

Hotel Management
February 2011 Issue
The Sales Clinic
By: Howard Feiertag

READ YOUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER AND BOOK A LOT OF BUSINESS

It really is amazing how much group, as well as individual business could be developed just by carefully reading a local newspaper. If the same amount of time would be put in on reading and analyzing the daily paper as we put in on the computer doing social networking, we would be booking more business. In most cities, of any size, in any one day, most anyone would be able to identify at least 25 good, healthy leads that would encourage a sales person to follow up with phone calls. It is just a little bit of information that could identify a lead, then, of course, a follow up by making the phone call would certainly lead to the development of additional information. There is no question about it; to some extent a number of the calls would reflect not enough to call those leads "valuable". However, some would develop into qualified prospects. It is just a matter of making the calls and asking appropriate questions to determine if that particular lead could develop into a prospect. The questions need to be open-ended, that is, to be asked in such a manner that we get the person on the other end of the phone to do some talking. We do not want to ask any questions that call for a "yes" or "no" response. The questions to be asked depend on the type of lead found in the newspaper. If there is an item in the paper mentioning a company meeting being held elsewhere, then the questions would want to gather responses concerned with company meetings. If the newspaper item has to do with social events, then the questions would want to reflect responses regarding the specific events. For an article about a company moving into town, then the questions would be about the organization and its housing of staff members moving into the city. Questions would certainly vary depending upon the particular activity mentioned in the paper.

Without question, every section of the local newspaper would have any number of happenings which could reflect some sort of business for a hotel property; for example:

In the Sports Section....how about looking for information about sporting events to be taken place on some future date in your city? There probably would be some teams coming in to participate in the event. The teams, and supporters will certainly need a place to stay; teams will need special attention for meetings and meals. Look for a name, a contact in the newspaper report and make contact. It may very well lead to another name or two before reaching the right person.

Companies moving into the city would certainly need rooms for staffers over night. Further, chances are there will be some company meetings to be held, and some entertaining for meals.

Then there are engagement announcements; which of course, should lead to wedding receptions. And, unfortunately, there are obituaries. However, people from out of town come to funerals, and there are meals involved when families get together. Best contact on these would be funeral directors.

Any, the list really goes go on and on. Just do a test one day; see how many leads could be developed in just one half hour reviewing a daily paper. Then, take another hour just to make phone calls seeking prospects from the newspaper leads developed. The whole process to do the test would take less than two hours.

If you would like a form to use upon which to write down the responses to your questions, just let me know by email and I will send you a form.

WC 625