



© ASSOCIATED INDEPENDENT STORES LTD 2006

**Associated Independent Stores, or AIS, is the largest independent, non food buying group of its kind in the UK with a combined membership turnover of around £1.8 billion. The group has a membership of 270 independent department store and specialist retailers operating 611 outlets across the UK, Ireland and Channel Islands.**

AIS enables independent department stores and specialist retailers to profit from the level of buying power and services normally enjoyed by big high street chains – yet with no loss of their independence.

The principal objective of AIS is to increase member profitability. Collective buying power means that major brands across a wide range of furniture, floor coverings, homewares and fashion merchandise are keen to do business with AIS and on some of the best terms available to anyone.

But AIS is not just a buying group. As well as providing members with access to major brands in all categories of the merchandise mix, the group's in-house team of experienced selectors source exclusive products and develop own brands to strengthen the independent retailer's point of difference in the high street.

AIS offers key services specifically designed to meet its members needs such as central payment facilities (CENPAC), training, marketing, procurement and information technology.

AIS exists to improve its members profitability but the Association itself is non-profit making. Formed over 30 years ago by the merger of two separate buying groups, AIS has grown and evolved with its members and with the fast-changing retail environment. Today's organisation is efficient, innovative and profitable with a strong sense of mutual advantage for members and suppliers alike.

Committed to the concept of successful independent retailing, AIS constantly champions the benefits of individuality and entrepreneurship which the independent sector offers.

In short, AIS is a dynamic organisation that has unique experience of supporting the independent retailer and it welcomes direct approaches from interested, independently minded, quality retailers and from prospective suppliers who wish to find out more about the organisation.

# Partnership for Profit