

THE
MUNICIPAL
LIQUOR STORE

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Four Key Considerations
When Determining
Beer Assortments

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MUNICIPAL LIQUOR STORE

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ON THE COVER

For years beer has grown through item expansion, capitalizing on the explosion in craft, flavored malt beverages, and now, seltzers to fuel revenue while total category volume was flat to slightly down.

Eventually, something has to give.

Many retailers are starting to weigh which items they can cut.

The road to reducing SKUs is lined with peril; cut the wrong items and shoppers will walk.

In fact, MillerCoors research suggests that if a retailer doesn't have a consumer's preferred brand or pack, it will lose those sales 55 percent of the time.

See page 6 for four key considerations when determining beer assortments.



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MMBA President's Message



CHRIS ARONLD
President

Each year I try to bring a different employee to the MMBA Annual Conference. Last year I brought one of my part timers Ruben.

If you recall Reuben had a heart attack the first day of conference and a quadruple bypass a week later. So,

I had to bring him this year so everyone could see how he was doing. Plus, he wanted to go and tell everyone thank you for their support. He is the only person I know who died at a conference and wanted to come back.

I told Reuben the overall agenda and that Monday night was going to be a Spanish theme, but he would not have to dress up. He was more than fine with that.

When we checked in, Reuben and I asked if the Minnesota Fireman's Association conference was going on this week as well. The staff informed us they only host their conference every 4 years. All I could think is how lucky Reuben was last year to have them around.

I always say, I learn something at each conference. Last year sure was a learning experience I could have missed. But, I also learned I belong to an association filled with amazing people willing to help someone they barely know. We are more like a tight knit family, willing to help when needed. All someone needs to do is ask!

On our way home, I decided to interview Reuben. I wanted to get his opinion of the conference and find out his favorite experiences. We talked about the leaning opportunities, networking and last put not least the food and parings.

Learning Opportunity

He said it was amazing the variety of information provided. Even though he is just a part time employee, there was information to help him do his job better. It also gave him a better understanding on how a municipal operation works. He learned how all employees play a key part in the operation even though they have different duties and responsibilities. This gave him a better understanding of management's role and what they have to do in the background to make his job possible.

Networking

He said it is so nice coming to the conference and being able to sit down at a table of total strangers and leave with new friends. He said it doesn't matter if you're a part time clerk or manager of the largest store in the association. Everyone is treated as an equal and is willing to help each other.

Food / Pairings

The meals are simple amazing and there's always something new to try. Plus, there is a learning experience with all of the different kinds of wine and beer paired with the various types of food. This is very helpful when customers ask what beverage goes well with certain menu items.

This conversation was great not only to help justify bringing a staff member, but also as feedback for my responsibilities as an MMBA board member and president.

Finally, on Monday night after all the day activities were over I was visiting with Paul and Gary at a table.

We had two members come up and thank us for the great opportunity we

had given them by having the conference. One of these individuals said they have been attending these events the last several years and realized how it has made them a better person and a better manager.

The other was a new member who has worked in the industry and has only been here one other time. While they have attended many other seminars and conferences, the MMBA's is by far the most beneficial for them. This made me feel real good about everything we do.

In conclusion, 2018 was my first as your president.

It started out rough, but ended on a high note.

At the board meeting following the conference, I was proudly elected to serve as your president for another year.

I hope this next year is filled with great things and opportunities for our membership.

I will continue to work hard you all of you.

As always, I hope everyone has a great day and take care





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Four Key Considerations When Determining Beer Assortments

Peter Frost , Behind the Beer

As the beer industry wraps up a second consecutive difficult year in which sales once again struggled while the number of beer items remained at a historic high, retailers face a new round of critical decisions to ensure they've got the proper assortment.

The stakes are high: beer is a key traffic driver to retail stores, with some 70 percent of consumers saying beer triggered a trip. On top of that, the beer shopper spends 43 percent more in-store than the average shopper and the category has provided more than \$4 billion in revenue growth between 2013 and 2017, according to Nielsen data.

