

Operation Local Sales

By Tim Huckabee

Tips for luring local customers to your shop



don't use that data. First, find that number on your order screen. Then, survey your staff to see if they use the feature. If they don't, point it out. The average sale can give the salesperson a rough idea of what the caller may — or in this case should — spend. If you see that Mega Corp has sent 125 orders and spends \$100 on average per order, you must educate the caller.

School New Customers

When a caller chooses a smaller arrangement than the company normally sends, I remind the caller what we'll create for the given budget: "OK, for \$50 we'll design one of our beautiful small sympathy baskets, about 14 inches

tall." Now, she has a clear description of what she's sending. Additionally, I mention, "According to my computer, Mega Corp usually sends a large design priced closer to \$100" (since she may be new to the firm and unaware of their buying patterns).

Following these steps can help increase your average sale. Equally important, you'll raise the level of customer satisfaction. After all, what would Sally's boss have thought when he saw a \$50 basket — no matter how beautifully designed?

Common Corporate Conundrum

Sally's boss told her to call your shop and order sympathy flowers since her business has a corporate account with you. Sally chooses a traditional basket design and spends \$50. Her \$24,000 annual salary makes that seem like a reasonable amount. The problem: The card says, "With deepest sympathy from management and the entire staff at Mega Corp." How should you tactfully help Sally buy from the company's pocket, not her own?

If You've Got It, Use It

Most shops I have trained use order-entry software that can show the average sale. However, most salespeople

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Web Wise Smart Ways to Win Online Customers



Among the links listed across Plaza Flowers' homepage, **www.pflorist.com**, is one for "free flowers." The Norristown, Pa., business awards free flowers to every 50th customer (for a limited time). The catch: Free flowers are only awarded to customers placing online orders — a tactic shop owner Chris Drummond uses to encourage more Internet business. Winners are notified via e-mail. Plaza Flowers gets about 30 online orders weekly, not counting all the phone business generated from his Web site.