



RUGMARK UK

RETAILER SUPPORT PACK

Index	Page
1. Introduction to RugMark	2
2. How Retailers Can Help	4
3. 'Look for the Label' Campaign Overview	5
4. RugMark Membership Structure	6
5. Business Benefits of RugMark	8
6. Communicating With Your Customers	10
7. Q&A	11
8. RugMark Market Research Results	14
9. RugMark Retailer Press Kit	16
10. Letter to Customers	20
11. RugMark Communications Materials	21
12. Order form	23

1. Introduction to RugMark

RugMark is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to providing a better life for thousands of children working illegally in the rug industry across South Asia.

"All we had to look forward to in our lives was the break we had at 10am to eat, after that we worked through till nine at night." Akash, 13, was rescued from a rug factory in Nepal where he was made to work from 4am to 9pm.

By importing or selling a rug which carries the RugMark label, you are giving children like Akash the chance of a better life through RugMark's education programmes.

When the problem of child labour in South Asia's hand made rug industry became world-wide news in the 1990s, consumer interest in hand made rugs fell sharply. This drop in demand meant that abject poverty became a reality for the families and communities who relied on making rugs for their income.

RugMark was created in India, in 1994 - as the rug industry's own initiative - to provide independent, ethical accreditation that not only reassured consumers, but also provided better training and conditions for workers in the hand made rug industry. By 2007, over 5.5 million RugMark labelled rugs had been exported to Europe and North America.

"Without RugMark, we wouldn't really have considered the importance of child rights; we may still have been employing children as labourers." Rug Factory Owner, Kathmandu.

By early 2007, RugMark had rescued over 3,000 children from working the looms, and prevented thousands more from entering the factories. Those rescued from working have been reunited with their families, or taken to live at a RugMark-sponsored rehabilitation centre.

RugMark educational programmes help children through rehabilitation, formal schooling and vocational training - breaking the cycle of poverty which forced them into work. RugMark also runs vital educational and welfare programmes for poor weaving families and their children - providing pre-school day care for small children who would otherwise spend their days hanging around in dusty, dirty factories.

RugMark UK is one of six international offices. Our job is to highlight the issues associated with child labour, and promote a sustainable solution to tackling these issues in the hand made rug industry.

The RugMark label on the back of a rug means that the rug has been made by adult artisans paid a fair wage for their work. The unique code on the label allows the rug to be traced back to the loom where it was made. Our teams of inspectors carry out random unannounced inspections to make sure that no children are working.

The RugMark initiative operates through a system of licensed manufacturers/exporters and importers. Licensed manufacturers/exporters agree to the following conditions:

- Not to employ children illegally
- To pay adults a fair wage for their work
- To allow unannounced inspections by the RugMark inspection team

The licence fees collected from our licensed importers in the UK are used to fund our inspection and education and welfare projects in producer countries.

Licensed manufacturers/exporters pay licence fees locally to fund our inspection system

Producer Country Offices:

India
Nepal
Pakistan

Importer Country Offices:

Germany
UK
USA/Canada

You can access all our individual country web sites through www.rugmark.net

Remember ...look for the label.

"I visited some of RugMark's rehabilitation schools (in India) and I was really impressed...and I am now very happy to work with RugMark, in fact, I am now on the RugMark Board."

Paul Walker, Managing Director, Handmade Carpets

2. How Retailers Can Help

Rug retailers in the UK and Ireland can help in the following ways:

- If you sell rugs which were made in India, Nepal or Pakistan, **make sure they are RugMark labelled** – available from licensed UK importers - a full up-to-date list can be found on our UK web site www.rugmark.net
- **Promote the RugMark initiative in your store.** Free Point of Sale materials can be ordered from Rugmark UK – please use the order form at the back of this pack.
- **Promote the RugMark initiative on your web site.** Please contact RugMark UK for the logo and appropriate wording.
- **Generate local media coverage** by using the Retailer Press Kit which can be found in section 9.

Remember, every labelled rug you sell raises more funds to combat illegal child labour and promote better conditions for adults.

“I think that ethical standards are part of the world we live in. As customer awareness increases, customers expect companies like us to meet certain criteria, and RugMark is a step in the right direction. RugMark helps us to guarantee to customers that our ethical standards, match their expectations.

Brian Deen, UK Rug Buyer, Carpetright plc.

