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GOING GLOBAL

What It Takes to
Move Beyond the
U.S. Market

THE CBD PHENOMENON

What Retailers
Need To Know



Dazzling
Displays,
On-the-Go
Solutions,
Foundations
and More!

COSMOPROF REDEFINED

A Closer Look at

LIZA RAPAY

CPNA's New Head
of Marketing



The Retail Clinic



3 Tips for Exceptional Customer Service

Customer service has evolved. It now entails more than just a friendly sales associate that helps customers find their way around a retail store. Today's beauty consumers want to sample their options and talk to someone who knows more than they do. As a result, customer service must comprise a blend of intuition and expertise to keep the salesperson a few steps ahead of the customer. Here are a few expert tips to boost your store's customer service.

Get specific. When customers ask for help finding a product, ask them about their hair type or other beauty concerns as you walk them to the shelf. Take a moment to offer an option that may better suit their individual needs. Jessica Richards, owner of Shen Beauty in Brooklyn, New York, says that a majority of customers lack understanding about products, unsure about what they're using and why. Getting specific with customers will help them purchase the most effective products for their unique needs. "We try to be simple but helpful," adds Richards. "It's important to empower them."

Educate them. Make sure customers leave the store with more than just product in hand. Equip them with information, tips and tricks that will upgrade their skin, hair, lifestyle and future buying decisions. "Making people feel comfortable with and knowledgeable about their own skin is a huge bonus," explains Richards. It also boosts the value of your beauty destination within the consumer's beauty network, as your store becomes more than a place to shop. Your staff becomes a valued resource.

Invite them to play. Point out the nearest mirrors, wipes, hand sanitizer and any other resources they may need as they test product. By doing so, you're gently guiding them to give themselves permission to "play." Let them know you're available to offer both feedback and assistance. A *Journal of Marketing* study entitled "The Role of Within-Trip Dynamics in Unplanned Versus Planned Purchase Behavior" found that the more time a customer spends shopping, the more money they're likely to spend. In part, the extended shopping time prompts them to recall additional product needs.

Keeping your staff apprised of solutions to your customers' unique beauty concerns and intuitive to their in-store needs marks the difference between adequate and exceptional customer service.



Flooring That Minimizes Risks

Flooring is one of the more subdued, but vital components of retail design. It influences store aesthetics and may have an impact on how long customers shop. It may also affect staff productivity and well-being by precipitating fatigue, physical injuries and other ailments of workers who stand on it all day. The journal *Rehabilitation Nursing* cites chronic venous insufficiency, musculoskeletal pain of the lower back and feet, and pregnancy-related concerns as major health risks associated with prolonged standing.

Certain flooring can exacerbate injury health risks or mitigate their outcomes. Nicole Migeon, the founder of New York City firm Nicole Migeon Architect, whose specialty includes spa and salon design, says that some of the least supportive floor types common to retail and salon spaces are concrete and stone. She notes that they can be paired with vinyl mats and carpeting, respectively, to reduce negative outcomes. But she advises the best flooring options for retail are carpet/carpet tiles and wood flooring, as they're gentler on lower limbs, and as a plus, absorb sound. In addition, "Carpet tile is good if food or dirt stains [may be a factor]. Wood flooring provides a warmer environment. [And] cork flooring is a good option in retail as it is a renewable resource, easy to walk on and provides sound-dampening qualities," she says.

Of course, retailers can further minimize negative health outcomes by recommending supportive shoes, including inserts and compression hosiery, as well as exercises.

An article published by *Ergonomics* explored the connection between low back pain and workers who spend their day sitting and standing. It concluded that "standing at work without freedom to sit down at will is associated with low back pain in both men and women." In addition to forgiving and aesthetically pleasing flooring, creative solutions for intermittent sitting within the retail environment should also be considered.

For immediate flooring solutions, remember carpet, wood and cork are best!