

All Fueled Up!

I now admit that I'm tired of gas stations. Not the price of gas, but all the questions you're asked when you go to the gas pump. You're basically "pumped full of questions". Do you have the answers? Even when paying cash, I still have to answer several questions when filling up my tank. But as I'm filling up my tank, I realize how the fuel pump has become a sales person. Actually, a pretty good one too!

Pay at the pump? Credit or Debit? Do you have a fuel card? Would you like to use your discounts? Would you like your car washed? Which wash do you want? 1, 2, 3, or 4? No prices were offered. Press the fuel rating you wish to use. 87, 89, 91, or 93. Now I can get what I came for, gas. While pumping the gas, across the screen I get a barrage of advertisements for products that they want me to come in and buy. Finally, I'm all fueled up. But we have a few more questions I need to answer. Another about a car wash, which I picked "no" earlier and finally do I want a receipt. I count at least over 7 or 8 questions.

In preparing for this article I happened to do a little research on gas pumps. Did you know that in Las Vegas they are testing music downloads while you pump? At Sheetz you can now order your food while pumping at some stations. I knew that would be coming! Also there is www.gstv.com which is a website that offers gas stations 10 – 15 second commercials, news, and weather while you pump. I mentioned earlier about the fuel card that are a.k.a. loyalty cards that are everywhere. You can't go to a grocery store without discounting your next fill up. I'll bet you paid more than what you saved for those groceries.

Why do I bring this up? Well, as a sales person you can learn a lot from a gas pump. You see, it is doing what most sales people fail to do. Ask pointed questions that demand answers. Now, the fuel pump asks you for yes or no answers. I encourage sales people to ask open ended questions that offer customers to open up a discussion. But at the end of the day, we need a "yes" to make the sale.

Are you smarter than a gas pump? Are you a better sales person than that pump? It gets results. It keeps your attention, asks pointed questions, and gets you to answer yes or no. No maybe allowed!

When you are in front of your customer are you asking questions that will offer up answers? Gas station operators understand their customer's needs and wants. They are trying to offer that one stop shop. The days of just fueling up and going down the road are over. It's about the average sell per person. It's the same for you as a sales person. How do you increase your sales per customer? If you don't ask for the sell, you won't get the sell. Customers want to buy from people they like. Work on asking the questions that will help you grow your sales. It's much easier to grow your sales through existing customers than to find new ones.

You can learn a lot from a gas pump!

Great Selling!

Mike Popella