

# Operation Local Sales

By Tim Huckabee

## Tips for luring local customers to your shop



... we can create an arrangement for around \$75



### Perfect Your Phone Pitches

Why is the average sale on your business's Web site almost always higher than a phone sale? Because salespeople in almost every shop I train tend to make the same mistakes: selling from their own pockets, not using their voice as a tool and not listening to customers.

If you can get your staff to live and work by these three points, your average phone order will increase:

1. When employees take a card message containing the phrase "Happy Anniversary" (usually an occasion worthy of lavish design), they should automatically suggest a large arrangement. Preface the suggestion with, "For your anniversary, I'd recommend or I'd suggest ..." to automatically sell more large-size arrangements.
2. When I train employees on how to make a sale, they often say, "You make it sound so easy!" That's because I've used and refined the process for more than a decade. Practice makes perfect. The real secret behind my

sales strategy is that I sound confident. I use my voice as a tool. I place a period at the end of a price instead of a question mark. For example, I say, "We'll create that large design for \$75!" not, "We'll do that for \$75 — is that OK?" Hang reminder signs in the work area: "Our prices end in periods, not question marks!"

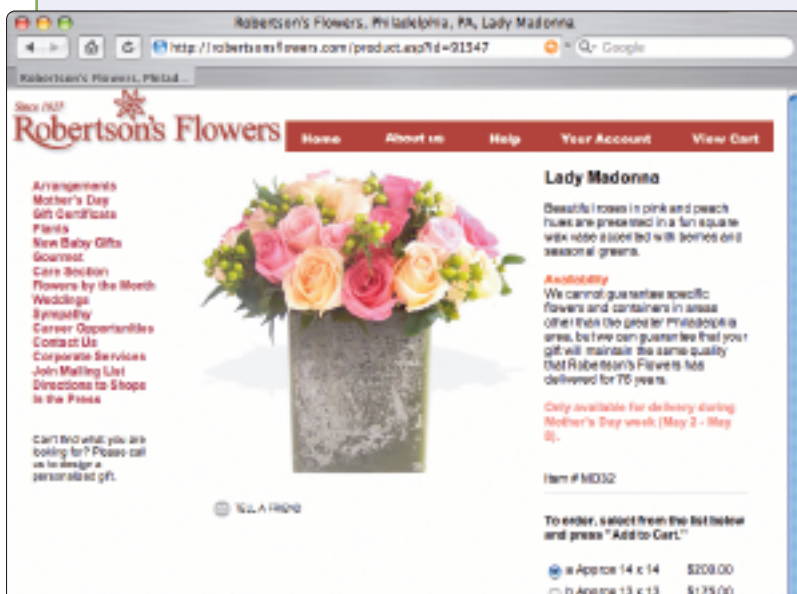
3. Few salespeople have good listening skills. When I make test calls to shops, I pretend I'm calling from New York and that my sister is turning 30 next week and she's at her wit's end. I mention

that I have a business trip in China and can't celebrate with her. I go on to ask if the salesperson has room to write 12 names on the card message. Even after this buildup, sadly, the standard response is "Our arrangements start at..." Did he or she not hear what I said? A dozen people are chipping in on this gift; it's her 30th birthday — we're talking big occasion, big gift.

**Try this activity with your employees to get your message across:** Grab a week's worth of orders and pull out those with "big ticket" card messages but small price-point items. White out the prices and hand copies of those orders to employees. Ask them to suggest an item and price based solely on the card message. Then show them the actual prices and discuss the importance of reading and reacting to the card message before talking product and prices.

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## Web Wise Smart Ways to Win Online Customers



Online customers know just what size arrangement they're getting when they order from Robertson's Flowers' Web site, **www.Robertson'sFlowers.com**. The Philadelphia business lists approximate sizes with different price points for each arrangement on its site. Plus, visitors have a good reference point since Robertson's indicates the size of the arrangement shown. They are encouraged to "make (their purchase) more special by adding something extra," such as a hand-written note or rose petals.