

Party sector worth £0.5 billion

PartyWatch

Sponsored by Rubie's Masquerade Company

The party sector is worth in excess of £0.5 billion, according to figures compiled by *partytimes* magazine in 2003.

The BalParQ research is based on a questionnaire distributed with the magazine. By looking at the number of respondents to the questionnaire, setting an average turnover for different categories of shops and using these figures against the number of dedicated party shops, it is possible to extrapolate a provisional total.

That would put the party retail market at £557.5 million. This includes sales of balloons, costumes, party products, face paints, novelties and other party supplies. In some cases, it will include decorating services etc.

When factoring in other figures such as the fireworks industry's calculation that it has a value of £220 million,

the total leans towards a £0.75 billion figure.

One of the most frequent calls made to the partytimes offices is about the size of the sector and its growth. There will be many of you reading this who have used copies of the BalParQ survey to show bank managers and prospective investors.

A total for the party sector has traditionally been difficult to quantify as manufacturers are not always able to distinguish between volume of business with the party sector and others. For instance, when does a paper plate represent the party industry and when does it represent the catering trade?; when are face painting products used for parties and when theatrical?; and when is a costume accessory for a party, when is it theatrical and when is it a toy?

If any party company has figures for their aspect of the sector that they would be willing to share, please let us know.

If the sector continues to grow at a rate of 15%, the magic £1 billion figure should be reached by 2007.
