

# COOKIE HAPPINESS

## Girl Scouts Go High-Tech With Cookie Sales

(NAPSA)—Thin Mints, Peanut Butter Patties, and Caramel DeLites—Girl Scout cookies have been an American favorite since the very first cookie drive in 1917.

For volunteers, troop leaders and parents, the Girl Scouts' traditional cookie ordering process involves mountains of paperwork. Each order passes through parents, troop leaders, and local service units before it is sent to the cookie manufacturer, painstakingly re-talied by hand at every step.

Last season, 18,000 scouts from the Patriots' Trail Girl Scout council took to the Internet with the help of their troop leaders. They used Intuit's QuickBase for Corporate Workgroups to track their door-to-door sales, facilitating a record season across 65 communities in greater Boston and selling 1.6 million boxes of cookies.

"Easy as a mouse click" to use, QuickBase is designed to collect, organize and share data among a widespread team. Troop leaders—mainly moms and dads using their home computers—collected the girls' order cards and entered them directly into QuickBase. That was the only time the numbers needed to be entered during the entire process, eliminating the constant recounting of orders at each level.

The Council office took it from there, consolidating the unit totals with the click of a few buttons and sending the totals electronically to the cookie manufacturer. "Before, we had to rely on volunteers driv-



**An Internet-based software program is helping the Girl Scouts with cookie sales.**

ing their paperwork here or dropping it in the mail," said Deborah Deacetis, associate executive director of the Patriots' Trail Council. "Now, we have a way to actually watch the orders coming in. QuickBase has reduced paperwork by more than 75 percent."

After the initial sales period, new orders were entered and updated right on QuickBase, with appropriate adjustments made to factory totals and daily shipping logs. As the cookies were shipped to Boston, QuickBase made it easy to organize delivery schedules and get the right cases to the right Girl Scouts. Best of all, the program didn't require widespread installation or extensive training to use.

Will the Council use QuickBase for future sales? Absolutely. As Deacetis reported: "The very first thing that happened at cookie sales training this year was a volunteer saying: 'When can we start using QuickBase?'"