

THE LESSON ROOM | BY PETE GAMBER

Holiday Selling to Students

When it comes to holiday shopping, there's a lot of discussion about attracting sales from outside with events like Black Friday, Small Business Saturday and Cyber Monday. But what about gearing your holiday promotions toward your community of music lesson students and families that are already in your store on a regular basis? Luckily it is not too late to develop a student selling strategy for this holiday season. This strategy should be based on stocking products that are needed by your students.



Develop a student selling strategy to keep your students' dollars in your store this holiday season

CREATING THE STUDENT SELLING STRATEGY

To create a student selling strategy, first make a gift list of musical accessories that will enhance your students' playing and learning experience. Most parents are ecstatic to have gift ideas. What if I asked you how many of your students don't have a music stand, a guitar stand, a gig bag or a stick bag? You probably don't know, and I would wager most of your students don't have one. These are great items to put on a gift suggestion list for your students and their families. Make a flier from this list and hand it out to your students. Create a video on gift ideas and post it to your YouTube, website and Facebook pages.

The holidays are also a great time to thank your students for taking lessons at your store. Offer a student discount on their purchases. Let all of your students and their families know you offer this discount. Give it to everyone who's holiday shopping, including their family members.

Hold a student-only holiday sale, and do it before Black Friday so your students get the deals before anyone else. Offer layaways, deals on special orders and a "hide it here" for larger items like drum sets.

Provide your students with a gift card to your store for referring new music lesson students. This will help drive new customers to your store during the holiday selling season.

GET TEACHERS INVOLVED

How many of your students need capos? Or an amplifier? Some of your piano students might not have a keyboard to practice on at home. What about a better guitar? Parents many times are

waiting for the teacher to tell students to get a better instrument, and most teachers don't mention it — they're just happy to have a student.

Making a list of your students by teacher and sitting down with each teacher to review each student is a great way to take notes on each student's supply needs.

Spiff your teachers for helping a sale. Many times your teacher hears that your student customers are in the market for a new instrument before you do. And many times the teacher says, "That's cool," but how many times do they say, "Let's look at what the store has here." Teachers don't necessarily feel like they are part of the sales process at your store. They teach — you sell. Explain to your teachers that they don't need to "sell" the product, they just need to help in the process by showing the parents that cool guitar, better amplifier or awesome trumpet, and get the parents hooked up with your sales crew.

Have fun developing your student sales strategy. Make sure to promote these events and special programs with every student and family. Your student sales strategy will no doubt add a little cheer to your holiday selling season. **MI**

Pete Gamber is a 35-year veteran of music retailing and music lessons. He specializes in music lesson programs and music retail consulting. He can be reached at petegambermusic@gmail.com.