

## May Retail Tips

### Top Tips - part three

Ok, we all know it takes 3 times more cash and effort to attract a new customer than to simply keep your existing customers, and what's the best way to keep your customers happy and coming back? Excellent customer service !

This is where independents really have the edge over multiple retailers. The personal touch, simply remembering a customers name or previous purchase is all we are talking about here. But if you want to take it a step further, then what about some kind of loyalty club or system?

Do you know who your customers are? If you don't how can you talk to them effectively? So why not compile a mailing list of your customers which you can use to send out information or special offers to them.

The best time to ask for customer's information is at the till, when their purchase is being wrapped. If you ask nicely and promise not to give their information to anyone else, most people will say yes. In our Peterborough shop we've built up a database of over 1,500 people in just over a year !

So what can you do with the contacts? Here's a few ideas:

1. Start a birthday club
2. Offer loyalty club evenings with special promotions
3. Prior information on sales and special events
4. Points and prizes
5. Send thank you letters to customers who have first bought
6. Invite customers to your events
7. Send them news of new products, or products which are complimentary to their purchases.
8. Send them details on stock due in soon
9. Start a newsletter
  - . Celebrate your business's stories with them

The key idea here is not to try to sell them stuff at every opportunity, it's to build customer loyalty in a competitive market place, so choose one idea at a time to work on, and remember its supposed to be fun. Keep it light and informative, don't deluge them with information.

Everything we write about in our top tips are things we've tried and had work for us..... If you try any of our ideas - please let us know how they work out for you. We'd love to hear your stories.....

Thanks for reading

