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campaign name: e-Communicator October 2008

subject: PROFITsystems October 2008 e-Communicator

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Here, you can preview both versions of your campaign: html (delivered to everyone who can receive html) and plaintext (delivered to anyone who can't). From preview, you may go back and continue working, or press on to proof your work and, when ready, send.

For more help with campaigns, visit our [self-help section](#).



Calendar

October

- 20th - 26th
High Point Market, NC

November

- 3rd - 7th
Daily Process Training Class
- 27th
PROFITsystems **CLOSED** for Thanksgiving

December

- 8th - 10th
PROFITgroups New York City
- 8th - 12th
Daily Process Training Class
- 25th PROFITsystems **CLOSED** for Christmas

Training Classes

For more information about our classroom training and to make your reservation, please contact Dawn at 800.888.5565 or dawnu@profitsystems.com.

Helpful Hint: Backing up CheckMark

By Joanne Gulnac, Director of Software Support

In addition to backing up your data files on the network, you should also be making regular copies of your CheckMark data. Since CheckMark is not installed on your network, you must manually back it up onto your local hard drive. You may also want to copy the backup file to a zip disk or CD-ROM once a month and store it off-site. WinZip or a similar product would be needed to restore

Marketing: Tip #3 Database Segmentation

By David McMahon, Business Coach

I want your response – so I’m just going to be blunt. Many furniture retailers are not very forward looking in how they market to their customers. Their marketing is very similar in the eyes of the public. *Loud, obnoxious, and intrusive*. They fill mail boxes and put on loud commercials in the middle of primetime. “Thank God for TiVo”, I hear consumers say.

Agree? Disagree? Don’t have any idea? Don’t care?

Well, I’m sure if you are reading this, you do care!

How fast is the population growing within a 30 mile radius of your store or stores? Not sure? Well, the population growth of the US is under 1%. Now, ask yourself, how fast is the population growth of your target customer? Well, I bet for some of your operations it is negative!

What does that mean?

Well, to me it means that you’re not going to just make new customers and keep old customers by hitting the public over the head with the same hammer of traditional furniture ads.

Do you know what else?

Your best customers are also someone else’s best customers!

I propose that you take a good hard look at your customer database and come up with ways to offer “your best customers” something that is relevant to them.

Great, how do you do that? Through segmentation!

Using advanced database querying software like e-Marketing central, available from PROFIT consulting, you can generate campaigns to specifically target:

- Initial Purchase
- Last Purchase
- Profit Center
- Opportunity
- No Sales
- Sales
- Terms Code
- Delivery Date
- Next Purchase
- Open Quotes
- Open Sales
- Zip Code
- Mobile Telephone Numbers

CheckMark data, if the situation arises.

To backup CheckMark, open the program and then open your company data. Next, click on the "File" and choose the "Back Up Company" option. CheckMark will automatically create a zip file containing your company data, with the file name defaulting to the current date. Simply choose the folder you want to save the file in and click on "Save". Should you ever have a problem with your CheckMark data, you can restore it from this zip file by clicking on "File" and choosing "Restore Company".

CheckMark Support Information

Occasionally our support departments will refer you to CheckMark support as they are the experts on their software and are most equipped to answer your product specific questions. Information about their support plans and contact numbers can be obtained via their website at www.checkmark.com.



PROFIT *groups* facilitates highly motivated groups of similar retailers who want successfully field-tested and time-proven answers to their biggest challenges. Members meet twice per year in a relaxed, content-rich setting to share Best Practices and help each other to achieve their double-digit profitability objectives. Owners measure their financial success against industry norms, network to improve GMROI and inventory management, lower both fixed and variable expenses, and improve efficiencies. For many years, this program has helped hundreds of retailers achieve financial success for themselves, their families, and their employees. This program is designed to help you take your business to the next level.

We are looking forward to seeing our PROFIT *groups* members at the next meeting. If you would like more information, please [visit our website](#). If you are considering becoming a PROFIT *groups* member or would like references, contact us at 800.325.2018 or phyllisz@profitsystems.com.

- Salesperson
- Customer Type
- Birthday and Special Occasions

So what?

What you can do with this is to generate custom emails, direct mails, and SMS (Text messages) that allows you to:

- Send targeted and more relevant material to your customer.
- Create a true preferred customer list through opt in marketing and reap the benefits of the traffic increase that this provides.
- Send thank you notes for sales and no sales.
- Send targeted campaigns based on what they said their next room project was.
- Send campaigns to specific customers such as designers and builders.
- Market people in specific areas by zip code, city, or profit center.
- Have pre-built, professional follow-up for your salespeople.
- Schedule and confirm service and deliveries without a telephone call.
- Do online surveys to get instant feedback.
- Follow-up on layaways.
- Send invites to people who attend certain sale types such as warehouse sales.
- Send emails to age and gender demographics.
- Make your best customer more loyal to you!

Since June of this year, multiple companies have started with our e-Marketing and are gaining that competitive edge.

