

Hot Knots

Kim and Scott Holstein FOUNDERS » **KIM & SCOTT'S GOURMET PRETZELS**

AFTER WINNING A QVC PRODUCT SEARCH, the Holsteins have appeared 20 times on the televised shopping service since December 2002. They sold 1.1 million pretzels this January, up 80% from January 2003.

TWIST OF FATE Since 1995 the Chicago-based couple have sold their crazy-flavored pretzels—fudge, spinach-feta—to Barnes & Noble and NASCAR tracks. “We were always the blank-named pretzel in the glass case,” says Scott,

37. That changed after judges picked their pretzels over 2,000 products at QVC’s first annual quest for new wares. “You don’t normally think of food as innovative,” says Marilyn Montross, QVC’s director of vendor relations. “This was.”

ROLLING IN THE DOUGH This January the Holsteins appeared on QVC eight times in 24 hours. The resulting jump in website traffic—400% in two months—inspired them to build a Kim & Scott’s store, which will open in Chicago this summer. “We want to be the Ben & Jerry’s of our market,” Scott says.

—MAGGIE OVERFELT

