

O N S A L E S

# TRAFFIC JAM



**Sales are stable, but you'd like to see more customers coming in? Shane Decker can help.**

**LATELY IT SEEMS** that everywhere I go, I hear the same thing from jewelry-store owners: "Traffic is down!" That may be true, but jewelry sales continue to rise. Why? Because closing ratios and average tickets are rising as well.

This means that the people who are buying are more serious about their purchases than ever before. Just imagine your figures if you could bring more of those people in!

Building traffic begins with proactive salesmanship. You can't just rest on your laurels and expect people to suddenly start beating down your door. Here are five proactive practices:

**1) Close the sale:** As obvious as it seems, many salespeople overlook the importance of closing. They see a missed sale as just that - one missed sale. They fail to spot the long-term ramifications (i.e., you'll never see that person again!). The best way to preserve customer loyalty is to close the

sale. Customers want the person who waited on them the last time they bought jewelry to continue to help them. That's the only way you're going to get referrals as well (which have a closing ratio of over 90%, by the way). Customers go back to where they were closed... not where they looked and left empty-handed.

**2) Follow up:** Too many retailers today depend upon mass-generated marketing materials. What's lacking is the personal touch. You should be sending thank-you notes after every sale, including repairs, and every note must be hand-written on store stationery. And hand-stamped - machine-stamped mailers just wind up in the garbage. You'll find customers coming in your door with the thank-you note in hand, saying, "Well, I figured if I got this in response to a repair, I can't imagine what you will do if I actually buy something!"

**3) Clienteling:** When you meet a

new client, take notes. Be sure to get his wife's name as well, and if he's in for an anniversary purchase, get the date. Next year, you can send them an anniversary card ahead of time ... along with birthday cards, holiday cards, etc. You'll reach him exactly when he's in the market for more jewelry, and he'll thank you for it.

**4) Invite old customers back:** Go through your mailing list and find everyone who hasn't bought from the store in a year or more. Write them a nice note: "This is Shane Decker, and I haven't seen you in a while. We'd love to see you in the store again and show you the exciting new jewelry now on display." Sign it professionally. You'll be surprised how many people will come back in, shocked - and pleased - you remembered them.

**5) Six-month calls:** Everyone who buys a diamond from you should get a call every six months. "Hello ma'am, this is Shane Decker with Decker Jewelers, and I'm just calling because it's been six months since you bought your diamond ring. We want to keep that diamond nice and tight, and we offer free service to do just that, as well as polish it up for you. When can you

come in?" Now, while she's in the store waiting for her ring to be cleaned, she'll shop.

Taken separately, any one of these five methods could amaze your customers - but combined, they pack a powerful punch that not only builds traffic, but kills Internet competition. Internet e-tailers don't do any of these things - they aren't set up to do so.

But you are. Personal service like this is one way independent retailers can always distinguish themselves from the competition.

Do you want to make sure your customers are loyal to a fault? That your door never swings shut because there's always someone walking in? Commit to get better at closing and follow-up - and deliver that personal touch only you can!

**SHANE DECKER** has provided much sought-after sales training to more than 3,000 stores worldwide. He can be reached at (866) 424-2472.



SIX-MONTH FOLLOW-UP CALLS BUILD TRAFFIC.

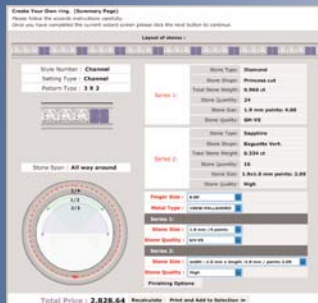
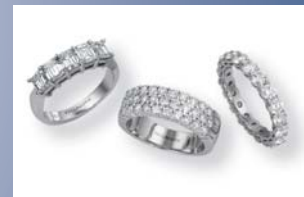
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