“Working conditions have always been a priority, so Rugmark not only emphasises our commitment to decent working conditions, but also gives our customers the reassurance that there has been no exploitation in the manufacture of their rug.”

Richard Morrey, Owner, Rimo Designs

3. 'Look for the Label' Campaign Overview

Raising awareness of RugMark with consumers, retailers and importers is a core part of RugMark UK's work, and in order to help us achieve this we are launching a new communications campaign in September 2007 - **Look for the Label**.

This is a great time for RugMark to launch an awareness raising campaign, with consumer awareness of fair trade and ethical issues at an all time high.

Through this new campaign, RugMark will raise awareness about the links between child labour and poverty, and promote their successes in combating the problem of child labour in South Asia's rug industry. RugMark aims to steadily increase the market share of RugMark labelled rugs, and this market expansion will be achieved by:

- Raising consumer awareness about and demand for the RugMark label
- Increasing sales of RugMark-certified rugs available in the market place
- Expanding availability and selection by growing the importer and retailer base

The **Look for the Label** campaign will be supported by:

- Point of Sale materials
- A new RugMark web site to be launched in August 2007
- Partnering with retailers to run promotions and competitions
- Maximising local, regional and national publicity for Rugmark
- Enlisting a high profile/celebrity patron.
- Creating education materials for schools
- Participating in trade and consumer events

"I try to persuade all our retailers to stock RugMark. I don't think the situation ever goes away...there is still a lot to do to improve the social and welfare conditions of the rug workers and their families."

Paul Walker, Managing Director, Handmade Carpets

"I think (RugMark) is absolutely necessary in helping to ensure that rug manufacturers adhere to a code of practice. I actively promote RugMark. I have the logo on our website and point it out to customers who purchase from our showroom."

Louise Gornall, Owner of The Rug Merchant

4. RugMark Membership Structure

Retailers Who Buy Their Stock From Importers/Wholesalers

If you want to sell RugMark labelled rugs, and you buy through UK importers/wholesalers, you do not need to sign a licence agreement with RUGMARK UK, but your importer/wholesaler does.

You may find that your importer/wholesaler is already registered with RugMark UK (a full up-to-date list can be found on our UK web site www.rugmark.net), and if this is the case, then just tell them that you want all India / Nepal / Pakistan rugs you buy through them to be RUGMARK certified.

If your importer/wholesaler is not already registered with RugMark, let them know that you only want to buy rugs from India / Nepal / Pakistan that have been certified by RugMark and ask them to contact the RugMark UK office to find out how to do this. Telephone 020 7405 0980 or Email info@rugmark.org.uk

Retailers Who Buy Their Stock Direct From Overseas Exporters

If you are a retailer who buys (or wishes to buy) direct from India / Nepal / Pakistan, then you will need to sign a licence agreement with RugMark UK, and:

either buy from an exporter currently registered with RugMark in the producer country, and inform them that you want all rugs you purchase to be RugMark labelled – Contact RugMark UK for an up-to-date list of licensed exporters - Telephone 020 7405 0980 or Email info@rugmark.org.uk

or, if the exporter that has the ranges you wish to buy is not currently registered with RugMark, you can ask them to apply for registration. This means that the exporter will have to sign a licence agreement with the RugMark office in their country, and that RugMark inspectors will visit their looms to check for illegal child labour. Once you and your supplier are both registered with RugMark, you can use the RugMark label.

Achieve a Higher Ethical Profile - Become a RugMark UK Marketing Partner

RugMark UK has launched a new Marketing Partner Scheme for retailers who want to work in partnership with RugMark UK to achieve a higher profile for their ethical stance.

For an annual fee (Large multiples £1,200, Small Independents & Web Retailers £400), our Marketing Partners receive the following benefits:

Exposure and links through the new RugMark Website:

- Feature your new rug ranges on the RugMark UK homepage
- Rotating profile placement on the Retailers page

- Logo placement and priority listing with reciprocal Web links in the Where Can I Buy section.

Sales tools and point-of-sale materials including:

- Leaflets
- Posters
- Window stickers
- RugMark logos
- Customised Showroom Posters which can be ordered from our designers - Corporate Culture
- Marketing Partners also receive postcards which can be used as point of origin certificates or event invitations etc.

