenges and joys of running a resale business until the next Conference rolls around.

This information has been gathered from the resources of [Too Good to be Threw](#), a leader in the education of professional resalers. Kate writes, blogs and researches solutions for this industry, creates [Products for the Professional Resaler](#), speaks to resale groups and serves as industry consultant. Kate is a past Education Chair, director, and fervent supporter of [NARTS](#). She was awarded their first-ever Educational Service Award in recognition of significant commitment to enhance and enrich industry education and the industry's highest honor, the Renee River Award, for outstanding service. Most recently she was honored with a lifetime membership. Kate writes a monthly column, *Growing your Business with Kate*, in the NARTS member newsletter.



I'd love to go but...

It's a big commitment, I know. Time, effort, money. . . but it's important for your professionalism to attend. Here's [Kate's personal, just-between-resalers take on how to re-examine your hesitations](#). Maybe you're thinking

I can't go because I work in my shop alone.

I don't have the money.

I won't know anyone.

We're in a small town so our problems are unique.

I've had my shop for years. There's nothing new to learn.

Believe me, all of the above reasons, and more, to not expand your professional horizons are actually reasons your success depends on Conference! [.....Read more](#).

HAVE A GREAT MEETING!

Get the most out of any business meeting with these 5 steps!

1. Talk to people!

Now is NOT the time to be shy. Walk up, introduce yourself, hand out your card. Bring more cards than you can imagine you'll need.

Whatever you do, do NOT stick with him what brung ya. If there's more than one of you from your shop, split up. You'll get twice the helpful info that way.

2. Get serious

Sure, every conversation starts in generalities. But a meeting is not the time for chitchat. Ask a question: *What type of sale brings your customers in best?* or offer an insight: *Since I started sending email out every 2 weeks, I've been able to cut the time I spend on social media in half.* Get down to it. Share what helps you sell 100 designer bags a month...

In preparation for serious fact-finding, list your concerns before you go to the meeting. What do you want to find out?

3. Is it your style?

Listen to all sensible ideas. It may not suit your shop's image, but there's a lesson there.

Just what does that person's idea do to their bottom line and HOW? Figure out how you can do it too.

For example, you may not want to do an after-hours party. But maybe listening, you'll learn that people really like to "belong", and you'll turn that party idea into a Preferred Customer Club...

If you haven't been making profitable use of Kate's [**10 Simple Low- or No-Cost Ways to make \\$10,000 more a year**](#) all year, start now! So okay, you won't make \$10,000 more between now and Conference ...but you'll be on your way!

4. Take what fits

They might have a really big budget. They might have a teeny shop. They might be in the country or the city.

Not everything will seem to fit. But we all have similar customers, when you come right down to it.

5. Keep notes

Scribble flashes of insight down, along with the person's name who said it. Later, in a free moment, go back over your notes and flesh them out. If you need clarification, you'll have the person's name right with the idea.

Write each brilliant idea on a separate index card. That way, you can shuffle ideas around, combine and subtract... and put them on your to-do calendar when you get back home.

5a. (*Don't you hate it when someone miscounts her own lists?*) **BEFORE you leave home**, make up a handful of business-sized stamped envelopes addressed to yourself. Then, when you ask someone to send you something, you can write WHAT on the back of the envelope and hand it to the person. **You'll increase your chances of actually GETTING it 1000%.**

And most of all: have FUN! The resale business is unique... and so are you and everyone you'll meet!

If you have to close your shop to go to Conference, DO NOT use the word “closed.” Huh? Here’s [the best way to phrase your signage](#).

WHAT TO PACK

Standing in front of your closet, wondering what to pack for NARTS Conference? Me too.

From experience honed over many resale industry conferences:

- Business cards. 100-200 of them. If yours don’t have city, zip, area code...add them by hand.
- 8 printouts of your PDQ file, **Visiting Other Resalers**, from TGtbT’s [MiniProducts](#). A pocket-sized field guide to gather all the intell you can during the Resale Bus Tour.
- Index cards. I’m a nut for these: one good tip or idea or resource I hear/see per card, so I can shuffle/organize them later.
- A filled-out index card, or maybe... [\[read more\]](#)

WHAT TO WEAR

Oh, what clothes to pack? Here’s the best suggestions, straight from NARTS HQ:

Getting To Know You: *Come as you are - comfy and casual!*

Resale Bus Tour: *Casual & comfy. VERY comfortable shoes!*

"Sweet Treats" Dessert Party: *Evening Attire: Ladies—Cocktail dress or dressy pant outfit. Time to bring out your strappy sandals and glitzy jewelry! Men—Suits or Sport Coats, Dress Shirt & Slacks. Ties are not required. NO Jeans.*

Conference Sessions: *Business Professional*

Sunday Night: *Casual Attire - Slacks, Capris, Jeans or Skirts... whatever you are comfortable in and don't forget your Dancin' shoes! Western theme dressing encouraged.*

THURSDAY

If you're arriving before 6 on Thursday, or if you've been doing other things that day, be sure to find the TGtbT meetup.

