

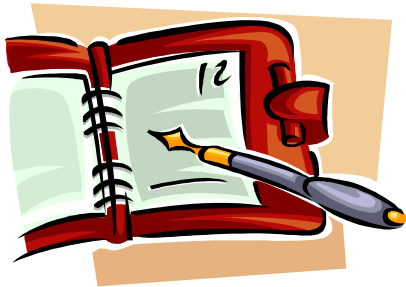


STARS News-

June/July 2009

Volume

Mark Your Calendars



June 26-29, 2009 Scottsdale, AZ

NARTS annual conference at the Hyatt Regency Scottsdale Resort and Spa. For information visit their website, www.narts.org. STARS is not affiliated with NARTS but we recommend them as a valuable source of Resale/consignment shop information.

August 1, 2009

Next printing of the STARS Newsletter. We welcome news or articles from STARS members. Contact the Editor, Pat Swartley, at pswartley@yahoo.com or by phone 281-338-9360.

DID YOU KNOW.....?

Yolanda has promoted our name and website on numerous web listings to give our organization visibility and STARS members more exposure. Look for us on yellowpages.com, superpages.com, yellowbot.com and local.com to name a few. Google resale shop or yahoo resale shops and STARS comes up. We are also linked to tgbt.com, visualhorizons.com and to individual STARS websites.

Your listing on the STARS website is a benefit from your annual STARS dues of

The **STARS Official Directory for 2009** is delayed until we find a new publisher. Yolanda is working on collecting names of STARS who would be interested in advertising in our annual publication. Remember, the more shops that advertise the cheaper it is for everyone. Yolanda sends directories to people who contact our website and ask for one. It can be a great marketing tool if you choose to use it.

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About STARS...

The STARS Newsletter is published bi-monthly 6 times a year for Feb/Mar, April/May, June/July, Aug/Sept, Oct/Nov and Dec/Jan and is mailed to STARS members, prospective members and other interested persons.

STARS was founded in 1991 to promote education, networking, mentoring and co-op advertising among member.

Membership in STARS is open to “for-profit” resale/consignment shops in South Texas.

Membership is only \$50 a year and entitles a member to a listing on the STARS website, www.starsresale.com, a copy of the newsletter published 6 times a year, and an invitation to advertise in our annual STARS Official Directory which is printed each June.

We invite our members to link their shop website to their listing on the STARS website. No additional hosting fee is charged. A free email account is also available.

TO JOIN STARS: visit our website and click on “membership” for information. Print and fill out the membership forms and mail with a check for \$50 payable to STARS, to the STARS official address below.

STARS Volunteer Board Members are:

Yolanda Ramirez, 713-664-5219

Children’s Collections

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Bellaire, TX 77401
childrenscollections@live.com

Roxanne Weiderman, 281-558-1793.

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Letter from the editor...

Invest in YOUR business...Register now! If I had a wish for each STAR it would be to see you go to a NARTS Annual Conference some place in America. This year it is in Scottsdale, AZ . “Learn from the best and the brightest in the industry,” their PR touts. YES! You learn from them not only in workshops but around the dinner table, on the bus visiting local resale shops, and in SourceMart where you buy merchandise for your shop—just to mention a few opportunities.

The amount of information is overwhelming—and exciting! It is not uncommon for someone to write in how they went back to their store and changed the way it looked, and how they did business. I did that myself on several occasions from the knowledge I gained from attending most of the Conferences while I was in business, including the very first Conference they held !

I will not be attending this year for the second year in a row, but I treasure each conference I went to for the great speakers, networking opportunities and for catching up with my resale friends across America. And I hope to make a Conference trip again some day as I am still a member of NARTS as a “Life” member, a high honor given to me several years ago and held by only a few of the 1,000 plus members. In 1999 I was also awarded the “Outstanding Service Award” at the Conference in Atlanta; again, only a handful of people have ever been given this award. I was so shocked to receive it my nose started to bleed! I stood there with the award, a spray of flowers, and a rag to my nose as I accepted the honor. I’ve also had the pleasure of writing articles for the NARTS Network monthly newsletter, some of which are archived on their website and accessible to non-members.

An especially rewarding time for me at the Conferences was when I began to give workshops on marketing. The following year people would come up and thank me for ideas they had used successfully. The most popular tips? “Clothing bucks,” with punch cards a close second. Look on page 3 for other tips I presented at workshops.