Focused editorial efforts with consumer, trade and local media:

- RugMark will actively promote your company to the media to gain exposure for the certified rugs you sell.
- Marketing Partners will be invited to serve as campaign spokespeople.

Exposure through event participation at:

- interior design events
- consumer events
- flooring, rug and carpet events

To join RugMark's Marketing Partner Scheme, contact Samantha Towle at RugMark Tel 020 7405 0980 or Email info@rugmark.org.uk

Note: Retailers who are already licensed importers and who generate annual licence fees in excess of £1,200 automatically become Marketing Partners

5. Business Benefits of RugMark

1. Why the RugMark label is important

By introducing RugMark to your clients you are building awareness of an important issue and how your company is addressing it, thus giving your brand a distinct advantage over non RugMark certified stores.

2. RugMark certification helps to increase sales and margins.

RugMark certification can provide a competitive advantage over non-certified rug brands. Presenting verification that your rug was made by adult artisans and is free from illegal child labour can lead to increased margins. This combined with the quality of a rug, hand made by artisans, gives you a very strong selling point. This is especially true, when our own research shows us that:

"Over 65% of customers would take the RugMark scheme into account when making a purchase." (RugMark Consumer Research 2007)

3. Customers feel reassured.

RugMark is the only independent product label backed up by rigorous inspections. Price and quality are very important to customers, and ethics provide an extra bonus. A percentage of the revenue from each certified rug sale directly funds education for children in weaving communities.

"Almost half of women, 47%, normally bought ethical products and 38% of men." (RugMark Consumer Research 2007)

4. RugMark certification adds value.

The RugMark label is the best assurance that a rug was not made with illegal child labour. It shows that your company cares about how their product was made. It is a mark of quality - you can show that rugs that are made by experienced adult artisans are of a higher quality and more beautifully woven. Fine details are the result of decades of practice and require the patience of an adult weaver.

"40% of your potential customers are already knowledgeable about the issues that RugMark represents, namely child labour and fair trade, with 40% already buying fair trade goods and over 85% being able to identify child labour issues." (RugMark Consumer Research 2007)

5. Each label carries a verifiable code

Each RugMark certified rug can be traced back to the loom where it was made. Each label carries a unique code, which helps to prevent counterfeit labels. Each rug can be traced through the entire supply chain.

"Almost 65% of consumers who had bought rugs knew where their rugs come from, implying that rug consumers, in the majority, are interested in the production and origin of their rug. India was the most widely stated country of origin with 70%, followed by Nepal with 48%." (RugMark Consumer Research 2007)

6. RugMark means a high return on investment: low financial cost of certification and high impact of welfare programmes.

You can also tell your customers that the financial cost of participating in RugMark is shared between the rug manufacturer and the importer, and has virtually no impact on what they pay – unlike many other ethically produced products, where you have to pay a premium.

With RugMark the importer pays only 1% of the export value of a rug which is a small price to pay to end child labour and create educational opportunities for children in weaving communities. Tell your customers, that this small payment will fund rehabilitation and education programmes for children who have been rescued from exploitative work.

"33.9% were aware of child labour issues in the rug or carpet making arena. Consumers who are able to identify issues related to child labour, appear far more likely to place some importance on product labelling/inspection schemes. Plus, the more aware the participants were of issues relating to child labour, the more important product labelling and inspection schemes were to them." (RugMark Consumer Research 2007)

7. Funding education and restoring childhood.

A percentage of the revenue from each RugMark certified sale directly funds education for children in weaving communities. Let your customer know that by 2007, RugMark had rescued over 3,000 children from working the looms, and prevented thousands more from entering the factories.

8. Meeting supply chain standards.

Transparency and accountability in your supply chain are vital elements of good corporate governance for your company. By stocking RugMark labeled rugs you can show that you are committed to, and serious about, high corporate governance standards and ethical purchasing.

"Carpetright has its own corporate governance and supply chain standards, and our importers meet them by complying with RugMark standards."

Brian Deen, UK Rug Buyer, Carpetright plc

6. Communicating With Your Customers

The RugMark label on your rugs means that you can reassure your customers, and provide them with a guarantee that random inspections have been carried out to ensure that there has been no illegal child labour involved in the production of their rug. You can also tell them the adults have been paid a fair wage and that they are working in decent conditions.

