



Episode 7: Simple Sales Tips for Apparel Decorators

www.customapparelstartups.com/simple-sales-tips-apparel-decorators/

TRANSCRIPT

This part is very lightly edited for readability and is designed only to help those that have trouble listening to the podcast or would like some kind of reference. We know the grammar is terrible, but the information is still good!

Welcome to custom apparels startups podcast; your best source for information, news, tips and tricks to get you off the ground running and earn success with your custom apparel decorating business. So get ready to soak up some knowledge, now here are your hosts Mark and Mark.

Mark S: hey everyone and welcome to simple sales ideas for apparel decorators or whatever title we finally ended up choosing for this podcast, my name is Mark Stephenson, I am the Director of Marketing for ColDesi Inc.

Marc V: and I am Marc Vila and I am the Director of Business Development for Colman and Company, and today we are here to talk about Sales and your apparel decorating business. And by that I mean a commercial embroidery business, custom t-shirt printing shop, rhinestone transfer business, vinyl signage, etc.

Mark S: Basically that is what our titles mean, my title is Marketing and Marc's title is Business Development, but it all boils down into sales. I think both of us have got a pretty long career in a variety of different kinds of sales departments. So this is one place I think we both have the edge on most of our customers and have something worthwhile to share.

Marc V: And I really hope we could bring some knowledge to you and help you with your business. I've sold the equipment, I've sold apparel and I've sold intangible things like credit cards and loans, I've sold to retail people and I've sold to wholesale bigger accounts too. I feel that throughout my career I've run into so many hardships and blocks in sales that just being able to vent and get out some of the information and the hardships that I had will be helpful.

Mark S: Right...and I think that both of us got into sales because we have no other skills, I mean, as in you guys can embroider you can screen print or you can create beautiful graphics or bling designs but Marc and I have only a moderate amount of creative talent and mostly what we do is connect people and products and ideas together in a way that everybody wins. That is what we are going to try to convey to you so don't be afraid that we are going to talk about how to be a car salesman and close deals or things like that. We are going to through some simple ideas on how you can maybe find customers and get more out of the customers that you have, and what to do with that phone call or that meeting, you know when it happens so you'll make some money.

Marc V: Yes, and I think the first thing that I was running into when I worked in embroidery and direct to garment equipment sales was that my folks were saying that I am not a sales person, that I don't know how to sell this. Maybe your hear – I am an embroiderer or an artist but I am not a sales person and I think that is the first place that I need to get into that when you need to start to sell, what are some of the simple steps to get there, and what Mark and I had discussed a little bit was about identifying a customer in the beginning; we have talked about this in plenty of podcasts before in the email Marketing and wanted a social one we always talked about this and who would you love to sell to.

Mark S: That's a good place to start.

Marc V: Yeah, so who would you love to sell to? And who would you be comfortable in selling to,

Marc S: So fill in that blank. I mean we're going to be quiet for 10 seconds. If we can help it, what I'd like you to do now is just think about that; if you're an embroider, who would be your ideal customer? You can write it down. If you got that phone call from somebody or if you got an order from somebody and it just made you incredibly happy and successful, what would that person or that company be?

Marc V: So we got something hopefully.

Marc S: Oh yeah.

Marc V: So we got something, you know maybe it's just to throw some ideas out there for those who drew complete blank maybe it's just swim teams or maybe its local bands doing t-shirts or its big bands doing t-shirts, maybe its standup comedians doing t-shirts, but you know the more ideas you have the more things you are passionate about the more you are going to be exciting to sell to those people, so maybe don't start with I want the biggest business in my town,

Marc S: Right, so if your dream was that Microsoft calls and they want a polo for everyone that works for them. May be you want to start smaller than that.

Marc V: yea (laughing) and dream big though and if you got a connection at Microsoft go for it.

Marc S: (laughing) Then call us!

(Both laughing).

Marc V: That's the kind of the thing that we've got to find out. That is just a starting point though, you've got to jump in on a group of people that you're going to feel comfortable to just talk to.

Marc S: right.

Marc V: And then I think it's probably from there that once we have determined the group of people that we are going to talk to maybe just what should we go into first? Would it be when they contacted you or you are reaching out to them?

Marc S: Well, honestly I think the easiest thing to do is to start with maximizing that incoming phone call or that first contact, so one example that I like to use and I just put it into a post in ColDesi blog, is that fast food places are miracles of sales development. Think about when you go into any fast food joint, but McDonalds in particular as they were the first ones to figure out the whole supersize idea. When somebody calls in, what are ways that you can kind of maximize or supersize? Let's talk about people that you are already doing business with because a lot of the people that are listening to the podcasts are existing embroiders and blingers, so let's talk about how you can use a few simple sales techniques to increase almost every single sales that you can get now. And the first one, using the McDonalds example is : When you went in and you wanted to just order a cheese burger and a coke, what's the first thing that they would ask you? They would say something like: "Would you like to make that a large?"

Marc S: Well, honestly I think the easiest thing to do is to start with maximizing that incoming phone call or that first contact, so one example that I like to use and I just put it into a post in ColDesi blog, is that fast food places are miracles

of sales development. Think about when you go into any fast food joint, but McDonalds in particular as they were the first ones to figure out the whole supersize idea. When somebody calls in, what are ways that you can kind of maximize or supersize? Let's talk about people that you are already doing business with because a lot of the people that are listening to the podcasts are existing embroiders and blingers, so let's talk about how you can use a few simple sales techniques to increase almost every single sales that you can get now. And the first one, using the McDonalds example is : When you went in and you wanted to just order a cheese burger and a coke, what's the first thing that they would ask you? They would say something like: "Would you like to make that a large?"

Marc V: Yea, would you like a "large"?

