**Retailer Newsletter**

**April 1, 2022**

**Tom’s Business “TIPS”**

***“To Improve Profits”***

**RE: Continued Cleanliness is Vital to Business Success**

**Hello,**

**I’m sure you have read about the problems at the Family Dollar Company and their stores when it was revealed they had a severe sanitation problem at a one of their warehouses. For a major company like Family Dollar, this situation was a serious problem; but for the small business owner, it could be a death blow. Most of us could not survive a closure for any amount of time. Now ask yourself this question, “How many people will refuse to return to Family Dollar stores even after the sanitation issue is behind them?” That is always the $64 question. Many things can happen in the life of a small business that will affect their future business i.e., credit card scam (or skimming), carjacking on the premises, armed robbery, COVID-19 outbreak among staff members, the list goes on. I believe your customers are continuing to watch the conditions at your store(s). Are you still vigilant when it comes to their safety, including sanitation? I hope you are. Please check our website, ‘Clean and Sanitize Your Facility’. I am not saying your staff needs to wear a mask (when your local community says it is not required); however, I am saying wearing plastic gloves when handling food is imperative and using disinfecting cleaners is a must when cleaning. It is vital surfaces, counters, and doors ‘look’ clean. You should also keep hand sanitizer readily available for customers to use.**



**It’s essential to have sanitation instructions clearly posted in your store(s). Not only is it a good reminder to your staff, BUT it also points out to your customers that you consider sanitation serious business in your stores.**

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**We have all experienced empty shelves at grocery stores, restaurants with downsized menus, etc. Everyone has encountered items being out-of-stock from various suppliers. It can create havoc with the plan-o-grams in your store and coolers and makes it difficult to stick to your inventory placement without giving your customers the appearance your shelves are bare. Another critical point I would like to make; is the importance in your ongoing diligence in regard to watching for price changes. My grocery supplier used an (\*) on the invoice to indicate a price change. Cost increases will slowly deteriorate your gross profit if you do not raise prices accordingly. When sales are declining, it is even more crucial than ever that you watch to make sure your gross profit does not begin inching downward with price changes. Take the time to verify that the prices in your store are in line with your gross profit guidelines. Check out our website for ‘Industry Guidelines’ to be sure your Category Management is current. If you do not have time for this important duty, please delegate it to a trusted staff member (manager, CSR, or another employee). Do not overlook this important detail.**

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**Remember, it’s never too late to compliment and thank your staff for doing their job(s). If you have not been doing this in the past, now is a good time to start.**

**I have visited many stores recently where the front door signage could use a little clean up. For example: old, worn out “*Help Wanted*” signs; old, not current *“Masks Required”*; or old, incorrect *Store Hours*. Now would be a good time to replace/update signs. Remember, when customer see obvious signs of neglect or lack of attention by the owner, they wonder, “What else are they ignoring that I cannot see?”**

**Many of you realize that since our inception in 2005, T&S Management Services has been the hard work of two people, Bill Sawyer and me. I first met Bill in 1971 (we both worked for Amoco Oil Co.). I was fresh off active duty in the military, and I was appointed the manager of a Turnpike Station in Wellington, Kansas. Bill offered to help introduce the Amoco Oil policies and procedures to the new employees hired in Wellington. We continued our friendship (both business and personal) throughout my corporate career, as well as my 30 years as an Amoco Oil (BP) service station/c-store retailer. When I sold my last store in 2005, I was too young to retire and interested in sharing my knowledge with others. Bill had just completed a business venture, and not ready to settle down either. Over dinner one evening, while discussing the continuing needs of retailers to improve the operations and profitability of their stores, we came up with the idea to form our partnership. Our goal them, as it remains today, was to provide training and consulting for retailers in the c-store industry. I had lived the life of a small business owner; I knew the ups and downs of the business, but I did not have a clue how to organize my thoughts. Bill, on the other hand, knew how to organize the material for both workbooks and classroom presentations. It’s safe to say, “T&S Management would not have been successful if not for the efforts and hard work of Bill Sawyer.” Those of you who don’t know me, may not realize that I can be a little hardheaded. As a business owner, I (and many of you also) would get an idea in my head and I would move full speed ahead, without a clear plan to succeed.**

**I met a young businessman several years ago when I was invited to work for a couple of weeks in Kuwait City. My friend Mohammed was thinking three years down the road as to where he wanted to be. His ultimate business plan was to be the “7-11 of Kuwait”. Mohammed knew what he wanted; he just didn’t know quite how to get to that point. That was part of the struggles Bill had trying to rein me in. If you have participated in a seminar (either a training session or a trade show) or read one of my many newsletters, Bill Sawyer had his mark on it.**

**Bill has decided to step aside (retire may be a better word for it) from the day-to-day activities of T&S. He helped me immensely in the 50+ years I have worked with him. I plan to continue the work we started 17 years ago, knowing that I would not have been successful without his assistance. I have no doubt Bill and I will meet for coffee, or an adult beverage, and we will discuss T&S Management, the state of the c-store industry, and our families. Thank you, Bill, for all you have done, I could not have done it without you!**

**Remember, if your store is not as profitable as you think it should be, give us a call or email. If you are a supplier or organization with retailers, and they are struggling to maintain profitable stores, please reach out to us. We can help these stores operations and improve profitability!**

***"Be miserable or motivate yourself. Whatever has to be done, it’s always your choice."*
 —Wayne Dyer**

**Don't be a victim of the 5 Dangerous Words –**

***‘Maybe I’ll Do It Tomorrow’***

**Do it today because tomorrow (~~could be~~) will be too late!**

Tom
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***“Our business is making your business better!”***