But the industry turned in a tough 2017, with sales volume down 0.9 percent and this year that trend has been even worse, with sales volume down 1 percent year-to-date through Dec. 8, according to Nielsen all-outlet data.

For Jeff Long, MillerCoors vice

president of category management and e-commerce, the falling volume is the clearest signal yet that retailers have to take a hard look at what is on the shelf.

"For years beer has grown through item expansion, capitalizing on the explosion in craft, flavored malt beverages, and now, seltzers to fuel revenue while total category volume was flat to slightly down," he says. "This year some 19,000 SKUs have been sold, up from just 6,000 in 2008. Eventually, something has to give. This kind of fragmentation is tough on every part of the system."

Shoppers experience frustration with a seemingly endless sea of options; item productivity is declining; retailers are converting less shoppers to beer buyers in their stores; and out-of-stock rates for key packs are at an all-time high, Long says.

That's why many retailers are starting to weigh which items they can cut. The road to reducing SKUs is lined with peril; cut the wrong items and shoppers

will walk. MillerCoors research suggests that if a retailer doesn't have a consumer's preferred brand or pack, it will lose those sales 55 percent of the time.

"Consumers are more thoughtful about their purchases in beer than ever before, and all of the fragmentation means that retailers have to find ways to make shopping for beer easier and more enjoyable," Long says. "While it may be enticing to look at cutting a package or two among core brands like premiums and premium lights, our data shows there's a lot of risk in that approach. Drinkers won't necessarily shift to another package size within the brand; they may leave the store altogether."

Long offered four key considerations retailers should heed when determining their assortments for 2019:

1. Consider the consumer and the occasion

Beer packages are designed to meet

Tracy Liquor Holds Successful Wine Event



Featuring St. Michelle Wine Estates

the needs of key consumer occasions. A six-pack of bottles is perfect to bring to small gatherings with friends and family, while a six-pack of 16-ounce cans might be the package of choice for consumers relaxing at home over the course of the week. Or consider 24- and 30-packs, which are key stock-up packs or perfect for a large-group party or celebration. Cut any of them and shoppers may delay their purchase (9 percent), or worse, leave the store altogether (31 percent).

2. Consider the shopper

The average beer shopper is incredibly brand and pack loyal. About 55 percent of consumers said they entered the store with a specific brand in mind. What's more, 34 percent of the time they had a specific pack in mind. Within the premium segment, which includes bread-and-butter brands such as Miller Lite, Coors Light and Bud Light, pack preference is even higher. A striking 57 percent of buyers who favor premium light six-packs of bottles, purchase only that pack. For premium light 12-pack buyers, the figure is 46 percent. A third of 18-pack buyers are exclusive to that pack size.

3. Consider the store opportunity

Be wary of anyone who says they can provide a static "market level" view of a pack's transferability, a measure of how much of a pack's sales shift to a different pack if it is not on the shelf. Beer is an incredibly local business, and as such, making a national decision to cut a package will lead to a lot of false reads.

Here's an example: Last year we saw several retailers pull 18- and 20-packs because they thought those sales would simply transfer to 24-packs. Instead, when consumers didn't find those packs, they traded down into 12-packs.

So while sales of 12-packs grew by 5 points, on average, 24-pack volume declined. What's worse, retailers that dropped those packs saw the number of households purchasing in the

segment fall 2 percentage points over prior trends. As a result, those 18- and 20-packs came back into a significant number of sets.

So, instead of taking a national view on transferability, we've found the best approach is to look at each individual store when making decisions about which packages belong in a set. We calculate store opportunity as a combination of a pack's transferability, shopper dynamics and the competitive environment to make recommendations on which products earn shelf space in each store.

4. Consider the productivity

While productivity isn't the sole reason an item should be on the shelf, consider the top 3 percent of SKUs account for 80 percent of sales. Simply put, beer's long tail has gotten longer and even less productive. Although craft six-packs have higher dollar sales than any other pack group at \$1.2 billion year-to-date, it took nearly 5,200 SKUs to get there. As a result, they're one of the least-productive segments in beer with sales of \$4,841 per retail placement.