Ethical production and child labour can be very complex issues to explain, so we thought it would help to give you some talking points for your customers, and also responses to questions they may ask.

Good luck!

Points you may want to get across:

1. This RugMark label on the back of the rug means that children did not make it.
2. This code on the label identifies the production site where it was made so you can be sure that conditions have been checked and approved.
3. The RugMark label also assures you that independent inspectors have randomly visited the loom or factory where this rug was made.
4. We carry the RugMark label, because we think it is important to ensure no child labour.
5. Child labour has been and still is a real problem in South Asia, and we wanted to make sure that our rugs were not part of that problem. By buying a rug that is RugMark certified, you are part of the solution.
6. RugMark really is a remarkable initiative. In addition to monitoring and inspections, RugMark also sponsors education, welfare, rehabilitation and childcare programmes.
7. By buying this quality rug, you are helping to build a market for responsibly produced goods, and helping to put an end to exploitative child labour.
8. Your purchase really does matter. Experts estimate that child labour on South Asia's looms has dropped from 1 million to 300,000 since the launch of RugMark in 1994. Through a rigorous inspection and monitoring system, RugMark has rescued more than 3,000 children from illegal carpet work and successfully deterred thousands more from entering the factories.

7. Q&A

Suggestions on how to address questions and concerns that your customers may have:

1. What about Rugs in this shop that are not RugMark certified?

Our showroom has longstanding relationships with our vendors. We believe they are also committed to fair workplaces that do not use children. RugMark is one of the several ways that we strive to ensure this.

2. What about other child labour free labels?

Yes, there are other child labour free labels on some rugs (Kaleen, Step, Care & Fair). RugMark is the only independent monitoring and inspection organisation working initiative in India, Nepal and Pakistan. The other labels run social projects, but they do not carry out independent monitoring or random inspections.

3. How does RugMark certification affect the cost?

RugMark does not create a premium price for customers. The cost is very low for each certified rug. For example for a rug with an export value of £100 which might retail at £250, the cost would be £1.25.

The licensed exporter pays 0.25% of the export value of the rug, (on a rug with an export value of £100, they would pay £0.25p) and this money is used to fund the inspection system.

The licensed importer pays 1% of the export value of the rug, (on a rug with an export value of £100, they would pay £1) and this money funds the inspection, and welfare and education programmes back in the country of export.

4. Why is child labour such a serious problem?

Exploiting children is illegal in most countries and it is just wrong to take away children's childhoods. It means that instead of going to schools and experiencing childhood 300,000 children in India, Nepal and Pakistan are spending long days working in poor conditions.

Child labour is also not good for community economics as it drives down adult wages, keeping entire communities in a cycle of poverty.

5. Isn't it true that children in poor countries must work to feed themselves and their families?

We don't believe that this is an acceptable answer to poverty. Not only because children should be allowed to be children, but because most of the children

working will be working for very little, or nothing at all, to pay off their parents debts at vastly inflated rates.

RugMark manufacturers pay an adult living wage to adults, so that they are able to support their families. Because of RugMark, more than a quarter of all looms in India, Nepal and Pakistan provide a decent livelihood to hundreds of thousands of weavers.

6. Aren't children legally allowed to work in some countries?

No. Child labour is illegal in the South Asian countries where RugMark works – India, Nepal and Pakistan. These countries have enacted national laws against child labour and signed international conventions outlawing it. Only children going to school full time are allowed to work alongside their families at home. RugMark helps enforce these existing laws.

7. If children can't afford to go to school, isn't learning a trade a good idea?

Childhood comes only once, and every child should be educated to be a full contributor to their family and community and to gain opportunity. No child under 14 should be working illegally.

When we end child labour it increases the wages for adult weavers and parents are able to afford education for their children. Recognising that young people must be prepared to enter the workforce and make an adequate living, RugMark offers vocational training programmes to children who wish to complete their formal education and training.

8. Child labour is a fact of life in poor countries. Does RugMark believe in abolishing child labour by decree?

No. RugMark believes in helping enforce the laws that local and international governments have put in place. We believe in abolishing child labour, child by child, loom by loom, factory by factory, employer by employer, exporter by exporter, importer by importer, retailer by retailer, and consumer by consumer. Restoring childhood to the children of the world is possible and we all can help by providing and promoting certified rugs.

