How to market your newsagency using point of sale software

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Instead of being pulled down by media reports of economic doom and gloom, why not invest some time in your business by using smart technology to increase sales from existing customers.

Using smart technology, like Tower Systems Point of Sale software, newsagents can make greater success for themselves without investing more in the business.

This report contains some easy to implement low cost marketing tips you can use right away to drive growth for your newsagency – using your point of sale software.

By using the software to make your pitch, you're demonstrating the professionalism of your business and not cluttering the shop with more posters or flyers.

In a few minutes you could have offers going out to customers without it costing you anything – you have nothing to lose and only sales to gain.

Here is a list of free marketing you can engage in using your point of sale software:

- **Coupons on receipts.** Receipts can be more than a record of sale. Add a coupon to the base and lure customers back into your business – like your own shop-a-docket. Good software can include coupons based on what was purchase, the amount spent and or other criteria as appropriate. The keys to successful coupons are – a compelling offer with a sunset and which is presented simply and attractively.

- **Promotions on accounts.** Never send mail without including a promotion – including and especially statements and accounts. These can easily contain a promotion printed on the statement or account – it's easy to have your software do this automatically. It's free and silent marketing effort.

- **Up-sell during the sale.** Use your point of sale software to guide staff on up-sells for items. The promotional script appears on the screen without interfering with the sale

but reminding staff of the offer. The key with good during the sale up-selling is that the offer is compelling and easily pitched. Track success by staff and reward success.

- **Two for one, three for two etc.** Use your software to offer discounts for volume purchases. Your sales staff need do nothing since the software can track the offer and apply the discounted pricing for quantity purchase. You can make this for one item or a whole catalogue. Also, you can run multiple offers at any one time or over times which crossover. The keys are: make the offer compelling, promote it in the usual place for the stock as well as at in a high traffic location.

- **Loyalty marketing.** Reward customers for spending more than usual. THIS IS IMPORTANT – too often I see newsagents for rewarding customers for doing what they usually do. No, reward them for EXTRA EFFORT. Using the loyalty facilities included in the Tower software, you are able to accrue points for customers and offer these as a form of currency. Running your own VIP Club or some similar named loyalty program is easy to setup and manage. The system tracks points and lets customers know balances etc on receipts and via correspondence generated by the software.

- **Customer database marketing.** Using the marketing tools in the Tower Systems software you can quickly trawl your customer database based on what your customers have purchased, when and for how much as well as using other criteria.   The key is to track customer details. This is why most businesses run a loyalty program – not so much for customer rewards but for research about customers and what they purchase. The Tower software has excellent tools for this. Email, mail or call them with the offer – low cost marketing which should drive more sales.

- **Trawl your data.** Track what sells with what. The 10x10 report is excellent for this, it lists the top ten items sold with the top ten items sold. See what customers buying your top ten items are likely to buy, place these near the top sellers so more will buy them. Just looking at this data will unlock more opportunities for you.

- **Gift cards.** Give your customers something they can buy for family and friends which locks in business for you. Gift cards only work if the giver feels that the recipient will find something they like at the store – your store.

- **Service, service, service.** Customer service is the most important differentiator in retail today, especially in newsagencies. Sure, you can discount and use price as a differentiator but where is the commercial sense in that? No, **customer service is king.** Customer service is a marketing activity. There are several ways you can use your Tower Systems software to drive better customer service:

  - **Give out receipts.** Receipts build trust. You can set the minimum value to trigger printing and reduce paper wastage. I'd suggest $4.95 – given the price of what newsagents sell, this will be more than a single item in most cases or if it is a single item it's got a value which warrants a receipt.

  - **Thank your customers.** Be sure to include thank you text on your receipts.

  - **Being consistent.** The Tower Systems software can remind staff of your greeting and thank you process during a sale.

  - **Offer extra advice.** You can setup advice to share with any item you sell. This displays on the screen when you scan an item. Take time to set this up and have your team provide this advice as an extra free service.

  - **Use a customer display.** This shows what is being scanned and the price being charged. It will build trust.

  - **Train your team.** Make sure they can answer questions about accounts and stock items quickly. For example, using ALT/T you can quickly let a customer know when you next expect to receive a magazine in.

  - **Use the software.** Putaways are big business for newsagents who do them but frustrating. Newsagents using our putaway tools save a ton of time and improve customer service through personalised labels (and barcodes), text messages when issues come in and tracking when they are collected. This saves time and dramatically improves customer service.

  - **Process cards at the register.** Using the PC Eftpos link you can process credit and debit cards at the register, cut time and improve sales accuracy. While there is a cost for this, the benefits for the business and the improved service for your customers could make it well worthwhile.

There are many more ways you can market your business for little or no cost. The ideas in this report are designed to get you started. The key is to do something and do it right away. Then, next week, do something else.

No matter what you do, it is important to **stay on message** across the business. By this I mean that everyone has to be on board and understand your focus and any offer you are pitching.

A HOW TO PRIMER, STEP BY STEP

Say you are running a coupon offer which invites customers back within 7 days and offers $1.00 off a ream of paper.

- o   Design a coupon to be included on receipts for seven days. Make the value of the offer clear and the end date for redemption.

- o   Set a redemption target as your measure of success.

- o   Let your team know about the offer ahead of time – even ask their advice on a good offer they think will work. It needs to be something people use regularly.

- o   Have a process for processing coupons to give the discount including thanking your customers for coming back.

- o   Encourage your team to draw the coupon to the attention of customers,

- o   Track the numbers and be honest with yourself on the outcome.

Retail Newsagencies have great traffic. While marketing outside the business is important, it is equally important to leverage existing traffic to maximum potential.

By using your point of sale software to create passive marketing platforms for your business, you can drive a consistent and profitable message through several channels in your business. This is smart retail management.

If we can further improve our software in this area in any please let me know.

> Tower Systems began in 1981 in Melbourne Australia. Since its formation, the business has focused solely on the needs of small business retailers. Today, the company serves in excess of 1,500 newsagents and 2,500 small business retailers in Australia, New Zealand, FIJI and several Asian countries. Tower Systems has offices in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth and Auckland.