

TECH-SAVVY SELLING

> In the spirit of this issue's technological theme, I am presenting my mystery shopper call a bit differently than usual. I am not going to review and critique the exchange; you and your team are going to do it! Visit safnow.org/timscalling to play the recording of the call I made posing as a customer from New York City who could not travel to celebrate his sister's 40th birthday.

Listen as a group and discuss what the saleswoman did well and where she missed opportunities. Talk about how that call would have been handled at your shop. How would I have been greeted? What price would I have been offered for which design? Also, pay attention to how well this shop integrates technology into the customer shopping experience.

I want to use my remaining space to discuss the importance of using technology while selling flowers. For many of you, the only way your customers have bought flowers over the past few months has been with a grab-and-go bunch at the grocery store. They are starved for diversity and elevated customer service. And the easiest way for a shop of any size to impress customers is to integrate 21st century technology into the shopping experience. Here are a few must-dos:

1. Actively use your POS system to see a customer's average sale (hint: pitch an arrangement above that number!) and access their shopping history to save time. It's not quaint or retro to record a flower order — an important business transaction — on paper. It's archaic, inefficient and just bad business. There is no point in having a POS system

and then writing your orders on paper to enter them later. Do you push your delivery van to each recipient's house? Make smart use of your technology!

2. Capture an email address from every caller, even on a pickup order. I take thousands of orders every year and know for a fact that the overwhelming majority of customers have and use email. Yes, you will occasionally hear that the caller does not want to share this information or does not use email. Gathering email addresses is the easiest and cheapest (aka free) way to build your database to reach out with marketing campaigns. If you are not comfortable creating an email campaign, get help! Reach out to your website provider and they'll walk you through the process — some may even send the campaigns for you as part of their contract. Now more than ever, you need to keep in touch with customers to get sales.

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3. Use those email addresses to give extra service. Most POS systems I use allow you to perform two important functions that customers want and appreciate, and will save you time. The first is simply sending a copy of the order through email, either manually or automatically. I like to do this to give the customer a chance to review the order and contact us with any tweaks or changes before the design leaves the store. The other service is sending an email to confirm delivery. Think about how many hours a month you spend simply telling customers, "Yes, your sister got her flowers. They were delivered two hours ago." By making better use of technology, and configuring your POS to send delivery confirmations, you will save time and give your customers peace of mind, instantly elevating the shopping experience!

THE BOTTOM LINE: We're in a new retail era where customer shopping patterns and needs are changing. Don't get left behind because you're not embracing technology! 📞



The Recording

Take notes and write your review of this call. Email it to me at tim@floralstrategies.com. In addition to publishing the best review in next month's column, I will provide a pizza lunch to the first three shops to make their submission. And join me online for the next Tim's Calling... Live webinar on June 17 at 3:30 p.m. EDT. Head to safnow.org/timscalling for a list of upcoming sessions.



SHUTTERSTOCK/DRAGANA GORDIC



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