9. Don't child weavers earn the same wage as adult weavers?

No, child weavers do not earn the same wage as adults. They often work as bonded labour, where they work for free to pay off their parents debts, and they may never see a penny for their work. Child labourers are not able to negotiate with their employers. Employers often abuse those children who stand up for their rights.

10. Some child weavers work at home, side by side with other family members. Aren't they better off than child weavers in factories?

It is legal for children to work in the home, as long as they attend full time school and are not working against their will.

11. Isn't carpet weaving less dangerous than working with machinery or chemicals as some children do?

Child labour is illegal due to its unhealthy impact on children. Child weavers work in confined spaces in poorly lit workshops. Many develop respiratory illnesses, spinal deformities, arthritis, and cuts and wounds from sharp tools. Often children sleep on the floor next to the carpet loom and are fed only one meal a day. This leads to malnutrition and stunted mental and physical development.

12. If children are forced to leave work, won't they turn to crime and prostitution?

RugMark makes sure that rescued children have the opportunity to go to school. When they are old enough, and if they want to, children rehabilitated by RugMark have the opportunity to learn a trade.

13. In many countries, carpet weaving is an ancient and honoured craft. Why deny children this form of cultural and intellectual expression?

Learning at home alongside parents is legal as long as children go to school. RugMark supports this tradition. Illegal child labour is not a cultural tradition.

14. Won't the weavers' craft disappear if children don't learn it?

No. Many weaving communities train weavers as apprentices when they are old enough to work legally and physically and intellectually mature enough to do complex work for which they are financially rewarded. The craft will only disappear if weavers aren't paid a living wage.

8. RugMark Market Research Results

In early 2007, RugMark conducted two research projects to get an idea of the profile and understanding of RugMark with retailers and consumers. Below we have presented some of the key findings from the research. A full copy of the results is available from RugMark UK.

The Consumer research was carried out with 660 respondents who were interviewed face to face. Participants were asked a range of questions on the processes involved in the manufacturer of rugs and on what the RugMark initiative represents;

Generally, the research showed that the majority of consumers were already interested in ethical labelling for other products, and that they would take RugMark into consideration when buying a rug – illustrating a great business opportunity for importers and retailers alike; with the RugMark providing an edge to retailers in a competitive market.

On the whole, the longer ago a participant bought a rug, the less important product labels and inspection processes were to them. The general relationship between contemporary rug consumers and the great predilection for labelled goods presents opportunities for RugMark to create brand awareness amongst a willing and open rug consuming public.

- Almost 65% of consumers who had bought rugs knew where their rugs came from, implying that rug consumers, in the majority, are interested in the production and origin of their rug. India was the most widely stated country of origin with 70%, followed by Nepal with 48%.
- 40% of potential customers were already knowledgeable about the issues that RugMark represents - namely child labour and fair trade, with 40% already buying fair trade goods and over 85% being able to identify child labour issues.
- 33.9% were aware of child labour issues in the rug or carpet making arena. Consumers who are able to identify issues related to child labour appear far more likely to place some importance in product labelling/inspection schemes. Plus, the more aware the participants were of issues relating to child labour, the more important product labelling and inspection schemes were to them.
- Almost half of women, 47%, normally bought ethical products compared to 38% of men.
- Over 65% of customers would take the RugMark scheme into account when making a purchase.

The Retailer research was conducted by telephone with 50 retailers in the UK, of which 5 were large retailers; 5 were online retailers and 40 were small, high street retailers. The objective of the research was to establish the attitudes, understanding and receptiveness of British hand made rug retailers to RugMark. In general the results were positive, and showed that there is a lot of scope to increase the numbers of retailers selling RugMark labelled rugs.

- Of the retailers asked, 66% were aware of ethical labelling schemes in the rug industry. Of those, online retailers were most aware (100%) and 3/5s of large and small retailers were aware of ethical labelling schemes.
- From the sample that knew about ethical labelling schemes, by far the majority knew about RugMark:

66% were aware of RugMark
34% were aware of Kaleen
16% were aware of Care & Fair
16% were aware of Step Label

- 68% of retailers said that RugMark labels were very important compared to other sourcing decisions such as price, quality, distribution and reliability.
- 54% of retailers said that they see RugMark as relatively important to customers.
- 48% said that customers have asked for an ethical rug or raised the topic.
- Awareness may be reasonably high of RugMark amongst rug retailers (66%), however, only 36% of those sampled, actually sell RugMark labelled rugs.
- Over half of the sample (52%) were very aware of the issue of child labour in general across all industries. In addition, 52% thought that it was most prevalent in the rug making industry.
- Out of the sample of 33 that were already aware of RugMark, 42% said that RugMark would make them much more likely to source labelled rugs, and only 21% said it would make no difference at all.