Premium light large packs (24s and 30s), on the other hand, are the most productive with \$43,382 in sales per retail placement. That's eightfold better than craft six-packs and three times more productive than import 12-packs, on average.

So if a retailer is considering dropping, say, an 18-pack of premium lights to make way for another craft six-pack, they should keep in mind that those 18-packs are four times more productive, on average.

"Every segment has to play a role in a healthy beer category at retail," Long says. "We believe in a balanced approach, and that does not mean every segment gets the same amount of space; it means that getting the items right within each segment is more critical than ever."



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How Labels Sell Wine

Whether consumer or trade, when it comes to making a wine sale, aesthetics go a long way.

No matter where in the world or what side of the industry, any given wine consumer's first interaction with a bottle ironically begins with their eyes. So how much purchasing power does a wine label actually hold for both industry and consumer sales?

On the industry side, wine labels absolutely play a role in buyers' decisions, particularly on the retail side. "Ultimately, if the wine is a great, the wine label doesn't matter," says Leah Rinaldi, a Brooklyn-based sales representative for Jenny & Francois. "That being said, a great label can definitely become one of the factors that has a buyer pull the trigger on a wine."

Rinaldi explains that if two wines are equally good, but one has a better label, the buyer is likely to go with the latter. On the contrary, Rinaldi recalls instances where buyers have fallen in love with a label and not the wine inside, but not particularly vice-versa. "[Labels] definitely make more of a difference for off-premise than on-premise," she says, noting that diners choose their bottles based off of a list, whereas labels play a big role in in-store sales.

Elsewhere in New York, Dalton Cannizzo of Martin Scott Wines, notes that visibility, clarity, and design of a label deeply matter. "A buyer's decision to bring in a wine starts with the gauntlet of taste, but that is quickly followed by an examination of the label," he says, noting that if a label is hard to read or has a poor layout, the wine will be pushed aside, regardless of how it is. "Graphic design helps and buyers really respond to it, however, the age of catchy labels selling poor-quality wine is coming to an end, or rather, I hope it is," Cannizzo reveals.

"We have a joke in the industry that you

can sell more of any wine if the winery adds a bird to the label, AKA 'put a bird on it'," he laughs. "While this will engender groans in my colleagues, it is an absolute truth from my experience."

Cannizzo also confirms that labels affect the way his buyers' taste wine, too. "Try tasting a wine blind versus with the label in view and you will see what I mean. You will taste different aspects of the wine and your experience of it and reflections upon its quality will vary," he says, stating that labels set the stage for experience.

"The premise holds that the label makes a difference not just for the information conveyed, but also queues my buyer into the flavors and overall style of the wine, or should, if executed well," he says, noting that legibility and graphic design are more heavily weighted on off-premise buyers' decisions, whereas a "less graphic and more stylized label" works better for on-premise buyers.

Ann Miller, a sales representative for LA-based Chambers and Chambers Wine Merchants, recalls a moment where one of her winemakers questioned the hurdles of selling his wine because of the labels. "The label had a very personal meaning to him and was actually a great story to use to sell, but was abstract enough that people didn't really understand what was being depicted," she explains, revealing that the label was actually changed the following vintage.

Miller also recalls working in a wine bar/shop several years ago, where she featured a 'Beautiful Wines with Ugly Labels' flight. "At the time, I didn't think about that comment being offensive to the winemakers, but we sold a lot of bottles that people otherwise wouldn't have touched!" Now a seasoned sales rep, Miller notices the weight that labels hold even more. "I've had wine directors literally

say to me: 'I hate that label, I don't even want to taste it', or 'I like the wine, but I can't have that label'."

For winemakers, ticketing decisions are crucial. Often the decision comes down to whether to use more traditional labeling, featuring cursive text and minimal design, or eccentric, image-driven tickets, beaming with bright color and unique personality. However, for some winemakers, the answer is both. Barolo-based Giuseppe Vajra bottles his wines with both classic and image-driven labels.

