

Show Me the ... Product Demo

By Mike Sawchuk

About 20 years ago, some grocery stores and other mega-retailers began to try a new marketing strategy that has proven to be very successful. They hired people to give shoppers little samples of crackers, dips, pizza—you name it.

In virtually every situation, the sales of those products increased significantly on the days they were being demonstrated. What's more, retailers won over many consumers who became regular customers, selecting more of those products each and every time they went shopping.

Distributors can take advantage of this marketing trend, as well. But unfortunately, many seem to have forgotten that product demos can be one of the most powerful ways to market cleaning tools and products, especially Green cleaning supplies.

Demonstrating how well a product works can be much more persuasive than talking about the product or asking customers to read about it in brochures. And many distributor sales reps (DSRs) who do demo their products will tell you the easiest way to increase sales is to take the demo a step further and conduct a side-by-side cleaning challenge with a competing or non-Green product, as well.

This can be done in a way that is as convincing as it is discrete. Always carry a product with you for every sales call. It's not even necessary to mention it. Most likely, the client will ask, "What do you have there?" That's the time to show them the product. Eventually, their curiosity will likely force them to see how it works. Now you can do a product demo.

Better yet, reach for another comparable or a non-Green product that the customer has and put the two to a cleaning challenge. Have the customer actually use both products. If your product is noticeably more effective, easier to use, or has other features and attributes that help it shine above the other product, then you've likely won yourself a sale.

Try one specific product for a month and see if it does not generate more sales. And once you see that it does, each month select another product and carry it with your for demos as a part of every customer contact and visit. Seeing how a product works first hand is one of the most effective ways—if not *the* most effective way—to win a sale.