

If your merchandise is not selling as much as it should, pick out a good local merchant and get his advice on how to buy, how to display and how to stock your shop. Next, go to your salesmen and let them know what you anticipate your wants and needs will be—for example, that you will need some close-out merchandise, provided the quality is as good as the new model.

Some people at municipal courses have a limited budget. But if you give that person the proper attention and educate him to the difference between a commercial line of clubs and the professional line, the chances are that as soon as his budget permits, he'll want to buy a set of clubs from you. If you can sell clubs to only one member of a foursome, the others will come to you for their equipment instead of going downtown.

Another point: Lincoln Park doesn't handle any low-end merchandise. I don't believe in it because the people who play at Lincoln Park need more help than Arnold Palmer. Arnold Palmer could take any club in the house and manufacture a good game out of it. My golfers can't.

It has been said that if people bought clothes like they bought golf clubs this nation would be the sloppiest in the world. A professional must teach his staff to properly fit clubs to each individual. This kind of expertise is invaluable in building up customer relations.

A country club pro shop might display only one set of clubs. Mu-

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Resort

"Buying is still basically a guessing game . . . But records will greatly reduce the chances of making mistakes."

By HARRY OBITZ and
DICK FARLEY



A resort golf shop should be thought of as a seasonal business, because most of the business will be done in a relatively limited amount of time. Some shops, especially in the north, are open only part of the year. Shops in other resort areas, the South for example, may be open year-round, but their main sales volume will be concentrated into a few winter months. There are a few golf resorts which enjoy steady year-round business and whose clientele will stay about the same, day in and day out. This is the ideal situation, of course, and is the easiest to buy for because one doesn't have peaks and valleys in an inventory over the year, but a continuous level of inventory.

The importance of keeping re-

ords, as a key to the past performance of a business, is particularly true in buying for the resort golf shop (or in buying for any type of golf shop, for that matter). Without the guidelines these records provide, it is impossible for the buyer to order correct quantities and best-selling items without resorting to pure guesswork. With the aid of these records correct scheduling is practically assured. The records may be as simple or as sophisticated as time permits. We are not saying that mistakes in buying will be completely eliminated because of records. Buying is still basically a guessing game and does depend to some extent on judgment, but records will greatly reduce the chances of making mistakes.

Let's look at the standard tried and proven rules for buying.

- Analyze your clientele. What type of customers will you be dealing with? Determine what price range merchandise they will buy: high, medium or low. Are they likely to be conservative or will they want high fashion and color? Remember, most people away on a holiday are inclined to buy more expensive items and spend more money than they would at home. They are relaxed, happy and usually in an extremely good mood to be sold.

- Inventory. In a resort shop, the general rule is that if the item is not in stock when the customer comes in to buy it, the sale is lost. The day of the long vacation is all but gone. With this in mind, the resort operator is forced to carry a somewhat larger inventory and not

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bly can. Tell your customers you appreciate their business, because you do.

The municipal course player likes to be called by his first name. The more names you can remember the better. It will be reflected in your total sales at the end of the year.

Business goes where it is deserved. If you take care of the people who play at your course you'll be well satisfied at the end of the year. At least I've always found it so. □

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spread his selection of items out too much.

- Price ranges. When buying, remember that most basic items, shirts, sweaters, shoes and bags, should be bought in more than one price range. In shirts, for example, a low price range could be \$5 to \$7.50, a medium price range, \$8 to \$11.50 and a high price range, \$12 to \$18. A large operation might choose to have items in each of these ranges in order to provide a maximum selection for his clientele. Someone else may not have a market for the low price and will go with the medium and high. Another operation may wish to eliminate the high price range and offer the low and medium only. By using the price range method, after first analyzing the potential clientele carefully, it is easy to see that the operator will have an acceptable price spread for everyone.

- Styles and colors. In this day and age, men's clothing is beginning to take on the same style and color importance that women's wear did 15 years ago. The men are still way behind, but thanks to fellows like Doug Sanders, they are coming fast. Don't be afraid to follow along and buy the new

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(Left) She's lining up the action in a coordinated double knit duo of stretch knit Dacron® polyester. Her "Action D" slip-on skirt is a DiFini original, worn with a full fashion "knit de knit" top.

(Center) She scores in shorter length Nassau walking shorts topped by a semi-scoop neck bouclé shell in Dacron® polyester.

(Right) He's going "Continental" in white-on-white silky Trevira polyester doubleknit slacks, color-coordinated with his action fitted shirt of extra fine gauge Trevira polyester.

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bright high shades being retailed so well by the big downtown stores. Keep in mind that these stores are large operators with tremendous research facilities, professional buyers and long experience in the business. They don't make many mistakes, they can't afford to.

- Close outs. Almost every manufacturer has at some time during the year close out merchandise available. This usually represents goods left over at the end of their selling season, which they are willing to sell below their regular price. The big question is always, does this merchandise fit your operation? Can you use it when it becomes available?

- Shipping of merchandise. It is important to program your buying so that merchandise will arrive at the right time: Not too early so that it sits on the shelf for a long time before you have the customers there to buy it, and not too late so that it arrives well after the vacationer has gone home.

- Credit. If your credit rating is good, you may be eligible for some consideration from the manufacturer in respect to extended datings on your purchases. In some cases, an extra 30 or 60 days might be given to a very good customer.

- A last quickie tip. Buy one very expensive item for display. This could be, for example, a \$200 to \$250 golf bag. The reason for having this expensive bag is to dress up your shop, and it will make your average priced golf bags look like real bargains by comparison. There is always the chance that someone will be tempted to purchase this high priced item, in which case you simply order another to take its place. If it's still there at the end of the season, you can always raffle it off or sell it at a discount to get back your investment. □

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