Vajra explains that the image-driven labels of his Barolo Albe and Freisa Kyè are inspired by the stained-glass windows painted in his cellar. "When people come to the winery and can see [the windows] with their own eyes, those two colorful labels of Barolo Albe and Freisa Kyè only make more sense." Vajra does note, however, that when the labels were first released, he felt an initial sense of resistance from buyers, though this has faded over time.

"While we keep improving little things about packaging, we never thought about changing a label to sell more," reveals Vajra. "Vajra is founded on the 'holy ingenuity' that a wine has a life, a soul, an identity (including its label), and [we] will not betray [that] just to try and capture more sales." Vajra notes that although some markets occasionally request for the Albe label to look more "classic", his decision to leave it the way it is stands firm.

"At the end of the day, Albe was born to be counter-cultural; in a time when many Barolos were 'modern' inside with a 'classic' label outside, we started to produce a wine that was hardcore traditional 'inside' but with a huge smile and joyful outside. We are not going to change this."

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“At the end of the day, Albe was born to be counter-cultural; in a time when many Barolos were ‘modern’ inside with a ‘classic’ label outside, we started to produce a wine that was hardcore traditional ‘inside’ but with a huge smile and joyful outside. We are not going to change this.”

And the most crucial sales target of them all? Everyday consumers. At LA’s The Wine House, part-owner Jim Knight explains that with a selection of over 6500 wines, labels are crucial.

“A good label pops off the shelf and sets itself apart from other labels,” he says, noting that both traditional and off-the-beaten-path labels do well at his shop, citing Clos Cibonne and Folk Machine Pinot Noir labels as examples. “The labels that fall in between these categories get lost a little bit in the mix – unless, you have great brand recognition behind you, like Patz & Hall or Sassicaia.”

Neil Thompson of Park Avenue Fine Wines in Portland feels that larger retailers may rely on labels more than

smaller shops.

“As a specialty wine retailer, the customer is more likely to purchase based on trusting the opinion of the wine professional helping them,” he says. “We often hear, ‘I usually buy by the label’, but it seems to be a reference to instances where one is stuck at, say, a supermarket, and does not have professional assistance. Then, yes, the label is all anyone has to go on.”

He notes that off-the-beaten-path labels have only recently begun taking off in his market, but Old World wineries modernizing their labels to fit in with this trend is a mistake. “In nearly 100 percent of instances, the labels have become generic in every way,” he says.

“They are no longer identifiable by brand, historically, and they emote nothing special to the new customer, who may be looking for a label that stands out from other labels on the shelf.” Thompson does commend the approachability of unconventional wine labels, which he deems to be the first step to drawing in new consumers, who then eventually find enthusiasm

for the producers behind the bottles. “The labels are now part of the culture,” he states.

In Washington, Lenny Rede of New Seasons Market finds that most winemakers underestimate the importance of a label. “Some of the shops I have managed have had as many as 10,000 SKUs for wine – what is there to differentiate one from another? Packaging,” he states, affirming that a wine’s label should ultimately be a reflection of the winery, winemaker, and of course, wine inside the bottle. But above all, it’s the product inside that matters most.

“A compelling package might get someone to buy a wine the first time, but how much they enjoy the wine will be the biggest factor on whether they come back and buy it again,” he says.

In his market, Rede finds that an equal number of consumers are both drawn to and pushed away from unconventional wine labels. “The question for wine producers and their marketing departments is this: who is your target customer? If you are trying to position your wine for mass market, you will have a harder time getting it onto sommelier ‘curated’ wine lists.”

And in Chicago, Evie Olson of Craft + Bottle sums it up best. “Labels play an enormous role in consumers’ decisions to buy or not buy wine; it’s only natural, as humans are visual creatures, drawn to anything that is aesthetically pleasing.” She explains that many consumers are still intimidated by wine, so gravitating towards an easy-to-understand label is instinctive.