I am proud of my association with NARTS and am most grateful for the education and the numerous opportunities I was given to grow as a Resaler. Conference fees, travel and hotel expense add up but in my case I would say going to Conference was worth every penny I spent. Thank you, NARTS.

The Editor, **Pat Swartley**



BECAUSE THE CUSTOMER.....AUTHOR UNKNOWN

- BECAUSE the customer has a need.....We should try to fill it
- BECAUSE the customer has a choice.....We must be the better choice
- BECAUSE the customer has sensibilities.....We must be considerate
- BECAUSE the customer has an urgency..... We must be prompt with service
- BECAUSE the customer is unique.....We must be flexible
- BECAUSE the customer has high expectations.....We must excel in our service
- BECAUSE the customer has influence.....We have the hope of referrals

BECAUSE OF THE CUSTOMERS WE EXIST! (submitted by Yolanda)

“POSITIVE PROMOTIONS”.....HIGHLIGHTS FROM WORKSHOPS PRESENTED AT NARTS CONFERENCES.

By Pat Swartley

What are promotions: Anything you can do to drive traffic into your store and increase sales. “Successful Entrepreneurs never bet the farm on any one thing. They try things and tinker and measure results...this characteristic is so important and so overlooked...” quote from Joseph M. Sherlock, marketing guru.

Why should I do promotions:

1. To “brand” your store name in the community
2. To increase the customer/consignor base to increase profit
3. To move more merchandise and assure consignors that you really are trying to sell their stuff!
4. To have fun and to create excitement in your store for customers AND employees while you make more money.

How do I decide what type of promotions I should do? Study retail. What motivates or draws YOU to do business with a company? What makes YOU want to go back and buy more or refer your family and friends to them? Make a list of “in store” and “out of store” type promotions that appeal to you. Some favorites are:

- In Store:**
1. Give-aways lead the pack especially if your store name is on it. Other freebies can be small gifts as rewards for coming in. All time favorite: advertise a free small bottle of cool water during the hot summer months. Give a gift for purchasing a certain amount of merchandise, such as a pair of earrings from a selected group.
 2. Always have a hand-out for the customer to take home that tells them of upcoming sales, promotions, what's new in the store, store policies, etc. A newsletter tops this list for most effectively promoting the store.
 3. Use of coupon offers, punch cards, certain weekly, monthly tag sales or other incentives to buy.
 4. Special party sales events on certain days or several times a year.

Out-of-store-promotions:

1. Be a presence in the community, wear a store name tag wherever you go, join net working groups, donate door prizes, get advertising in local events, join organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce and speak as an expert in your field.
2. Join with other merchants or resale shops in your area to share advertising costs and exposure.
3. Be selective in print advertising. If it works keep doing it as much as you can afford. Can you afford a billboard?

Is there anything else I need to know about promotions? Yes, it is important to evaluate each promotion you do in terms of did it meet your goal for doing it? Do you have realistic goals for your promotions? If all you do is break even on the cost of it after paying expenses, you still have the benefit of pleasing customers and getting your name out there to potential customers.



Dear Resale Queen,

Do most resale shops pay consignors monthly or at the end of the consignment? Which do you recommend?

Signed: Want to do the best thing.

Dear Want,

There are a number of options for paying consignors—What do your consignors want? What works best for you? What does your consignment contract say? Do whatever it says to keep a good reputation. It is also important that the consignor fully understands how they will be paid. Best not to have some complicated system that can trip them up; such as, they have a limited time to pick up their money or it is forfeited.

Legally you owe them the money and you should not set rules that prevent them from receiving payment. How can you tell a consignor, “Sorry, if you had come in last week I would have given you the \$50 I owe you, but you missed the pickup deadline.” I wonder how many friends the consignor will tell that story to?

The gold standard in the industry is to pay consignors every month and to mail the check to them. I find it interesting that most of the long-standing resale shops who have long time loyal consignors operate this way. It is not cost effective, however, to send checks for very small amounts. Consider printing checks for amounts due over \$10 or more. Some shops prefer to print checks for everyone due money each month but hold the check for them to pick up. Then they end up spending time calling people to come get their checks and it is all a bookkeeping nightmare. Some tell consignors when they can pick up monthly checks, but only print the check when they come in.

