

## Case study – Retail #22

This client is a retailer offering a broad selection of inventory within their niche. The business has, about three years ago, come into the hands of current ownership and has had some ups and downs in their attempts to establish significant growth since then. On the face of things, it seems clear that the business that they had taken over had many distinct advantages. First, they are in an excellent location for traffic and have long been able to use this as one of their best assets; this is important as they are in an industry that is often significantly affected by geographical factors. Second, the business is housed in a striking, antique building that has loads of charm and can easily attract attention, inside and out. Third, their predecessor had built a steady clientele over a long history of innovative programs and solid customer service. And finally, they are currently debt free and their present capitalization shows little sign of strain.

Over the course of our assessment, it became even more apparent that the client is better positioned than many small businesses for progress and growth. Our conclusions indicate that this business has many additional strengths, including no small thing that they have already in place a positively charged team that works well together and is looking for ways to grow. They feel that their purpose, both individually and as a whole is generally clear and that their interactions with the customer reflect their positivity. They feel that they are in a good location to capitalize on the market available to them and they are confident that their pricing is competitive. They also indicate that their internal appearance shows sufficient appeal and its organization is easy for their customer base to navigate.

On the other hand, there are three specific areas that our evaluations indicate are most in need of immediate enhancement to set this business on the path they are seeking:

- ※ **Staff empowerment**
- ※ **Ordering systemization and inventory strategy**
- ※ **Marketing planning, implementation and monitoring**

These three are the issues of primary importance and cannot be neglected if this business is truly seeking measurable improvement. In addition, a direct competitor is establishing a new location nearby that could have a major impact on the client and other businesses in this industry within local proximity.

The points of disagreement between the management and the staff assessments identify a list of somewhat more subtle issues that can be interpreted in terms of aligning management and staff with each other and with their collective corporate goals. Secondary steps will need to be taken to align these parties' understanding of each other and their own personal responsibilities to one another. Issues such as product knowledge, effectiveness of promotions and ordering efficiency can be resolved by incorporating specific points into our proposed solutions for the business's primary weaknesses. These additional problem spots ought to be addressed more directly following our primary solutions:

- ※ Clarification of organizational goals, values and plans
- ※ Systematic efficiency and awareness
- ※ Leadership role of management