

Professional presentation produces positive results in softgoods sales

Associate Kevin Tucker mixed detective work, financial analysis and computer wizardry recently to earn a major softgoods contract. In its first six months the contract has produced more than \$100,000 in new business and opened the door to additional business in other product areas.

Kevin, with Zimmer Kimbrell in Lexington, Ky. and Distributor Bill Kimbrell believe the critical factor in getting this business was the professionalism of Kevin's presentation.



Kevin Tucker

"Without Kevin's computer expertise and hard work we would still be out on the street," Bill said.

Other factors included successfully countering a STAT rebate offer and the history of friendly and professional service provided by Bill's office staff.

The account was Appalachian Health Care, a chain of small hospitals and clinics in the Appalachian Mountain area. Kevin faced a tough competitive situation. STAT had held the softgoods contract for eight years, and a half dozen companies submitted proposals when the contract was rebid.

Kevin focused on several areas to make his sales presentation stand out.

- He visited many of the chain's facilities to evaluate usage trends, costs and the satisfaction level in the field with the previous contract.

"The decision was made by corporate purchasing administration, but I wanted to do my homework," Kevin said. "I also wanted them to know we were out there and really interested."

- He structured his presenta-

tions on the account's expressed concerns, which included price, invoice accuracy, the bidder's ability to fulfill contract specifications and requirements, quality merchandise and delivery times. For example, he used the price and usage information he had gathered on the highest volume products and developed computer spreadsheet analysis to demonstrate the long-term costs savings he could offer. He highlighted Zimmer electronic ordering systems, the Zimmer fill rates that lead the industry, and availability of expert FMS support to address other concerns.

- He packaged his presentations, which included a preliminary bid and a follow-up presentation, in a professional, multicolor format developed through his own computer skills. Financial data was presented through multicolor graphs and tables that were easy to understand. He scanned in the Zimmer and AHC corporate logos and used them together to promote a partnership concept. The presentation mixed slides and overheads, and he created hardbound book copies of the entire presentation so AHC representatives could follow along.

"I wanted to give them something beyond the normal black and white stuff they see every day," Kevin said. "I think it was also important to demonstrate our level of professionalism, and that started right with the presentation."

Kevin, who admits he has never had a formal computer class, worked on a Macintosh computer and used Aldus Persuasion presentation software. Although he has a Mac at home, much of his presentation was developed using the facilities at a local Kinko copy house.

- A STAT rebate program was countered by offering free UPS shipping, an important consideration for the largely rural AHC facilities. Although AHC facilities stretch across several Zimmer distributorships, the ability of the Zimmer

events

Meetings/Conventions

Sept. 14-16 – American College of Emergency Physicians (*Seattle*).

Sept. 17-19 – American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (*Honolulu*).

Sept. 20-23 – Clinical Assembly of Osteopathic Specialists (*Chicago*).

Sept. 21-24 – American Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (*Washington, D.C.*).

Oct. 1-3 – Orthopaedic Trauma Association (*Minneapolis*).

Oct. 8-10 – Clinical Orthopaedic Society (*Denver*).

Oct. 10-15 – American College of Surgeons (*New Orleans*).

Oct. 11-14 – Western Orthopaedic Society (*Monterey, CA*).

Oct. 14-17 – Eastern Orthopaedic Association (*Puerto Rico*).

Nov. 1 to 3 – Congress of Neurological Surgeons (*Washington*).

Nov. 11-14 – American Society for Surgery of the Hand (*Phoenix*).

Nov. 22-25 – Harrington Course (*Scottsdale, AZ*).

areas to communicate closely together was also stressed.

Kevin said his experience shows the sales presentation can still be an effective sales tool itself, particularly when dealing with corporate administrators in a highly competitive situation, if the time and effort are expended to make it so.

"A presentation is more than just numbers – it must show your professionalism, your commitment to addressing the customer's concerns and at the same time differentiate you from everyone else," Kevin said. "That takes a lot of work, but there aren't any short cuts."