Bright Displays
Will Never Match
The Good Sell

Exotic lighting doesn’t mean
a thing if you aren’t moving
merchandise across the counter

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There is so much emphasis these days
on new or refurbished pro shops that
you can’t help but wonder if all isn’t
“show” and if the accent isn’t being
taken off of “sell.”

The exotic lighting, exciting displays
and tasteful use of wall space and mer-
chandising islands, seen so often in
GOLFDOM features, are wonderful, but
if the pro and his staff don’t know how
to move that goods across the counter
to the golfer, then maybe the interior deco-
rator is the only one who is benefiting
from these new shops.

In the off-season I work in the retail
sales field. Until I started doing this a
few years ago, I thought I was a pretty
fair merchandiser. But soon after I took
the outside job I realized there were a
few things that I still had to learn.

For one thing, the retail stores don’t
spread themselves thin as so many of us
in the pro merchandising business do.
They concentrate on two and never more
than three brands. In contrast, the pro is
liable to carry as many as five or six lines
of shirts, perhaps five different kinds of
shoes, as many brands of slacks, and so
on. By ordering various items from a half
dozen houses he probably loses any
chance he may have of getting any kind
of a discount for volume buying, and cer-
tainly since he can order only so few
items from so many firms he isn’t end-
ning up on any of their preferred customer
lists. What’s more, in doing this, he may
be overinvesting his funds simply be-
cause he feels that he has to give an order
to every salesman who comes along.

To top it off, he is acquainted with so
many brands of merchandise, but actual-
ly knows so little about each, that he can’t
sell any of them convincingly.

To sell effectively, you have to know
your products as intimately as you know
your customers.

You undoubtedly have seen for your-
self how this works. If a customer asks
you a slightly involved question about
a brand of shoes you handle and you
can’t give him an intelligent answer be-
cause you are only vaguely familiar with
the shoes and don’t know all their fea-
tures, then you are going to lose his con-
fidence. And, human nature working the
way it does, he probably is going to won-
der if you know very much about the
other kinds of merchandise you handle.

Follow Up The Lead

All of us, of course, are well aware of
the selling power of the open shelf or
table display. The idea is to get the cus-

tomer to pick up the merchandise and
sell himself through the feel of it. But
what if he puts it back on the shelf? The
alert salesman is going to suggest that he
take the item outside and look at it in
the sunlight. If it’s a sweater, for instance,
the color may be dazzling in the natural
light where it may have been rather dull
inside. The salesman is going to accom-
pany the customer outside, too, and make
a point of emphasizing this. It isn’t un-
common to see them do this in the out-
side retail field.

Golf clubs should be sold the same
way. In my book it is altogether wrong to
say to a golfer, “Take it outside and
swing it and see how it feels.” The idea
is that you go along with him. Then, you
don’t sell the club, you sell the feel.

What’s wrong with saying, “Mr. Jones,
don’t you think you could get 10 yards
more with that driver?” Talk about his

grip and his swing and offer any sugges-
tion that you may think will improve
either. Study him closely all the time to
see how he is reacting to the new club.
In most cases, it’s going to feel better than
his old driver just because it is new.

Furthermore, he wouldn’t have brought
it out after picking over the other clubs
in the rack if it hadn’t felt pretty good.

May Bring It Back

The very fact that you have a person
trying out a club or a set of them is work-
ing in your favor. Be smart enough to fol-
low up this advantage. If, say, you don’t
go outside with the prospective buyer
when he is testing a club, you’re giving

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NEW AutoMAC charger prolongs golf car battery life.

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Bright Displays vs. Good Sell

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him the chance to bring it back into the shop and say, “I guess I’ll let it go for a while. My old driver still feels pretty good.”

After it’s apparent a person is favorably impressed with a thing, that is the time to start talking price. Discreet prodding usually brings out how much money a golfer is prepared to spend. When you tell him the price, don’t say, “That club will cost you so many dollars.” Rather, say, “I’ll let you have that club for so many dollars.” The latter way of putting it gives the impression that you may be making some kind of a concession and people, being what they are, usually are on the lookout for concessions.

After you have made a sale, don’t forget to ask the person, within a week or two, how the new clubs or the new shoes feel. If you’ve sold a sweater, mention that you think it looks good on the person who bought it. It pays to have a retentive memory for such things and not to be above passing out compliments.

After you have made a sale, don’t forget the word get around that “Jack McGill bought a set of clubs from you.” If they’ve brought about an improvement in his game, make sure that that gets around, too. When that happens, Jack will feel so good that he will be advising everyone around the club to buy a set of “Pluperfect Irons” when they ask him how he likes the new clubs. Fellows like McGill can be the best advertising outlets you have.

Speaking of advertising, there are many different ways you can do it at a club. The leaflets that are enclosed with the monthly bills, space in the club newspaper or magazine, etc., of course, are familiar to all pros. But go beyond these things. Look for new ways and methods of advertising and promoting the pro shop. Play up your merchandise and specials in conjunction with National Golf Week and your big club tournaments.

What’s wrong with moving your merchandise into a tent near the first tee when important club events are being staged? Something like this has a special look even if it is the same merchandise you have been displaying in the shop. What’s more it gives you exposure to people who ordinarily don’t come into the shop very often.

I have been quite successful in what might be termed cross-advertising. When
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Glaring Oversight

I run a men’s special, I make sure that notice of what is being offered is posted where the women can see it. With women’s specials, I do the same thing so that the men will see the advertising. Women, of course, are more responsive to this because if they don’t buy merchandise that is on sale, they at least tell their husbands about it. And, quite a few men, surprisingly enough, will make purchases for their wives if an ad reminds them to do so.

Job Analysis Can Cut Waste

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(week) was our only worry, we’d hire 18 men, give them each a mower and be through with the job in 45 minutes. Then we would face the problem of keeping these men productively occupied for the rest of the day without interfering with the players. This gets us around to the realistic point of how many men we require and the timing and assignment of their duties. For a better insight into the problem, let me tell you what our basic work unit of men is at Bob O’Link. We strive for top quality turf, we have no women to contend with and we have adequate equipment. Most of our play is in the afternoon. In our normal daily operation four men mow greens in the morning. These same men often rake traps in the afternoon. One man continuously mows rough. One man mows tees, one changes cups, tee towels and markers, one man mows green banks and tee banks, two men mow fairways or repair equipment or spray chemicals, and one or two men work nights on irrigation. About 6 of 12 men are engaged all day in basic work and the remainder are available for half the day for the other 1001 jobs need-