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Little Changes Equal Big Business

By Carl Davidson & Ric Harry

Sometimes we focus on big things and fail to grasp the importance of smaller ones that can make an impact on our sales.

This article discusses a few of the small changes that could make big improvements in your sales.

Add-On Products Add Dollars

Many dealers tell us they are struggling against low-priced competitors and big-box stores. A great way to differentiate oneself from competitors—even those who sell the exact same products—is add-on products.

Goodwater Warehouse, for example, adds the Aquagate Leak Controller to all of its applicable products. The leak controller constantly monitors for leaks, sets off an alarm and, if need be, shuts off the water. It is fairly inexpensive but tells your customers a great deal. It says you care and that you carry the latest products and supply the best solution.

If your products all came with this leak detection system, it would differentiate you from your competitors. How much does it add to the value in the customer's mind? Much more than its cost. Savvy dealers do not sell this as an accessory; they simply add it to the system as if it was a built-in feature of their superior products. In turn, they use that feature to justify a full-price sale.

This is also the kind of feature that gives you an edge in recruiting salespeople. By telling a potential employee that you sell a product with features no one else has, you have created a salesperson's dream scenario—a fact that will help attract great candidates.

Another example of an add-on is a built-in set of lights that tests total dissolved solids (TDS) in reverse osmosis (RO) water. These are available from

several sources and are usually built into the faucet. They show a green light if TDS is low or a red light if it is high. Compared to a competitor's low-priced RO systems, this type of product would add a high customer-perceived value.

What would it be worth to customers to be assured that their RO systems were working every time they took a drink? How does the customer know the process actually lowers TDS without this add-on? Adding such a feature allows you to truthfully state that your system tests water 43,200 times a day to ensure better quality.

One Foot in the Door

There are many exciting products that can add significantly to your income while providing benefits to customers. A good example of this is Rust Out, made by Pro Products. You can purchase this chemical in small envelopes for a very low investment and offer a resin cleaning to every contacted customer. In the process, you can remind them that resin eventually gets coated with iron and other materials, causing it to work less efficiently.

On average, dealers sell resin cleaning for about \$60. The cost of the chemical is about \$1, and it takes just a few minutes to do the work. If you did five resin cleanings a day for salt and water delivery customers, it would add \$72,000 per year to sales—and most of that is profit. Some dealers even have their sales staff get appointments by offering to do a free resin cleaning as a reason to come by. It is a great door-opener for a very small investment.

Another door-opener is a faucet from Liquid Soap that saves water by mixing in air. This low-cost item provides sales staff with a reason to call on prospects, see how much water they are wasting and give them a showerhead that will save significant amounts of water and money throughout the year.

Stopping the Shopping

Another use of add-ons that we teach

in our seminars is to use add-ons to sell something in every home. We suggest your staff never leave a home without a sale. Have small, impulse-type fallback items such as carbon and KDF showerheads and drinking water filters on hand.

To see how this works, let's first assume the customer has said no. As a salesperson, you can pack up and leave, or you can offer an inexpensive solution that improves their kitchen tap or shower for only \$59.95 or \$99.95. If they accept, you have received multiple benefits.

First, it turns rejection and company cost into a measure of success and revenue when the salesperson leaves with a sale instead of a "no."

Second, this approach stops customers from shopping elsewhere. Why would they call a competitor when you have solved their problems? Plus, you can call back in a month or so to move them to the next level.

The third benefit is significant income. If a salesperson does 600 demos per year and sells 200 times, that leaves 400 unsold. If he or she can sell 200 of those unsold filter solutions at \$99 each, that is an additional \$20,000 in income for the company per salesperson—not to mention the addition of a customer and replacement filter income.

More Sales, More Revenue

As you can see, the skillful use of add-ons can add revenue, allow for additional services, justify higher prices and much more. Call your suppliers and ask about products that will differentiate you from your competitors and provide the solutions that your customers want. *wqp*

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