Interestingly, of the retailers who were not aware of RugMark prior to their interview, 71% said that after becoming aware of RugMark they would be much more likely to choose RugMark labelled rugs.

9. RugMark Retailer Media Kit

Many local and regional press and radio stations now cover ethical shopping and ethically produced goods.

Also, you may have already read in this retailer pack, that consumer interest in ethical products and shopping is at an all time high. RugMark's own research shows that in 48% of rug shops, customers have asked for/or raised the issue of ethical production.

Perhaps your shop has carried RugMark labels for a while? Or, maybe RugMark labels are arriving in your shop for the first time? Perhaps it is Fairtrade Fortnight, and you would like to be included in your local media's coverage?

Carrying RugMark labels is a great opportunity to create a higher media profile; not only can you communicate your commitment to ethical production, but also create a higher profile and a competitive advantage.

With this in mind, we have created this media kit, which contains:

- a basic guide on how to approach the media
- some key national dates which you can tie in with
- two draft press releases.

RugMark UK also has a database of images that you can download from the website www.rugmark.net

This is very positive news to promote and shows that you are actively supporting a sustainable solution to a problem. If you have any questions, or need any further support, please contact RugMark: Tel 0044 20 7405 0980 – info@rugmark.org.uk.

How to Approach the Media

If you have never sent a press release out before you should find the following short guide helpful:

- Always contact the media a week before your event is happening.
- Ring your local newspapers or radio station, and ask to speak to editorial for newspapers, or go through to the newsroom for radio.
- Explain why you are calling. Perhaps it is Fairtrade Fortnight, and you want to know if they are planning any features on ethical shopping? Explain clearly, but not for too long, the nature of your call. Then ask who you can email your press release to.
- Once you have emailed your press release, call back the next day and ask the journalist how they would like to proceed, they may want an interview or to send a photographer down to your shop.

If not, don't be downhearted. Always ask what they would like to hear about, and what would make this interesting for them. Tell them that you will be keeping them informed of your progress (but not all the time!)

In general, it is best to have things well prepared. Have a good story ready and some print quality images (your new rug range etc), and remember that journalists are very busy - they don't want lots of calls, but they do need following up. Be succinct and to the point and only get in touch when you have something to say.

Good luck!

Key National Events and Dates

The following dates could be good times to contact your local media as they may be organising features around ethical shopping.

- National Fair Trade Fortnight 2008 - 25 February to 9 March
- Your Voice Against Poverty 2007 - www.yourvoiceagainstpoverity.org.uk
- World Fair Trade Day – every second Saturday in May - www.wftday.org/english/index.htm
- If your town is a Fair Trade town, they may be organising a local fair trade events that you can get involved with. Visit the following web site for a full list of fair trade towns - www.fairtrade.org.uk/get_involved_fairtrade_towns.htm

Alternatively you may like to announce that you have a new range of RugMark labelled rugs, and that ethically produced rugs are now available in your area.

Sample Press Releases

You may want to attach your logo and the RugMark logo to the top of the press release

Press Release 1- First time retailers

(This press release can be adapted to different events or circumstances – however if you would like to change the quote from Samantha Towle – contact RugMark on info@rugmark.org.uk)

Insert Date

(Suggested headlines)

“Ethically Labelled Rugs Come to xxx (insert name of town)”, or

“Floored by Ethical Concerns? RugMark Rugs now in xxx (insert name of town)”

People living in XXX (insert name of town) now have the opportunity to buy ethically sourced rugs from XXX (insert name of shop). The owner of the shop, XXX (insert name of owner), has made a commitment to stock and retail RugMark labelled rugs. The RugMark accreditation means that no illegal child labour has been involved in production, and that adults have been paid a fair wage for their work.

