

HAVE PRESENTATION, WILL TRAVEL

Presenting opportunities: the latest audio-visual equipment is truly portable. By Martyn Billing.

The professional, travelling presenter has never had it so good! Previously, taking a presentation on the move meant lugging heavy, bulky and unwieldy equipment between venues. However, the latest projection equipment is not only more portable, it is easier and quicker to set-up on arrival.

The overhead or slide projector and tripod screen has been replaced by compact multimedia projectors and screens that simply pull-up from their cassette. Of course, there are also a whole host of accessories that can add to the impact and image of the presentation, many of which are available from the portfolio of an office product dealer.

As with many items of electronic equipment, the latest projectors really are ultra-portable. Some are so compact they are no bigger than the size of a hardback novel. Indeed, when you open the case or carrying bag, the cables can take up more room than the projector itself!

As the price of these projectors has also reduced, they are now within reach of many of those who need to make presentations; even whole sales teams can be equipped at reasonable cost. Graham Leese of Acco suggests: "For maximum brightness and low weight, the ideal is a DLP projector. These provide performance with portability."

The essential accessories to go with the projector are also becoming easier to carry and to set-up. As an example, the TCI range includes a lightweight projector stand. Although this looks and is set-up like an ironing board, it folds flat when not in use and for portability the stand is more than adequate to hold the latest projectors and, with the two shelf version, a laptop or notebook computer as well.

As mentioned previously, the latest portable screens are much easier to use than the traditional tripods. The cassette is simply placed on the floor or table/stage and the screen is pulled up into place. Different formats are available. However, the most appropriate for computer presentations, including with the ubiquitous PowerPoint, is a video version in a 4:3 format. >>



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There are many presenters who need the benefit of portability. The obvious ones are sales and marketing personnel who, by the nature of their jobs, will need to make a good number of presentations. However, many other senior personnel within businesses and other organisations will also have a need for presentation equipment, not least the MD. Indeed, if the MD or chief executive can be reached, then they will often be interested in improving their company's image in this respect.

Those in a training role may well also have a requirement for projection and presentation equipment, especially in those organisations that have multiple offices or branches where training may need to be undertaken. Lecturers at colleges and universities should also not be forgotten.

When on the move, presenters should still try to create the best environment for their presentation and a professional image, in both senses of the word. Other products in the office product dealer's portfolio that can assist in this respect include display stands, with appropriate graphics, either to act as a backdrop to the presentation or for branding at the entrance to the seminar/training room or similar. Also, leaflet and business card holders, binders and folders for presentation notes and proposals, even laser pointers and name badges as personal accessories for the presenters themselves.

To make it easy for the presenter to be mobile, carrying bags are great for keeping all of the equipment in one place and protected. While the laptop or projector may be provided with a bag, larger cases and/or bags for the other equipment such as the stand, screen and various accessories can be suggested.

Whether responding to an enquiry for a piece of

presentation equipment, or indeed making a cold call, the dealer salesperson needs to understand how, when and where presentations are to be made. Also, how many people within the organisations are likely to use the equipment and how often. From there, a recommendation can be made as to the most appropriate size of projector and screen, plus other essential accessories that will be appropriate.

Even when receiving an order for a projector, as the prices have reduced, selling the accompanying accessories can really boost the order value. Indeed, these can now add up to much more than the price of the projector itself, and at much better margins, so not only adding value to the sale but also improving profitability.

Graham Leese of Acco advises, "Bundle deals including the projector, screen and laser pointer, are a good way to raise both awareness and sales results." Meanwhile, Tony Cochrane from TCi suggests that, "Dealers should examine their ratio of projector sales to screens and audio-visual furniture, such as stands, trolleys and ceiling mounts, aiming to increase this, to maximise results."

Of course, dealer salespeople should also be considering how they can use the latest presentation technology and products to win business themselves. Indeed, Steve Dracup of Promethean UK says, "Dealers should practice what you preach; it's no good if your own presentation is poor."

Presentation products are now much more portable. This combined with their reducing prices has opened up the possibility of sales people, trainers and many more presenters having their own equipment in the car and ready to go. Highlighting this opportunity and presenting the case to your clients could certainly create the opportunity for incremental sales. ■

CASE STUDY

Egan Reid and Acco Nobo

While now a proven opportunity for sales that works naturally within the framework of a traditional office supplies dealer's product portfolio, many are still cautious about getting involved in presentation products, either through lack of experience or simply not knowing where to start.

Acco Nobo's team of five corporate account managers, supported by Graham Leese, UK commercial market manager, is in place to help dealers through this tricky early stage, as recently exemplified by dealer Egan Reid's successful move into the presentation market.

Egan Reid realised that there was an opportunity for growth of their business and margins through our presentation range, so they utilised our expertise to get started," explains Leese.

Leese provided Egan Reid with ongoing, hands-on support. An example of this was helping the dealer move into the education market by contacting individual schools, visiting them and selling the Acco Nobo range, all on the dealer's behalf.

The next step with the relationship, part of a six month plan to get Egan Reid up to speed with the sector, is for Leese to meet with the dealer's sales team at the start of the year and explain how Acco Nobo's well established range can continue to grow the dealer's business. For Egan Reid's MD Andrew Reid, the experience has been nothing but positive.

"We regard the Acco visuals division more as a partner than a supplier," he says. "Headed up by Graham Leese and with his wealth of experience this forms the ideal partnership for a winning formula. This backed up by customer site visits and demonstrations helps us to jointly secure new business in this growing market, all assisted by our personalized publication of their comprehensive Viscom catalogue."

