

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Retailers

Submitted by Patti Biro

If not every day then probably several times a week you have the opportunity to visit a highly successful retailer. By my definition that is a retail location that maximizes the revenue per square foot on a consistent basis. No doubt you have been in a drug store, a local grocery store or even a mall. These are all probably producing more revenue per square foot than you are.

A recent survey conducted by Natural Resources Spa Consulting Inc. indicated that day spa retail revenue per square foot lags behind other locations such as mall stores, health care locations, and airport retail and yes-even behind hospital gift shops! In fact the only other similar business doing more poorly than day spas were fitness centers.

So what is the secret to success? Unfortunately there is not one simple answer. There are however at least 7 behaviors or habits that successful retailers know and use on a daily basis. Developing or imitating these habits cannot help but increase your retail sales percentages.

1. Retail is a normal and expected activity.

Retail is a service to your guests. Stop apologizing or making excuses for selling retail. When was the last time you visited your hair salon and did not see products for sale? If we want our clients to have great results in between visits-let's provide them with the tools to do so!

2. Educate and inform your clients about your retail products

Think about the last time you visited the wine section of your local grocery store. No doubt there were samples, reviews from leading wine magazines, product ratings and suggestions for pairing with foods. This is a good habit to imitate with shelf talkers, product reviews and samples of your retail products for clients to see, touch, smell and experience.

3. Consistency is a virtue

Recommending products should happen for every client every time. Better yet-put it in writing so if I cannot buy today I can have it ready when I am able to purchase products.

4. Engage in some visual merchandising

Ever wonder why you cannot locate the English cucumbers? If they have been moved it is probably to make way for another display or they are part of a new section. Mixing it up by creating visually appealing and changing displays keeps items fresh. Anyone who has ever worked store retail knows that sometimes simply moving the location of an item will make it sell!

5. Keep to the Right

Most people tend to turn to the right when they enter a store. Higher priced items will be placed on the right side. When guests walk into your retail what do they see? Which way do they logically turn? You may consider moving your retail items to accommodate this tendency.

6. Eye level is buy level

Less expensive products should be arranged below eye level. Reserve the prime real estate in your retail area for higher priced products. It is not just a fluke that at the grocery store the generic brands are placed closer to the floor making you look harder and reach down to find them.

7. Less is more

The more expensive a product is the less of it you should have on display. If you have ever visited a higher end purse, luggage or eyewear store you will notice large areas of “white space” to display a single item. Our brains tell us this item is special, more desirable and therefore worthy of the price. Try this trick in your retail section to add the perception of increased value to your products.

A famous quotation goes like this “Imitation is the most sincere form of flattery”. When imitating successful retailers improves your bottom line it is flattery that pays off for you and your guests!

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