XXX (insert name of owner), owner of XXX (insert name of shop) says, 'We are delighted to be stocking RugMark labelled rugs. I know from the enquiries from our customers that supply chain issues are important, and that people want to know how and where their rug was made. This doesn't mean there will be any compromise on style or quality; on the contrary, the label is an added ethical bonus which signifies that the rug has been made by skilled adult artisans. We are keen to show that we are committed to ethical production and we are proud to support RugMark.'

The RugMark initiative was founded in Asia in the mid 1990s amid growing pressure to rid the hand made rug industry of illegal child labour. Some of the children rescued had been kidnapped and used as slaves, whilst others were victims of debt bondage.

The licence fees collected from exporters pay for the monitoring and inspection systems, and those collected from importers are used to fund education and welfare programmes in rug producing areas. In this way, the rug industry itself is financing the programme to eradicate illegal child labour. The more rugs that are sold with the RUGMARK label, the more money is generated to fund inspection and education and welfare programmes.

RugMark has been running since 1994 and works in Nepal and India, rehabilitating child labourers through schools and education. By early 2007, over 3,000 children had been rescued and rehabilitated. Samantha Towle, Director of RugMark UK says, 'We are delighted to have XXX (insert name of shop) on board, which gives the people of XXX (insert name of town), an opportunity to buy RugMark labelled rugs. We know from our own research that 48% of rug buyers enquire about ethical issues. Plus, it is important to stress that the whole RugMark initiative is retailer led, and the more RugMark labelled rugs sold, the more money raised for education.'

Ends.

Notes to editors:

Please find attached images from our new range of RugMark labelled rugs. (attach some print quality images)

For more information contact:

(Insert name, email and telephone of best contact from your company)

You may want to attach your logo and the RugMark logo to the top of the press release

Press Release 2 - to tie in with key dates

Insert Date

Xxx (insert name of shop) Supports Fair Trade Fortnight with their Collection of RugMark Rugs

Xxx (insert name of shop) shop in xxx (insert name of town) will be stocking a (new) collection of ethically produced rugs in time for Fair Trade Fortnight/ or during Fair Trade Fortnight (or other external event). The RugMark label on the rugs, which come from Nepal/India/Pakistan, guarantees that they are child labour free, and that adults have been paid a fair wage for their work.

XXX (insert name of owner) owner of XXX (insert name of shop) says, 'Fair Trade Fortnight/or other event/ is becoming an increasingly important date in our national calendar, as more people are aware of, and demanding, ethically produced products. Here at xxx (insert name of shop) myself, my staff and importers are all committed to the ethical production of rugs, and to show that commitment we stock RugMark labelled rugs. These are the only ones that can make guarantees, because of their random inspection programme.'

Xxx (insert name of shop) has a (new) range of rugs from India/Nepal in vibrant/muted/other colours with a contemporary design. These range in price from xxxx to xxxx.

Samantha Towle, Director of RugMark, says 'I'm really pleased to see that xxx (insert name of shop) is supporting xxx (insert name of event), showing that all our individual efforts are part of the bigger picture of how consumers can really make a difference. Xxx (insert name of shop) is really showing its commitment to making a difference to people's lives in India/Nepal by ensuring that children receive an education. I think that if the people of xxx (insert name of town) are thinking of buying a new rug, they would do well to support xxx (insert name of shop).'

Ends.

Notes to editors:

Please find attached images from our new range of RugMark labelled rugs. (attach some print quality images)

For more information contact:

(Insert name, email and telephone of best contact from your company)

10. Letter to Customers

If you are stocking RugMark labelled rugs for the first time, or even if you want to remind your existing and potential customers of your commitment to RugMark, then a letter would be a good way of doing so. You may want to enclose RugMark's new leaflet with the letter.

Letter to customers - existing and potential.

Dear

We are delighted to let you know that here at xxxx, we are now stocking rugs with the RugMark label. This means that the companies in South Asia which produce our rugs are committed to fair labour practices and work with skilled adult artisans, steeped in ancient weaving traditions; not illegal child labour.

RugMark is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to providing a better life for thousands of children working illegally in the rug industry across South Asia. By buying a rug which carries the RugMark label, you are giving children the chance of a better life through RugMark's education programmes.

By early 2007, RugMark had rescued over 3,000 children from working the looms, and prevented thousands more from entering the factories. Those rescued from working have been reunited with their families, or taken to live at a RugMark-sponsored rehabilitation centre. RugMark educational programmes help children through rehabilitation, formal schooling and vocational training - breaking the cycle of poverty which forced them into work. RugMark also runs vital educational and welfare programmes for poor weaving families and their children.

