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Could it be as simple as improving showroom lighting?

Fran O'Hagan, President, Pied Piper Management Co.

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Can your dealership sell more motorcycles and accessories simply by improving your showroom lighting? Some dealerships make no change to the standard fluorescent fixtures that came with the building, while others

install bright ambient lighting as well as spotlights on motorcycles and on accessory displays. All that

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specialized lighting costs money to install and the ongoing electric bill may be higher too, so where are the facts proving that specialized lighting is worth the expense?

We dealership folks may be experts when it comes to motor vehicles, but other industries have been paying very close attention to lighting for many years, and we may be able to learn from their experience. Visit any mall and look at the lighting used by jewelry stores, clothing stores and for that matter, nearly any major retailer.

The reason you see such consistency, with plenty of bright but neutral ambient light as well as spotlighting, is that retail stores must achieve retail sales per square foot targets. These retailers learned years ago that the only way to hit their targets was to pay close attention to lighting.

How about some facts? Ten years ago General Nutrition Center (GNC) and its lighting supplier had an argument. GNC and the lighting supplier agreed that the prototype of a new GNC store design looked great, but GNC noticed that they could save a lot of money by cutting the display lighting from the design. The lighting supplier was not happy with that idea, but neither side had facts to back up their conviction, so they agreed to research it.


Two very similar GNC stores in two different malls were equipped with identical displays, with one exception: one store's end-cap display was illuminated with display lighting, while the other used only ambient lighting. A day later they swapped displays so that the other store had the lit display. 13,500 mall visitors walked past the stores during those two days, and their behavior was tracked carefully as part of the research. How many stopped to look at the display? How many walked into the store? How many handled the merchandise? And most importantly, how many bought the merchandise?

The results from the GNC research were stunning: During the time that the end-caps were illuminated with extra display lighting more than twice as many products were sold than without illumination.

Want your own proof? Try the experiment yourself. Do you have a featured motorcycle that would sparkle with an added spotlight? Or an accessory display that would benefit from greater attention? See if improved lighting would help your sales.

Fran O'Hagan is President & CEO of Pied Piper Management Company LLC, a Monterey, California company that works with motor vehicle manufacturers and dealers to maximize performance of dealer networks. One of Pied Piper's most popular services for the powersports industry is Pied Piper Prospect Satisfaction Index(PSI) sales mystery shopping to help turn more motorcycle shoppers into motorcycle buyers.

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Contact: fohagan@piedpipermc.com

Website: www.piedpiperpsi.com