

## **BOOSTING SALES ACTIVITY IN TROUBLED TIMES**

Many areas of the country have been hit with some over-development of lodging properties, last year, and to some extent early this year. So what we see now, in this recent economic cycle is not only an addition supply of rooms, but troubling economic times. Occupancy is down, RevPAR is down, as well as profit, in most cases. While we are waiting for the turn-around, which may very well already be on its way, we need to boost sales activity. All we need is a positive attitude about doing business in any distressed situation, and it should result in some productive sales activity. Just following some of the old basics of sales will result in some solid business.

Some hoteliers, in the interest of showing good performance may start by making cuts in the service, as well as sales and marketing efforts, when the answer really lies in improving sales performance. The idea is to start getting a better share of the available business in the market area. It may even mean an increase in the sales budget, adding some or more sales people.

The 10-Percent Formula is an old, tried and true, basic system, that has been tested, and really works. The idea is that 10 percent of selected sales activity will result in definite business almost immediately. Here is how it works:

- Send out at least 30 proposals to prospects with whom you are already working, and who have shown interest in your property. Probably more than 10 percent will result in bookings.
- Many times companies that are already supplying overnight room business are over-looked as meeting business prospects. Telephone or visit 30 of your current room business accounts; find out who make decisions on meeting locations, and sell them on using your meeting facilities. At least 10 percent of the calls will result in bookings.

- **Take two full days devoted to examining and following up on 30 or more, old existing files. Select files that have not been traced or have not come up on the trace system in a couple of years. Make contact and inquire with the old Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How. Just remember: “Once a Prospect, Always a Prospect”. This should result in at least 10 percent of those followed-up will result in bookings.**
- **Using the newspaper, or other sources for engagement announcements, call 30 of those a week. Ask the appropriate questions, and arrange visits to your property, in preparations for their wedding receptions, other related parties, as well as rooms for guests attending from out of town. At least 10% of the contacts made will result in some business.**
- **Any other pro-active activity, as reflected above, should work on the 10 formula. Of course, whatever is done, needs to be done well. It is the positive attitude that makes it work.**

**Get the sales people to take some time away from the computer, and their social networking to do some old-fashioned sales type of activities, and just watch this 10 percent formula work.**

**WC529**