

Losing Sleep Over Bedding Sales?

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Are you losing sleep over your bedding sales? From my experience in working with many home furnishings dealers, I find that bedding is more of an afterthought than a focus. Bedding is considered an add-on sale in which promotion, training, and retail space is little to none. Many dealers that claim to sell bedding even have mattress sets covered by linen ensembles and salespeople forget or have difficulty presenting this product to clients.

So why should dealers have more of a focus on bedding? Well the answer presents itself in some basic industry figures. With high performance dealers reaching gross margins of 45-50%, and achieving a GMROI (Gross Margin Return on Inventory) upwards of 5, bedding sales are far above most other categories in the home furnishings industry. The main reasons for this are: bedding can be acquired from vendors quickly, less need for on-hand inventory, fast delivery to customers, and relatively little preparation or after sale service.

With many dealers, the desire for increased bedding sales exists and there are many attempts to achieve increases. Unfortunately the attempts turn out to be exercises in futility and a level of frustration begins to overtake the desire for increases. The primary problem I see is that dealers are taking the wrong approach. They try to increase bedding sales by promoting price and giving special commissions and spiffs to salespeople. When the focus is on price and sales incentives, the results are higher costs of selling bedding and usually no significant increase in volume.

Bedding should be sold from a consultative approach, with focus on the customer needs. Comfort level, medical, and partner issues all contribute to getting a great night's sleep. This is what we are really selling, "Great Sleep". A shift in focus away from price and product, and making an emphasis on providing clients with a great night's sleep will allow salespeople to understand why the client requires a new mattress set and which products will address her individual needs regardless of price.

In addition, a significant bi-product of providing clients with great sleep is the benefit of repeat and referral business. When we are able to provide our customers with a higher level of service, education, and professionalism, they are able to make informed decisions. These decisions result in significant increases in quality of sleep and this is what clients talk about with friends, relatives, and neighbors.

As you can see, changing our approach to bedding sales can be highly beneficial from both a statistical view and by providing greater service to our clients. To learn more about increasing your bedding sales, contact chrism@profitsystems.com or 800.888.5565.