

HOW TO...

SELL CLEANING PRODUCTS

Wipe the floor with the competition

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There really isn't any mystique behind selling cleaning and hygiene products. Many people stay in the comfort zone of simply selling their products, but if they actually take the time to ask customers about what their requirements are in the way of cleaning and hygiene products they would probably be able to sell a wide range of other items.

It's my belief that an increased number of people are now looking for specialist suppliers that can provide a single source solution. The service that office products companies can offer is now much more important than the price factor as well. The value of excellent customer service is widely recognised and cleaning products don't have to be sold on price – service support is a key selling point.

Most consumers don't consider cleaning and hygiene products to be a high priority area of their business but, ironically, the annual spend for many companies frequently exceeds their spend on other office products. An example of this was a tender for a prestigious company which had a spend on office products that was only 50% of its total spend on cleaning and hygiene products.

Generally speaking, many specialist companies in the industry stock a range of cleaning and hygiene products in excess of 2,000 skus, but if you were to do an analysis of top product lines you would probably find that 80% of sales come from only 100 of those products. You don't need to stock such a huge number of products in order to have a significant share in the market place or to be seen as a credible supplier.



Another important thing to remember is that principal wholesalers have specialists in their organisations who can always support dealers with any technical information that may be required, so there's no need to be in fear of getting to grips with those technical issues. It's a fantastic opportunity to enhance relationships with existing customers and benefit from a significant increase in profitability as well.

Also, the wholesalers are launching a whole raft of green and environmental cleaning products in January. There're huge opportunities currently with green products, it's a hot topic, for want of a better phrase, and the canny salesperson can use the extra artillery provided by the environmentally friendly badge to increase their sales in the cleaning and hygiene area. ■

TOP TIPS

>> 1.

SERVICE SUPPORT IS A KEY SELLING POINT. MAKE YOURSELF INVALUABLE TO YOUR CUSTOMER

>> 2.

DEMONSTRATE THE OFTEN HIDDEN MAGNITUDE OF CLEANING PRODUCTS IN A CLIENT'S SPEND. THIS INSIGHT CAN ADD TRUST AND LOYALTY WHICH COULD EQUAL INCREASED SALES

>> 3.

USE CURRENT TRENDS AND WHOLESALER INITIATIVES TO BACK UP YOUR SELLING PROPOSITION