We are proud to work with RugMark as they launch their "Look for the Label" campaign to end child labour. Please help us to spread the word by encouraging your friends and family to look for the certified RugMark label when they shop for handmade rugs. The enclosed leaflet gives additional information or you can visit www.rugmark.org.uk to learn more.

We value your business and we want you to know that we are committed to offering you rugs that weave together fine design with social responsibility.

Thank you for your continued custom.

Xxx
xxx

11. RugMark Communications Materials

The new RugMark logo is available for use in retail brochures and on web sites etc. Please request your copy from: info@rugmark.org.uk



Cropped



With Code

Approved Wording for use in brochures and on web sites etc

Brief Explanations:

The RugMark is your best assurance that no illegal child labour was employed in the making of this rug. *[these rugs] or*

A percentage of the cost of this rug [these rugs] goes to support RugMark schools in India. *[or Nepal or Pakistan depending on country of production] or*

RugMark is a global non-profit organisation working to end illegal child labour and offer educational opportunities to children in India, Nepal and Pakistan.

Longer Explanation

The RugMark label is your best assurance that no illegal child labour was employed in making this rug [these rugs] To be certified by RugMark, carpet makers sign a legally binding contract to:

- produce rugs without illegal child labour
- allow unannounced inspections
- pay fair wages to adult weavers

A percentage of the cost of all rugs and carpets bearing the RugMark label is used to provide schooling and other welfare support to former child workers, their families and communities.

Point of Sale Materials

A3 Poster

For use in show rooms. Supporting the 'Look For the Label' campaign these colourful posters will inform customers that you are a socially responsible business.

RugMark Window Sticker

This A6 size window decal can be placed in show room windows or doors, identifying you as a RugMark retailer and helping to differentiate you from the competition. Features new logo and quotes "...for better futures"

Fold out A4 Leaflet for Consumers

Supporting the 'Look For the Label' campaign, these leaflets describe the RugMark certification and how the purchase of a rug helps to educate children in weaving communities.

Other Materials

RugMark Photo Library

Is available on our web site and features RugMark children in school and vocational training. It also includes the weaving process and welfare programmes.

Sample Press Releases

Available in the retailer media kit in this pack

Website Listings

Your store will receive a listing on the UK web site, with full contact details

Customised Showroom Posters (costs to be paid by retailer)

Our designers, Corporate Culture, can prepare customised posters for your show room. The posters would feature a rug design from your current range overlaid with the same information as RugMark's A3 poster. For more information contact info@rugmark.org.uk

For RugMark Marketing Partners

A6 Postcards

Can be used for a variety of situations including:
Certificate of origin (see suggested text below*)
Event invitations
Seasonal greetings for customers

*Suggested text for certificate of origin

Retailer should print their own stickers featuring their shop logo and address etc, followed by this wording

"Thank you for buying a RugMark rug from Nepal/India. The RugMark logo on your rug is the best assurance that it was not made by illegal child labour. Your rug's unique identification code (leave space to write the code) means that it can be traced back to the loom where it was made by adult artisans."

Web Site Listings

- The opportunity to feature your new rug ranges on the RugMark UK homepage
- Rotating profile placement on the Retailers page
- Logo placement and priority listing with reciprocal Web links in the 'Where Can I Buy' section.

12. Order form

RUGMARK UK POINT OF SALE ORDER FORM	
Please send your order form to Fax: +44 20 7405 5943 or post to: RugMark UK Suite 204 16 Baldwins Gardens London EC1N 7RJ	From Name of contact..... Shop..... Address for Posting..... Tel
Please Send:	
_____ Fold Out Leaflets for Consumers (A4)	
_____ Window Sticker (A6)	
_____ Poster (A3)	
For Marketing Partners	
_____ Postcards (A6)	
Logos	
Please send the following logos to me at Email:.....	
_____ Colour Logo Cropped	
_____ Colour Logo with Code	
If you would like to send a donation to help cover the cost of printing and posting, please send your cheque made payable to 'Rugmark UK' to the address at the top of the form.	
By way of indication, the design and print costs for 100 leaflets is approximately £12.50	