However, Olson’s small-sized shop allows her and her staff to assist nearly every customer that comes in, rarely leaving room for confusion. “I will say, labels that have eye-catching designs or bright colors do get a reaction,” she admits. “In the sea of bottles that consumers are sometimes presented with, if they are unsure of what they’re looking for, it only makes sense that they’d choose the most eye-catching bottle.”

It Was Good to See Old Friends at the Annual Conference



Former liquor managers Tom Ryman (Montevideo) & Dan Bahr (Bemidji)



Former Brandon & Pelican Rapids liquor manager Bob Leslie & former Minnesota Gopher Ben Utecht

If You Want the Business, You Have to Ask for It

By Tom Shay

A young girl walks into a local business carrying a box. She asks the salesperson if she could see the owner of the business. After being escorted to the office, the owner of the business invites her in and offers her a seat.

Using what she was taught, she explains she is a member of a local youth organization and she is selling packages of popcorn as a fund raiser project so that she and other members of her group can perform some local charitable work. While the owner has listened to this young girl doing a great job of repeating the script, the last thing the owner wants to buy is a box of popcorn. As a way of politely getting out of the situation of having to open their wallet and spend money, the business owner says, "I think my spouse has already bought some".

Surely, that line is going to cause most any salesperson, young or old, to fold up their sales effort and move onto the next opportunity. But not this girl. Remaining in the seat, the young girl reaches over to the phone on the desk, pulls it closer to the business owner, and without a moment's hesitation says, "Why don't we call her and ask? Just to make sure.

" This is probably where many of us think we have just observed a natural born salesperson. While we will never know where she got this closing sales line, or who taught it to her, we can agree she is one of those individuals that has learned how to make the effort to close a sale. Far too many people display great sales skills but fail to simply ask for the sale. In her own way, this young girl was asking for the sale. opportunity alive.

#1 – In making a sale, we should al-

ways have multiple products before the customer; different sizes, different colors, but definitely different prices. This is done to keep the customer actively engaged in the sale. The closing is as simple as asking which one the customer wants.

#2 – For most everything we can sell, there are accessory or add-on items that can go with the product the customer has initially selected. The closing is to begin showing the accessory or add-on items. Without saying a word, the sale is being made and progressing to the additional items.

#3 – Answer a question with a question. If the customer asks if the item is available in a larger size, simply ask, "Would you like it in a larger size?" Indirectly, you have asked for the sale.

#4 – Undoubtedly at some point you are going to show a customer an item they don't like. They will tell you they don't like it, and yet it may be the item that is best for them and their particular needs. Your closing is, "I know how you feel. I used to feel the same way until I found out that (finish with appropriate information)". This allows you to give information to the customer without telling them they are wrong.

#5 – In appropriate situations, you can let the customer know that today is the last day the item is going to be on sale. Perhaps it will be correct to tell the customer this is the last one of that item. With each of these, you are placing a sense of urgency before the customer so they make their decision.

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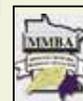


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#6 – Share a story of relevancy. Your customer may need a bit of reassurance. Tell the customer about the positive experience another customer has had with the same product. “Allow me to assist you with your concern by telling you about someone that bought this item last week and came in to tell me how much they are enjoying it”, could be your way of soothing a concern.

#7 – Ask the customer for help. In the situation where the customer has said they are not going to make a purchase, ask them for their help. Explain that you are working to improve your sales skills. You believe you have given your best effort to make the sale and would now appreciate their honest feedback as

to what you could have done differently that would have made the customer’s experience different. Strangely enough, many a customer will make comments that will then help them to close the sale themselves.

#8 – When the customer appears to be “stuck” and unable to make the decision, you can often close the sale by simply asking, “Is this the one you are selecting?” Many a customer just needs that simple verbal nudge to make the decision to make the purchase.

It is likely that no one reading this article can, or would be comfortable with, using all nine of these closings. That is a decision that only you can make. For

those closings you like but are not comfortable with, it is a matter of taking time to practice them. You can practice them alone, with co-workers, and finally with a customer.

