

BRAINSTORM



PET PROJECTS

THE PET JEWELRY CATEGORY REMAINS SMALL, but it's growing fast. Revolution Jewelry Works in Colorado Springs, CO, decided to leverage its location next to an organic pet food store by offering a fun gift idea involving customized pet impression jewelry. "Our team discovered a way to make quick molds of pet prints (paws and noses), so clients can come in with their pet and we can take the impression in two seconds or less," says owner Jennifer Farnes, "Once we have the impression, we create a wax, cast the item, and attach any findings needed for completion. It is a perfect impression with every little feature of adorable animal noses and paws!" Sometimes your next great business idea can be under your nose, or more precisely, right next door.

DUMB CRIMINALS

YOUR PHONE, MADAM



A woman comes in and switches a ring for a fake. She leaves the store, but we have her license plate. While we are talking with the police, she comes back in because she forgot her cellphone.

"Dumb Criminals" tales were provided anonymously to our Big Survey.

ON SALES

HOLIDAY PEP TALK

To deliver an unforgettable holiday experience, you have to be on top of your sales game. / **BY SHANE DECKER**



THERE ARE FOUR areas you'll need to focus on this holiday season to be successful: store floor awareness, add-on sales, "wowing" clients, and shopping environment.

1) Store floor awareness - Based on closing ratios I've tracked over the years, your team's closing ratio can go up 70-80 percent during the holidays. No client is "just looking"; they're looking to buy. Clerk sales and impulse buys skyrocket. If you haven't increased your sales staff or prepared for the rush, you will lose sales.

We all know that some clients will walk out if they're not waited on immediately. Some come in only during the holidays, and if they don't feel we meet their expectations, they will become clients of our competitors.

Store floor awareness deals with everything that is happening on your floor. Is the "sweet spot" covered and is everyone greeted within five seconds? If everyone is helping someone, clients need to be greeted by someone who isn't about to close the sale.

Don't let busy work get in the way of helping a customer — nor apathy or fear. When clients say they're "just looking," too many salespeople reply, "OK, look around and if you find something you want, let us know." That's a sale killer. If you're not present, they'll walk and give another salesperson in another store your money.

During the holidays, your sales teammates' needs become very important. Don't leave anyone stranded. They may need help closing or team-selling (an assist can raise the closing ratio by 50 percent). Never be too busy to help.

2) Add-on sales - During this time of year, the average Christmas buyer buys 15-20 gifts. The average jewelry sales-

person sells them only one. Then the client goes to several other stores and buys the remaining 14-19 gifts. When a client has chosen the item they're looking for, instead of walking to the cash register, use a lead-in

line and say, "How many others are on your list?" He may say, "I have a 12 year-old daughter." Then you reply, "You know, her first set of diamond studs should come from her dad. We have great studs for your young lady right over here."

3) "Wow" your clients - Get a high-ticket item in each client's hand before they leave. You can change it based on the client, your inventory, "wowing" smart and visual observation. Most clients have never had the opportunity to have an awesome item in their hand before they walk out. Sometimes they buy it. Remember: it's Christmastime, the time for giving. Not to mention, this will separate you from your competition.

4) Shopping environment - Make sure the store looks, smells and feels like Christmas. Offer coffee, cinnamon rolls, cookies, mulled cider, whatever a client may want. The longer they stay, the higher the closing ratio. Remember that the experience is even more important than the product they will purchase.

Lastly, show every client respect, patience and a great attitude. Tell them you were so glad to see them and wish them a merry Christmas with a smile. Small and large sales are all important. Gather information so that you can follow up, and remember not to mail thank-you cards *until Jan. 15*; you don't want to blow the surprise!

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