

"Vision is the art of seeing the invisible. Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality."

SPECIALTY RETAILER "CLIPS"

Last issue we discussed the definition of a specialty retailer. In a continuation of the discussion I feel it is important to identify how a specialty retailer can differentiate from the competition. As it happens I ran into just such an opportunity about two years ago. You'll need to follow this one... BUT it is very well worth the read. BETTER; every reader should consider a similar kind of practice.

Most consumers are price conscious and according to Eddy K, "all else being equal consumers will buy at the lowest price". Therefore the specialty retailer's corollary as it relates to his consumers is to "create an UN-equal tilt in their own favor". Sounds easy but how?

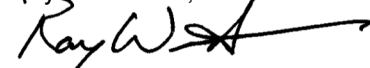
In olden times just opening the door for business was enough to draw paying consumers. There was a lot more demand than supply back then. As supply began its charge to equalize with demand, retailers had to become a little more creative. Build and sell, custom subwoofer enclosures, keyless entry systems, window tinting, custom dashboards, etc... The goal was to provide the consumer with an experience simply not available at the competition. Now as supply has begun to catch up to demand and according to some surpass demand, how to deliver such a compelling differentiator becomes an even greater challenge.

Now the "clip". Many consumers are, or at least claim to be rather particular about their car. One anecdotal proof of this fact is the claims you receive about the scratches, dents, rattles, burned out lamps, etc... that weren't there before you conducted the installation. In reality some consumers are genuinely concerned about such details. One differentiator I learned from Method Sound in Costa Mesa CA, 949-842-092 is keep common door clips in stock and TELL CONSUMERS WHY. The presentation goes something like...

"I note that you have a nice car and I'll bet you are concerned about how it is treated at the car wash, the valet, the service center and all the rest. We care the same way you do. In fact we take that care further than most... We will take the door panels off of your car to properly install the speakers. Of course we'll channel all of the wires with the factory wire channels, insure the waterproofing is properly in place and deaden vibrations in the door that might otherwise be annoying to listen to. Most of the good installers understand and do that. BUT we know that often when the car is assembled at the factory, or when the dealer has had to remove and the reattach the door panel, some of the little plastic clips that help secure the door panel to the door are broken. I would not be surprised to find that condition in your car when we remove the panel. OR we may accidentally damage a clip in the removal and/or replacement of the door panel. Many times in our business an installer may say 'well it's only one or two clips, no big deal; the panel won't fall off and nobody will know anyhow', and simply re-attach the door panel without the full complement of factory clips. To go to the car dealer and get the clips takes forever and most guys feel it's just not so important to get all of the clips anyway. So your door rattles just a little when you slam it shut. Let me show you how we feel about that. Here is my inventory of door clips and here are the ones for your car. We anticipate and have solutions as small BUT NEVERTHELESS IMPORTANT as the factory door clips immediately available so your car door panel leaves here with the same integrity intended in its original design and assembly. Buy from us or buy somewhere else. BUT may I humbly suggest, where ever you buy, make sure the guy understands the importance of door clips and has them in stock. The guy who does understand and stocks door clips is paying attention."

With this conversation you set a standard most others haven't even considered. Your consumer is better educated and more likely to respect the extra value in your approach to his car. Without such an education your consumer is likely to place more importance on just looking for a lower price.

At your service,



Ray Windsor