



Food For Thought: Week of May 19, 2014

The Importance of Cross-Training

If I were to ask you to imagine your business was a commercial passenger jet, how many staff members who have been trained to land the plane would you insist be in the store at any given time? One? Two? More?

Now imagine you just bought one of those fancy door handles with a push-button pad that locks/unlocks with a combination code. How many family members would you share the combination with? One? Two? More?

Finally, I want you to imagine you have a retail music store and a solid background of experience in all but one department: Band & Orchestra. How many staff members would you insist on being properly trained to handle the *very basics* of features, pricing, availability and the handling of customer service needs like facilitating a repair or exchange? One? Two? More?

So why am I asking you this? Over the years, I've seen a number of stores get into trouble with customers as well as the administration of this program because they've allowed for only one person, "The Band Guy", to be responsible for all things school music-related. And while it's good practice to recognize someone's strengths, it's often a crutch with combo MI, guitar boutiques and drum specialty businesses. Don't think I'm just picking on the combo folks here (I moved to Veritas from a combo store!). The problem begins when that *one person* who handles the band & orchestra department takes a day off, takes a vacation or leaves the company.

The Bottom Line: It's imperative that anyone in your store with access to your rental program is properly trained with the basics: Following a phone script, answering in-store questions, completing a rental agreement, taking in a repair, handling an exchange, and knowing where to go for additional help. We offer a wealth of training opportunities right here within Affiliate Resources (most notably, Veritas U). Be sure everyone on staff has completed the Rental Agreement & Multi Form courses before this season starts. And don't single out the new hires. It's been a year since your existing team members have completed those courses. Now's a great time for a refresher!

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