

THE LESSON ROOM | BY PETE GAMBER

Converting Customers

My store, Alta Loma Music, recently participated in a national survey with roughly 200 other stores that offer music lessons. It yielded some interesting findings. One of the questions asked, “How did students first hear about your lessons program?”

According to the survey, our top area of discovery was through word-of-mouth, at about 36.2 percent, followed by existing customers for another product or service at 21.93 percent and Internet search at about 6.4 percent. That statistic surprised me. Our store pops up all over the place on Google, and we’re also on YouTube. We get lots of traffic on our Facebook pages, but only 6.4 percent have discovered us via the Internet?

What this told me is it’s a big mistake to overlook your existing customer base when promoting your music lessons program. These customers trust you for other products and services, so why not add music lessons into that mix?

For our store, this was the second-largest way students discovered our lessons program. But every dealership with lessons, even a dealer getting robust Internet search results, needs to focus on this area of promoting.

Every customer who walks into your store needs to hear your “music lessons program story.” Don’t assume existing customers even know you offer music lessons. And if they do know, don’t assume that they know much about the specifics of your music lessons. Your staff may assume that, but you shouldn’t.

To better market to these customers, consider these easy-to-implement tactics:

1. Set up a music lessons literature holder at each point-of-sale station. Have staff hand out the information, and have them tell customers about the program. Don’t stuff

the info into bags. Hand it to customers. It’s important and valuable.

2. Put a brochure in every outgoing repair case or gig bag before a customer comes to pick up his instrument. When you open the case for the customer, tell him you’ve included some info on your music program.

3. Take advantage of band instrument rental nights. If

your rental info sheet has a blank side, put your music lessons information on it. Let everyone at the rental night know that you offer lessons for non-band instruments, too.

4. Market to back-to-school customers. You know the drill. When customers purchase back-to-school supplies for band and orchestra programs or guitar classes, let them know about your program.

5. Use the phone. Call your customers, and tell them about your lessons and events.

6. Use e-mail. If you’re having a music lessons event or you’ve recently hired a new voice teacher, for example, send out an e-mail letting customers know. Always link it to your store’s website and social media. Every e-mailer needs a music lesson blurb section.

7. Create a video of teachers demoing new product arrivals. Play the demo in-store, and use it to market the product and music lessons.

The sky’s the limit for promoting your music lessons program to existing customers. Just imagine what would happen if you raised that 21.93 percent to 30 percent? It would make a huge difference to your store and your program. **MI**

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Seven easy ways to get more of your existing customers signed up for music lessons