

By understanding your customer,

your staff will be able to maximise every sales opportunity. Suggesting an increased print size or number of reprints are obvious actions, but a little creativity goes a long way. I recently heard an example of photo lab staff selecting the best shot from an order and presenting it in a frame when the customer came to collect - add on sales are a great way to increase profits.

Learn to focus on detail!

Dennis Reid, Chairman of Retail Performance Specialists and one of the key speakers at the forthcoming PMA Conference, offers some advice for photo labs looking to increase digital printing sales



Dennis Reid will be speaking at the PMA Conference

The phenomenal rise in the use of digital cameras is presenting photo labs with a huge - and so far unexploited - opportunity. The potential market for digital printing is immense.

Currently 94% of families print their photos, and data shows that 70% of those print their pictures at home, while only 10% use professional photo labs*. The vast printing market is just waiting to be exploited by photo lab businesses that get their sales and service strategy right.

How do you do this? Firstly, you need to educate your staff and get them to work as a team. Tell them your aims and educate them about all the fine details of digital printing and complementary products you can offer, so that they in turn can give customers a compelling reason to use your services. With the support of your store managers, motivate your staff with initiatives to increase digital print output; consider games or contests to ensure momentum is maintained. For example track individual staff to see who

can get customers to print the most digital pictures.

If your staff know who they are dealing with, they will have a much better idea of how to engage with customers and convince them to use your services. Recent figures* reveal that digital cameras are primarily used by 'family memory keepers' - typically a mother in her mid-thirties. So these are the people your staff need to be confident approaching, and they need to know how to close a sale successfully.

Above all, however, you must keep your ears open to customer feedback. Coach your staff and adapt and improve accordingly, and then you will be well on the road to being the proprietor of an exceptional business.

* Industry figures by InfoTrends September 2005