Paying only one check at the end of the consignment will save time and money. This works well if you have 60-90 day consignment period, but some shops with longer consignment periods also pay this way. Some shops with this method offer cash or credit at any time to their consignor.

Paying monthly limits your cash flow, but keeps consignor debt down. Paying at the end of the consignment is more cost effective and eases cash flow, but the consignor debt can get scary.

Final answer:

I vote for mailing monthly payments because every time a check comes in the mail, the consignor is reminded that they make money in your store and it may motivate them to bring in more stuff ! And of course, send the store newsletter, coupon offer or other important info along with the check. Effective and cheap advertising!

Dear Resale Queen,

Could you give me some advice on how to handle complaining customers or consignors?

Signed: Tired of being insulted.

Dear Insulted,

This is my favorite question because I have been insulted a number of times and have managed to learn from the experience. It is hard to do—but try not to take it personally. Get a mindset that you and the customer are a team trying to work out a problem so that the customer will love you and your store even more. No matter what they say or do, treat them with respect and maintain eye contact. Let your body language, tone of voice, and facial expression shout out, “I care about solving the problem to make you a satisfied customer who will run out of here and tell all your friends that I run the best, most honest resale shop in the area!” I am not kidding. That is your goal.

Final Answer: There are, of course, total nut jobs out there for which this advice has no meaning, but that is no reason to base any policies on the possibility you may have to deal with one of them. Most people just want a fair and reasonable solution to their dissatisfaction.

The Resale Queen



NEWS AROUND THE GALAXY.....



April 9th **Shop Girl** article in the Houston Chronicle: **“Encore Resale Shop Has Looks for Spring.”**

Wow, major PR for our sister STAR. Intro to the article said, “...savvy shoppers know...to really add a pop of spring without busting the budget, head to a resale shop.” The media never gets tired of the same ole song: resale equals saving money.

Encore owner, Terry Rambin, picked up the theme of more people giving resale a second look, “The recession is getting new people to shop resale—and it’s also getting new people to consign. It’s good for everybody.”

Terry moved her shop to the 1852 Fountain View Dr. Houston, 77057 location in April because “It will be easier to find.” The new shop is prettier, very light and airy.” Should appeal to younger shoppers who have been coming in.

Here are some interesting facts about Encore: They carry size zero to size 20 for women, accepting high-end consignments of brand names such as Dolce & Gabbana, Andrew Gn, Tory Burch, Manolo Blahnik, Jimmy Choo. Quote: “new items just one season old are discounted by a third of their original price; older items are 75% off the original price and bargaining within reason is acceptable.”

Editor note:

Once the gold standard on pricing in resale was to never come down on a price—reasoning that the stuff is cheap enough and already a bargain. And there is always that customer who will take advantage of this policy. **All that said---**the bottom line is, do whatever you have to do to sell the stuff and move it on out. Your Editor does not believe in rigid rules. There are many variables connected to every sales decision, and it is your store. I once put my foot down and refused to give a good customer the discount she asked for (it was really unfair to my store) and she turned around and walk out of a \$300 sale of merchandise and never came back to shop again.

Was that the right thing to do? On one hand I was tired of her pushing my unfair discount button every time she came to shop and on the other hand I lost about \$1500 in annual sales from this woman.

Discovering Dollar Deals

(taken from Debbie Damon’s website, www.bdazzledresaleboutique.com)

“If you are looking for party favors, decorations, gifts, or any of the Dollar Trees many items, you can now shop online at <http://www.dollartree.com/home.jsp>.” Every item is a dollar and you have to buy a case.

A Lot of Panache, the Bay Area’s premiere ladies resale shop, and long time STARS member, finally got the west wall and some of her back wall put back in place that was taken out by a Hummer last fall. Through out the whole ordeal they remained neat, organized, upbeat, and well stocked with today’s fashions. It is a pleasure to shop there—lots of “wow” merchandise to look at priced just right. The owner, Pat Broxson, has owned her shop for over 20 years and can boast of having one of the most successful resale shops in Greater Houston. Congratulations!

***LOOK INSIDE FOR THE LATEST
S.T.A.R.S. DIRECTORY INFORMATION***



S.T.A.R.S. Newsletter
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Since 1991