Every year we have a TGtbT get-together before the "official" NARTS event, at 6 in the hotel's lobby bar.

Join us at this completely-casual, *drop in and order yourself a drink and introduce yourself* event! We always have a fun theme, so check the [TGtbT Facebook Page](#) in early June to find out what you might want to wear or carry so we recognize each other.

At 8, we'll go together to the NARTS Getting to Know You reception, and make even more new friends!

(Afraid you won't know anyone? [Click to see a picture of me](#). There. Now you're "meeting friends in the bar, Thursday, 6PM.")

FRIDAY: THE BUS TOUR: SO MUCH MORE THAN SHOPPING

To be sure to learn everything you can during the Bus Tour, download and print out plenty of copies of [Visiting Other Resalers](#), a little booklet to help you get the most out of visiting similar shops. It'll help you examine the shops from a shopkeeper angle, rather than as a customer. Each copy gives you a spot to take notes, notes that will help you make decisions about your business.

Not sure where to look, what to make note of? Here's a 3-part series from the TGtbT blog that I wrote after the 2017 Bus Tour. [Part One](#), [Part Two](#), and [Part Three](#).

Loving this info? Here's [a post from many years ago](#) (I'm still loving the first tag line there and aspire to have it applied to *me*.)

SATURDAY: CHOOSING YOUR WORKSHOPS

After the opening session with an inspiring keynote from someone we all have cause to admire, we'll break into separate rooms for workshops. Go to the [Conference Workshops Page](#) to see who's leading which, and be sure you come to mine!

The main things to remember about the workshops:

- If you're attending with a coworker, partner, or travel buddy, split up. Do not attend the same workshops. That way, you'll gain more knowledge and you can share with each other afterwards. Same thing applies to meals. Find a stranger to sit with and gain ideas and viewpoints that are new to you.
- Rooms can be cool or warm. Dress in layers.
- All workshop handouts will be available to Conference attendees, so there is no need to try to collect them all up in person. Relax, they will be online.
- Some presenters prefer questions at the end, some take them during. They will let you know.
- Turn your phone to vibrate, and if you must take a call, exit as quietly as you can before answering as a courtesy to others.

SUNDAY: NETWORKING SESSIONS, BRUNCH, SOURCEMART... and DANCING!

The fun just won't quit. Sunday's activities will keep you hopping (and *shopping!*), and the luxurious brunch buffet will keep you fueled all the way through to the lively celebration that evening.

MONDAY MORNING

Monday morning affords an opportunity to share what you've learned, make contact with peers you want to stay in touch with, and to hear even more ideas and real-life experiences. The final session wraps up at 11:30am, so there will be plenty of time to catch your ride back home, where you will be all ready to set into motion all you have learned at Conference.

WHEN YOU GET BACK HOME

Steps to avoid feeling overwhelmed with knowledge, strategies, and information

- Prioritize, prioritize, prioritize!
- While your memory of Conference is still vivid, complete the online evaluation. (The link is in your Conference booklet.) Remember, all comments, positive, neutral, and concerned, are useful to help your Association make next year's Conference even better. Share your viewpoint!
- Customize and send out your press release. The NARTS prepared template is great and will save you time.
- Create a Facebook Album with all the picture you want your followers to see on your business page. Your captions will showcase why you continue your education: for their benefit! See some examples on [this member's 2010 collection](#).
- Schedule a staff meeting to share your enthusiasm. Discuss the highlights of your education and present a timetable for changes, while gathering input from your support team on how best to accomplish your goals.

Disclaimer from Kate Holmes:

Neither I personally nor my business Too Good to be Threw have any financial stake in NARTS Conference or functions. I just really think it would be good for your business if you come, and I'd like to meet you, and I can personally attest to the great ideas, enthusiasms, and lasting friendships I have made at the many past Conferences in which I volunteered, spoke, and participated.

Please note that I will NOT be selling my Products for the Professional Resaler that weekend, so if you want to study them beforehand to discuss them with me one-on-one, [feel free to order now online](#)... and grab a seat next to me whenever you can so we can chat!

Credits

Many thanks to...

Adele Meyer, Executive Director of [NARTS The Association of Resale Professionals](#), for allowing members of the Association to access this booklet.

Txt2pic.com, which was an image generator that offered the opportunity to create our cover image. Alas, they are no longer online.

All of my friends and peers in the resale industry, from those I met at the very first NARTS Conference to those I have just met on [my Facebook business page](#) and in my closed Facebook group, [TGtbT](#). You have inspired, motivated, made me laugh and and sometimes made me SMH. I am grateful to the giving nature of resale shopkeepers.

FURTHER RESOURCES:

Kate Holmes, the host of Too Good to be Threw, has been thrilled to be a part of the consignment/ resale/ thrift industry for most of her life. [Read her story.](#)

[TGtbT.com](#) has listed all the places you can gather information, tips, and hints on the [Resources Page](#). There's plenty for any resaler to read and utilize on the web but for maximum help in polishing and perfecting your business, the Publications for Professional Resalers are made available to you on the [TGtbT Shop Page](#).