Nine potential closings provide you with nine opportunities to keep the potential sale alive. You will have nine lives – just like the cat. Now if we could only find a way to get, “Here customer, customer. Come here customer, customer.” as an expression to call them to your business.

10 Types of Merchandise to Put On Clearance

By Bob Phibbs, the
RetailDoctor

Shopworn:

Items that visibly show dirt, dust, yellowed packaging or items that have faded in the sun or are just plain OLD.

Seasonal:

Items that were only appropriate for the holiday and didn’t sell aren’t worth storing for next year.

Loners:

If you only have one left, clear it out. It will only get lost among your newer SKUs.

Demos:

Items you used to display, demonstrate, or feature in a display that are or have been out of their packaging.

Out of Fashion: Trends that came and went often don’t come back for a long time.

Duplicates:

Multiple lines of the same type of merchandise leave you overbought. Eliminate the slow movers.

Vendor You No Longer Buy From:

You won’t be reordering, and that money can be reinvested in your better sellers.

Lower 20%:

Always cull your lower 20% of SKUs in each of your various categories.

Too Specific:

Don’t hold on to old accessories for an item that was once popular.

Overbought:

Mistakes happen. Items you have just too much of should be brought into line with sales.

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Wisconsin's Confusing Law When It Comes to Underage Drinking

By Kris Schuller

GREEN BAY, Wis. (WFRV) -- Underage drinking in Wisconsin is an issue. But believe it or not, you don't necessarily have to be 21 to legally down a drink in a bar or restaurant. Kris Schuller investigates this loophole in the nation's top binge drinking state. In the state of Wisconsin, the minimum legal drinking age is 21 years old. But tucked away inside the alcohol laws of the state is an exception to that rule, which may surprise many. Which allows anyone, of any age under 21, to drink alcohol in a bar or restaurant - under certain situations.

"It's a law that's out there, that not many people are aware of or even realize or it is misinterpreted and not really clear on what that law even means," said Capt. Dan Sandberg of the Brown County Sheriff's Office.

According to the Department of Revenue, under Chapter 125 of the Wisconsin Statutes, "An underage person accompanied by a parent, guardian, or spouse of legal drinking age may be sold or served alcohol beverages in any licensed premises."

A law which former State Senator Judy Robson of Beloit tried to change in 2009, to discourage drinking by teens.

"When teens drink at an early age, they are more likely to continue drinking and binge drinking later on in life," Robson said.

Robson authored a bill which would have set an age restriction of at least 18 years old to legally drink with a parent or guardian in bars and restaurants. It came out of committee but was never scheduled for a vote.

"They're in a bar with their parents having a good time, watching people

have fun, be silly, and then there is an atmosphere of encouraging them to drink and to drink at a younger age," the former lawmaker said.

According to the Wisconsin Alcohol Policy Project at UW-Law School, approximately 30 states have exceptions to allow minors to have alcohol when with a parent or guardian. But only a few - like Montana and Ohio mirror Wisconsin's statute, which experts describe as "liberal" and "way out of the mainstream."

"I think there is an image out there of a 14-year-old, belling up to the bar with their mom and dad, drinking all night. We certainly don't see that happening," said Pete Madland, executive director of the Tavern League of Wisconsin.

Madland says the law lets parents teach their kids how to drink responsibly and it's a common practice in many European countries with lower drinking ages.

"There are parents out there who say - if he's going to drink, he's going to drink with me. If he's going to learn about alcohol, he's going to learn about alcohol with me, sitting next to him," Madland said.

But tavern owners like Mike McNerney and Jeff Fonferek say just because they can legally serve those under 21 doesn't mean they're going to start.

"Even if you're with your parents, it's our discretion that you have to be 21 to drink in our establishment," McNerney said. He owns Green Bay Distillery.

Liability is a huge issue.

"We can't control those people as they leave our restaurant and what they do after the restaurant and we want to make

sure we limit our liability for what we do here at Green Bay Distillery," McNerney said.