Basically, the SKY is the LIMIT. It's time to get that pick axe out and mine your goldmine!

If you would like a 30 minute demo, email me at davidm@profitsystems.com. (For the opportunity to help grow your business, I'll send you my latest favorite book on e-Marketing).

[Click here](#) to download my e-Marketing presentation.

Thanks!
Dave McMahon

For more information please email Dave at davidm@profitsystems.com.

Better Customer Service Through Integrated Payment Processing

A collaboration by Ricki Stark, Director of Retailer Relations and XCharge

Historically, merchants serving various markets such as retail stores, medical offices, veterinary clinics, auto repair shops, etc. accepted electronic payments via a dedicated terminal device. These devices consisted of a magnetic strip reader, LED display, and modem. Credit card terminals transmit the credit card number and purchase amount to large banking computers, which verify available credit limits and return either an approval or decline message to the credit card terminal. If a transaction is approved, the open to buy amount on the credit card is decreased, the merchant bank account is credited with the purchase amount, and the card holder is billed for the purchase.

Although electronic payments have been a benefit for merchants and consumers, it comes with additional costs. Merchants pay a fee on each transaction for the privilege of accepting credit cards. Hard costs include equipment purchases, phone lines, supplies, fraud liability, and fees. Soft costs include training, regulatory compliance, payment errors, and customer satisfaction rates.

The introduction of additional electronic payment types has compounded the costs of accepting these payments. New equipment and training are often required to accept debit cards, perform check



We have seen tough times before and will again. The demanding economy that has prices going up and sales going down is creating an environment where some businesses are thriving while others are struggling to survive.

Will you be a survivor? Our Business Survival Guide can help you improve your profitability. To request a copy, [CLICK HERE](#).

Do You Want an Opinion of Your Business? Do You Have an Opinion?

By David McMahon and Wayne McMahon, Business Coaches

We have analyzed over 400 businesses in the decades that we have been with PROFIT *systems*. We have provided our recommendations and ideas on how these businesses could improve their operations, their cash flow and their lifestyles. We have learned from the best coaches in the field and worked with some amazing business people.

Like a coach with multiple athletes this is what has happened with our hundreds of businesses (the athletes):

- Some have stuck with us, improved, prospered, and have a fantastic future.
- Some performed for a while and then quit when things got tough.
- Some fell of the radar; and some came back.

One thing is for sure. There is no business that we know of that succeeded without a coach and partner. We define success as reaching potential.

The usual objection is that consultants are expensive. Well, yes we are when compared to an hourly employee. But, when compared with getting an expert opinion and solution on how to improve the lives of your family and entire staff, we are cheap! My only advice here: choose consultants that you trust and someone that you want to work with for a long time. As they are your

guarantee services, and issue and/or redeem gift cards. The confusing array of differing hardware and interfaces often results in reduced merchant efficiency and lower customer satisfaction levels.

Today, electronic payment processing software can replace all of these dedicated devices. A single streamlined interface provides the merchant with a user friendly screen that supports all of the various transaction types. Training is much more efficient, as employees no longer have to learn different interfaces. As employees become more efficient and wait time is reduced due to faster communications, customer service levels will increase. Electronic payment processing software is capable of bypassing traditional phone lines and communicates over faster internet connections. This results in instantaneous approvals versus the traditional 20-30 second wait time for modem connections on the dedicated devices.

Another recent development of electronic payment processing software is the ability to interface with vertical software applications. This feature allows a merchant to concentrate training efforts on the core software application used to manage their business. Payments become just another part of the process in operating the software and serving the customer. Customer satisfaction levels improve through more efficient and faster check outs. Rather than receiving two receipts (one for purchases, one for payment) a single invoice or receipt includes both the transaction and payment information. Merchant costs are reduced through the elimination of payment errors, dedicated equipment, supplies, dedicated phone lines, additional training, and improved customer satisfaction rates.

Does this sound like something you would like to know more about? PROFIT *systems* has now partnered with XCharge, an industry leader with one comprehensive solution for electronic payment processing. Call 800.888.5565 today for your FREE evaluation, which includes an analysis of your current merchant statement. This analysis will show you a side-by-side comparison of your current processors rates with XCharge's processing rates. At the end of the day, it is apparent that traditional credit card processing will cost you excess money if it doesn't provide all of the benefits that XCharge provides.

It Truly is Magic

By Phyllis Zaepfel, VP PROFIT *groups*

I am a huge fan of Roy H. Williams, the Wizard of Ads. Imagine if you will my excitement when I read his latest article called "The Magic Table".

The Magic Table

You walk into a room, empty except for a table carved from crystal. Girdling the table are eleven other persons whose occupations are similar to yours.

You place ten thousand dollars on the table, your gift to the group. Each of the other eleven does the same. But this is a "magic table". You don't walk away with your own ten thousand. You get the entire hundred and twenty.

And so does everyone else.

