

Category Business Advice**Version** All**Module** All**Windows** All**Updated** October 08

PUTAWAYS MARKETING TIPS

Customers who purchase putaways are valuable to your business. They spend *more money* over multiple departments (not just magazines) than average customers. They also purchase from the business *more often*, and they pay for their items on a regular basis. These tips are aimed to assist you in marketing putaways as the business benefit they should be.

Mark Fletcher, Managing Director
0418321338, mark@towersystems.com.au

Promotion displays.

When a new partwork title comes in, promote it aggressively in a high traffic area. Create a bold display, ensuring everyone entering your shop notices it. Cover the display with product and posters. Don't just use the cardboard stand that you receive with your stock. Allocate some shelf space and make it really obvious that you are selling the title.

All partwork titles are advertised on TV in the first two weeks of issue. This is your low hanging fruit (easy sales) period. A delay here can result in missed opportunity and huge sale casualties.

When a partwork has particularly strong sales, consider doing the following:

- Keep the promotion display up for the first three issues;
- Order more stock of issue one in anticipation of selling out;
- Remember the first few issues are the value hook that reels new customers in;
- Most importantly: Encourage the customer to get the partwork put away in your store.

Pitching sales over the counter.

Win the customer from the outset. Sign them up when they purchase. Pitch your special care putaway service. Tell them that:

- They can cancel at any time;
- Their magazine is put aside and protected while waiting for them to collect;
- They can be notified by SMS when the title arrives;
- You have a magazine loyalty program that they can take advantage of, saving even more!
- They can pay for it when they pick it up with no subscription charges. No contracts!

Caring for customer putaways.

The special care you provide is a key point of difference. It's hard work but worth the effort. Create a clean, organised physical process for storing your putaways. Professionally label all putaways with customer details. This demonstrates your customer care. It's important to customers that they feel looked after, and that you have their best interests at heart.

Putaway staff responsibility.

Consider this: a customer has agreed to get his magazine put away with you and a staff member enters the new order into the computer. Two weeks later, the customer comes in to the store to find out that the new issue of his magazine is not put away. The problem is that his order was put in, but the wrong title was selected.

The reason this scenario could occur is because, by default, any staff member can enter new put away orders. It is possible to select the wrong magazine to put away, especially when so many titles have similar names. To fix this possibility, create an order form for staff to fill out. Then make one person responsible for entering the new orders into the computer. This will give your orders consistency, and reduce possible losses.

This general advice is provided by Tower Systems free of charge to supported users of its Retailer system. No warranty is made as to benefits to be gained by following this advice.



Join the Retailer User Group

Send an email with your name and your business name to retailer-users-subscribe@yahooogroups.com

Contribute Suggestions

If you have a great tip or suggestion about marketing putaways, don't keep it to yourself!

Share the idea with the Newsagent community by e-mailing us at: suggestions@towersystems.com.au



TOWER SYSTEMS INTERNATIONAL (AUST.)
PTY LTD ABN 61 007 009 752

HEAD OFFICE
LEVEL 3, SUITE 10
22 HORNE ST
ELSTERNWICK VIC 3185

TEL 03 9524 8000
02 9525 6444 (NSW)
07 3136 6888 (QLD)

FAX 03 9524 8099

WEB www.towersystems.com.au

EMAIL support@towersystems.com.au

SKYPE tower.systems

Do not charge putaways to an account.

Get your customers to pay for their magazines when they pick them up. This frees up cash flow.

Setup an SMS service.

If you SMS the customer (an automatic feature that you can turn on in Retailer), the customer will be reminded to come in to your shop and pick up their magazine. This helps prevent customers from forgetting about their magazines.

Back-orders.

Stay on top of back-orders. Supply can drop dramatically after the first couple of issues of a partwork, and you may not have enough stock to cover your orders. Read through the Customer Putaway Management advice sheet for assistance on the following points. You will need to:

- Backorder what was short supplied.
- Increase your supply. You really should do this, otherwise you will have to do all the backordering again next time you receive the issue.

Customers that request a back-order should pay upfront, as backorders are firm sales (see Customer Putaway Management.)

Supplier communication.

When contacting suppliers for backorders or supply increases, don't bother calling or faxing. The phone is too slow and faxes get lost regularly. Use email. The suppliers include an email address on their invoices.

- Email leaves a 'paper' trail. This is handy for following up on missing backorders or supply increases.
- Email is faster than phone and more reliable than fax.
- Suppliers do respond to emails (generally same day). They will let you know if they cannot backorder a title. This means that you and the customer are not left in the dark.
- In your email, include the description, stock code, issue code and quantity of the title you wish to back order. This information is all available in Retailer from the ALT+T screen, or the Customer Putaway Management screen.
- You should use email to notify suppliers of under/over supplies for the day-to-day magazines you receive.

Customer putaway management.

This is a set of new tools in Retailer designed to help simplify the tracking of customer putaways and back orders. Please see Advice Sheet 114 for the full breakdown of its use.

Customer communication.

Some customers get lazy or forgetful and lose interest in a magazine as time goes on. Most customers, when asked if they want to continue with the magazine, will wish to continue with the title until it finishes. It's important to keep close tabs on what magazines have not been picked up, and call these customers and remind them to come in.

- Call your customers and ask them to pick up their magazines by a date (previous to the date due for return).
- If the customer asks you to stop their account, don't forget to take their magazines out of the drawer.
- Leave a note on the customer screen (in the 'Notes' tab) with the date, who was spoken to, the date the magazines will be picked up by, and who made the call.
- Label the magazines with a brightly coloured label. This label will make for easy identification when it is time to return the magazines. You will also know that you have already called that customer.
- If the magazines are still in the drawer by the date they should have been picked up, pull out the magazines (look for the brightly coloured labels) - make sure you get all of the magazines that the customer had putaway for them. Now STOP the customer and return any magazines due for return.
- Leave a note on the customer screen if you have stopped their account. If the customer does come in, your staff can look it up and explain what happened and why. You will look professional and the customer will see you have made every effort to help them.