

# Success at Retail Quest

## QUARTERLY

10-30-2008

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Retail Trends
- Quest Expert Profile
- Quest In the News
- Quest Factoid

### RETAIL TRENDS

## Retail Product Knowledge Training and Sales Assistance *One-on-One Connections That Drive Sales At Retail*

There are many ways to drive sales of products in the retail environment, including effective point-of-purchase materials and well-organized, fully stocked displays. However, manufacturers often overlook a method that is proven to increase awareness, interest, and sales for their products: one-on-one interaction with store employees and consumers at the retail locations. With current retail conditions what they are, the importance of this cannot be overstated.

In-store **product knowledge training** and **sales assistance** are two very effective methods of creating that brand interaction with employees and consumers at retail.

**Product knowledge training** involves the use of a manufacturer-trained representatives that visit retail locations and provide in-depth training to store employees on the features and benefits of their products. Product knowledge representatives can also perform other merchandising services during their visits, such as conducting set surveys and



notifying store management of reordering needs. Through this training, the store employees are better able to discuss the products with consumers and are more likely to recommend them for purchase. The result? Better educated consumers and increased sales.

**Sales assistance** programs place manufacturer-trained representatives in stores to promote products directly to consumers, distribute literature, and generate leads. Sales assistants supplement the retailer's own sales/customer service staff and ensure that manufacturer products receive the attention with consumers they require.

Both methods, which are utilized for newly launched as well as mature products, are experiencing strong growth as manufacturers realize the benefits of creating these connections with store employees and consumers. These programs are generally managed by merchandising services organizations that are well versed in executing a variety of retail services at multi-location retailers nationwide.

In addition to the increased sales product knowledge and sales assistance programs can generate, key benefits include the invaluable feedback manufacturers receive from the stores on consumer behavior/interest and better visibility to shelf conditions. Finally, these programs also demonstrate a level of support for the products that the retailer will recognize and appreciate.

## QUEST EXPERT PROFILE

### Dan Gerstman

#### President, Quest Service Group

This month we sat down with Dan Gerstman, President of Quest Service Group, to talk about product knowledge and sales assistance programs.

Q: What trends in the retail industry are leading to the growth of these services?

A: In an effort to control costs, many retailers have reduced their sales and customer service teams to more closely match their in-store activities. There are generally fewer people on the floor to help customers, and the people that are there are most likely not specifically trained on your products. Where does that leave you? You need people in the stores that can interact with customers, introduce them to the features and benefits of your products and drive them to make the right purchase decision. Product knowledge and sales assistance programs do just that.

Q: What does Quest offer to its manufacturer clients that helps them drive sales?

A: Quest maintains a national team of high quality employees that perform product knowledge and sales assistance store visits at retailers in all categories. We cover literally thousands of stores across the country for our clients. Our employees become an extension of your company and talk to store associates and consumers about your products in an educated and enthusiastic way. What really sets Quest apart is the reporting we supply to our manufacturers on every store visit we make. The information in those reports goes directly to helping them make sales and marketing decisions on their products. In short, we become the eyes, ears, and voice of our clients in the retail

marketplace, with the end result being more rings at the cash registers.

## QUEST IN THE NEWS

### News Briefs

**Quest** is currently performing a broad range of retail services for its manufacturer clients, including continuity merchandising, product knowledge training, and resets, at thousands of stores nationwide including **Kohl's, Belk, Macy's, Bon-Ton, Dillard's, A&P, Giant, Stop & Shop, Fred Meyer, and The Home Depot**...**Quest** will participate as an exhibitor at the **In-Store Marketing Expo**, which will take place November 13 - 14 in at the Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV - Booth # 656.

## QUEST FACTOID

\$1.74 trillion

Sales recorded by Top 100 U.S. retailers in 2007

Source: NRF / STORES Magazine

439 Oak Street, Garden City, NY 11530  
Phone: 516-594-4400 | Fax: 516-594-7087  
[www.QuestServiceGroup.com](http://www.QuestServiceGroup.com)

©2008 Quest Service Group LLC

Quest Service Group LLC | 439 Oak Street | Garden City | NY | 11530