The crystal table is a metaphor. Its benefits are real, but the stakes are much higher than a mere hundred and twenty thousand dollars. And you need not bring any cash. Bring instead the things you've learned over the years – your failures and successes, your experiments and discoveries, your golden nuggets of experience.

Everyone else will bring theirs. Are you beginning to see the power of a Peer Group?

My friend John Young says, "There's a fundamental difference between a smart man and a wise man. A smart man makes a mistake, learns from it, and never makes that mistake again. But a wise man *finds a smart man and learns from him how to avoid that mistake altogether.*"

"When people share their experiences in an atmosphere of respect and mutual trust, a special kind

coach!

To prove what a tremendous value a professional business coach is, we are going to give you a one time offer:

[CLICK FOR OUR OFFER](#)

We are doing this because we know that we can help you. We want to help you make more money and have fun doing it!

What can we do better?

David just spoke with a long time business that he has been coaching for almost nine years. He said, "The recommendations and training are great, but I have trouble making sure we accomplish everything that you lay out." This lead to the ideal coach-athlete solution: GET MORE INVOLVED. From now on we will be providing our clients who wish it, a monthly meeting whereby we will review project progress. We will make sure people are accountable and goals are met.

Alternatively, if you don't want our insight into your business, please give us your opinion on what you would like us to write about in the future. Your response is truly appreciated and it will determine our participation level and direction with the e-Communicator.

Thanks!
Dave McMahon and Wayne McMahon

For more information please email Dave at davidm@profitsystems.com or Wayne at wayne@profitsystems.com.



Coaches Corner by PROFIT consulting

Here are some of the products and services that we currently deliver:

- [New!!! 2008 Product List](#)
- [e-Marketing](#)
- [Performance Groups](#)
- [Business Analysis & Recommendations](#)
- [Financial Forecasting](#)
- [Inventory Management Systems](#)
- [Financial Management](#)
- [Customer Service Systems](#)
- [Operations Consulting and Procedures](#)

of magic occurs: smart people become wise *and their businesses begin to grow.*" Roy H. Williams

It is such a blessing when one has their passion confirmed in this way. As my appointed occupation is that of professional facilitator to five peer groups as referred to above, I am thrilled to hear others declare their power and validity. My challenge has always been, and remain, proclaiming to others the benefits of belonging to such groups.

It is much like selling the home goods you make available to your customers. You know that you have the best prices, value and service available but they still insist on buying inferior goods from a questionable business down the street. Or when you know you have a product or idea that can make a real difference in lives and you must still convince others of the value. One can't help thinking "Why doesn't everyone just understand the value of this?"

I was talking to my husband who is in the tire business the other night about the challenges facing our industries. We specifically were discussing what I do and what the PROFIT *groups* program offers. He was in awe of what a performance group/peer group offers to those in business especially in challenging times. When I told him we recently lost a couple of companies from the program because of expense cuts, he said to me "This isn't an expense is it? Don't the folks in your groups get enough ideas from the others to more than pay for the price of attending and participating? How can they afford not to be in a group?" Then he said, "Do you sell it that way?" I had to laugh. Of course we sell it that way, the frustrating thing is this... why would one need to "sell" such assistance? Why don't more folks take advantage of these programs? I have to remind myself that the people who do participate in peer groups "get it". I know people who have been in the same group for more than 20 years. They weathered tough times together but came out better for sticking together and learning what it takes to not only survive but thrive. Those not in performance groups have no point of reference I suppose. Maybe they can't believe there could actually be something so simple that would have such a dramatic effect on not only their business but their personal quality of life as well. So while it is frustrating that everyone doesn't chose to participate, I understand it is hard to believe there really is magic available.

PROFIT *groups* offers you the opportunity to join our performance group's program and network with the "best of the best" retailers in our industry. If you are forward thinking, willing to share and aspire to improve profitability, this program may be just what you need to turn your business around and begin to reap the benefits groups provide. Thanks Roy for substantiating what we here at PROFIT *systems* have known for years!

For more information call: Phyllis Zaepfel at 800.888.5564 or email: phyllisz@profitsystems.com.

- [Delivery Routing Systems](#)
- [Sales Management](#)

Contact PROFIT *consulting*
at
info@profitconsulting.net.

The PROFITsystems E-Communicator is your best source for news and information on PROFITsystems, technology, and the retail furniture industry. If you need to know about our conferences, software, or just what is new around the halls of PROFITsystems, this is the place to find it. In conjunction with our website www.profitsystems.com, we are working to provide you the most information in the most timely manner possible. If you have not registered for access to our online PROFITresource Center, please sign up at our home page today!

Debbie Sloan, Editor PROFITsystems, Inc.
The Leading Provider of Retail Furniture Systems and Solutions
422 E. Vermijo, Suite 100 Colorado Springs, CO 80903
Phone: 800.888.5564 | Fax: 719.578.9506
Email: newsletter@profitsystems.com | Web: www.profitsystems.com

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