"For my opinion, they could do away with it because I don't use it. I won't let minors drink," said the owner of Pearly Gates Bar & Grill, Jeff Fonferek.

A suggestion that substance abuse counselor Tom Doughman of St. Norbert College wishes state lawmakers would embrace.

"Have the legislature look at laws like that, improve the culture, so we are not leading the nation in binge drinking," Doughman said

A change some in law enforcement believe makes common sense.

"When you're talking about someone, especially under the age of 18, in a bar and being able to legally drink, you're basically telling them it's acceptable at your age that you should be drinking alcohol," Capt. Sandberg said.

An effort this former state senator attempted a decade ago.

"I think it's time. I think the culture is ready for a change and to increase the drinking age in bars," Robson said.

According to a report by the United Health Foundation, Wisconsin led the nation in excessive drinking in 2018.

There is a difference between disruption and destruction

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Things for Managers & Staff to Do When Not Busy

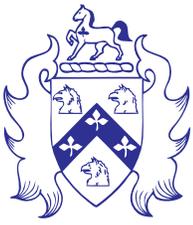
Based on Information from Bob Phibbs, the Retail Doctor

1. Clean the glass on the entry doors and windows.
2. Sweep the front sidewalk & clean parking lot.
3. Knock down cobwebs in the corners of the ceilings and floors.
4. Check the bathroom for cleanliness and clean if necessary.
5. Check for moldy stuff in the staff refrigerator and toss it. Clean if necessary.
6. Wipe the counters and all machines clean.
7. Pick a shelf, remove all the product, clean and merchandise.
8. Check the vacuum bag in the vacuum cleaner and replace if dirty.
9. Change any burnt out interior and exterior light bulbs
10. Check that all remnants of dated decorations and promotions including tape, wires and strings are removed.
11. Pick a shelf / endcap / display and make sure items are priced and tagged accordingly
12. Check your special orders or requests to see if items have arrived or need follow-up.
13. Make sure digital displays are working correctly.
14. Organize the under-the-counter areas.
15. Call or write a customer thanking them for a purchase
16. If you have computer access, go to a vendor's website and learn five new things about an expensive item you carry.
17. Research a new line to carry and write an explanation for why it is a good fit for your facility.
18. Role-play a sale.
19. Role-play a return without receipt.
20. Give another employee a list of ten items to find in your store; time them while they look.
21. Create a scenario where employees find the biggest add-on to a sale in just five minutes.
22. Organize the stockroom and make sure areas are labeled correctly.
23. Take a portion of an online retail sales training course.
24. Offer to help a customer to their car.
25. Spot check if inventory spot matches POS
26. Find the slowest moving item in the facility and come up with how you could sell it.
27. Break down empty boxes in the back.
28. Fill up the register supplies.
29. Fill up the bathroom supplies.
30. Analyze your sales figures and markdown those items rarely sold, overbought or dated.
31. Analyze your store's online reviews on sites like Yelp, then find a solution to stop the bad comments from recurring.
32. Teach an employee how to order supplies, check in shipments, make a call tag, etc. so those employees can take on more responsibilities and see a path to the next level of employment.
33. Make up a quiz of the top 25 questions customers ask you with a correct response for each.
34. Have an employee write out a review of a product.
35. Check out five large retailers' Facebook pages and list 3 things that seem to get a lot of "likes" or comments.
36. Write several emails to send out during the coming month.
37. Perform an employee review.
38. Shop a competitor and write up recommendations about what they are doing right.
39. Watch TV, Text Friends, Call on Cellphone --- NOT!!!!!!

Of course, once a customer comes in, all of this stops and the customer is given full attention.

Focus on long term success, but be willing to make short term adjustments to get there

A man walked into a bar and sat down next to a man with a dog at his feet. "Does your dog bite?" he asked? "No," was the reply. So he reaches down to pet the dog and the dog bites him. "I thought you said your dog doesn't bite!" he said. "That is not my dog!!!"



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