Marc S: They might not even do a question, they may just say a word and raise an eyebrow and all of a sudden you are spending more money that you weren't intending to. How many times do *you* say no when somebody asks you would you like to make that a large?

Marc V: yea , well I and that's the thing is because it's a bit of programming you know and that it you know that you are affirming a suggestion. They suggested that, why would they suggest it? It's probably the best value of the money and for them it is profitable, so it's kind of what Mark said earlier, both people kind of win in that transaction.

Marc S: yea

Marc V: when you buy the "large" both, you are going to get more for your money and...

Marc S: it's a better deal.

Marc V: it's a better deal and they're going to get a little bit more revenue. It's a better deal for them as well, so we definitely need do that with *your* customers. But it does not mean *large shirts*, does it?

Mark S: No you are not recommending that someone go gain weight so they'll buy more expensive shirts, but you know there are a couple of things that you can do to make that way and make it a large kind of a meal. Maybe it is physically "large," maybe it's an embroidered design and if you are charging by the stitch, maybe you can say "You know what? Have you ever thought about making this design about 20% larger? I think it would look great!"

Marc V: and I can't tell it's such a good example that its worth expanding on and especially for embroidery or bling because that is typically a per little piece type of thing, and I see these shirts that I can't even read what is on them because it's a micro font and they fit in this little spot. Sometimes, just make it bigger, you know, stack it on top and make it a little bit taller move the phone number to the sleeve. You might get more stitches on the shirt and one of the things that I've always said is if the large is maybe also little be at the add-on but you know do you want another spot too.

Mark S: Right! Well that is kind of my "Make it a Meal" idea, so you know on the large let's talk about not just embroidery making stitches, more stitches bigger designs, rhinestone bigger designs and in screen printing and DTG. I'll tell you it's much easier in DTG, it's all about varying the size of the shirts and the prints. For example, if you are a screen printer you probably won't be able to do this as easily, but with DTG if you get a family reunion deal, or even if you got a group of reunion shirts or party shirts or shirts for church outing, or anything along those lines, you've got everybody from small to four XL, right? Well with DTG you can scale that image to match the size of the shirt better. But that is not something that you usually talk about when you are talking about an order, so you can actually say "Can I scale that design for each size? It only adds a little bit to the cost of the shirt and it will look much better." There's your "large?"

Marc V: Absolutely. That even works for screen printing too. The cost variance can be more depending on the colors, but that's an option. You say "What do we say that we make everybody the women who are the extra small to the medium this size and then the large to the to the 2X this size, it's going to cost this much on the screens but I am going to tell you it's going to look so much better" and that is a little bit of an up sell.

Mark S: And this is how you can tell that both Marc and I are married. He naturally just said "*the women are the small and the medium*" and we got to the large and the XL there was no mention of whether or not it was meant for a man or a woman, that's just classic.

Marc V: (laughing)

Mark S: Right, so you are headed for McDonalds and you heard the "large?" and now you are doing that to your customers, till the next time you get an phone call for an order now you are going to go, hey "let's talk about varying size and stitches" let's make it a better design, for you and I will just say that when McDonalds upgrades a meal and I've got a cheese burger meal here as an example that adds 10% to the price when they say large. So think about what making that *one suggestion* every phone call might do for you business, would you like to have a 15% more revenue?

Marc V: And that's when we talk about shirts. I think it is safe to say that if somebody is talking about embroidery if you are saying that it's a dollar for every thousand stitches, and if it's a 11,000 or 12,000 stitch design, if you added let's say 2,000 more stitches to that, it's an extra \$2 dollars per garment. If its 50 shirts you added a \$100 dollars. If you are doing 5 orders a week you could easily see how that adds up to the point that just by asking you have increased the sales by \$20,000 dollars a year.

Mark S: And let me ask you does that *feel* like that it's a sales pitch? I would love for you guys to comment on this podcast in particular and let us know does that feels like a sales pitch what we just said, saying that this design would look better if it was 10 or 15% larger, would you like me to vary the size of the designs according to the size of the shirt, both of those are for your customers that also benefit on this.

Marc V: Yeah, and both win and right that is an example of a win on win on both ends that really just requires of asking of a question.

Mark S: Alright, so next let's talk about that other question that you get asked a lot in fast food and that is: "Would you like to make it a meal?" So if you go in and order a burger and a coke, or if you are in subway and you order a sandwich or something like that they are 100% of the time going to ask you "would you like to make it a meal?" You'll get a little bit of a deal, but they'll get *significantly* more revenue. Just so you know the difference in making it a meal at McDonalds and making it large is a difference of 55% in the price. So in other words those two questions could turn you from a five dollar hamburger into a \$8 dollar meal, and it seems like not a lot but it's actually 55%. So making a meal is even bigger deal then asking for a large. Marc already mentioned something that I like about making it a meal; what you are doing is you are not making designs bigger or offering scale or anything like that, but you are offering a complete product, so putting the logo or the name or the phone number on the sleeve is a fantastic way in embroidery to make it a meal.

Marc V: Yes, and in screen printing too, actually in everything in all of them now that I am thinking about it. But adding a second location, I would tell that to my customers all the time you want to increase sales, just offer them for a second location on the same garment, and if you happen to have two forms of media you can even offer them this service on the second media, on the second location.

So if you are doing a bling shirt, well maybe I can put a website in rhinestone that reads too well. I have an embroidery machine and I can put or I can embroider the website under it or next to it or screen print it or detach to garment print it or use final. you can do any of these things to add a second location and sometimes it could be just something quite simple, like- if they have got a low proportion to their logo that is like a symbol in front of the logo, for example it's a plumbing company and they got a little wrench type of deal, take that little piece and just put that on the sleeve or put that on the end of the sleeve or on the collar or one other little piece and you could say that I could do that for only [X] dollars more and its going to make that shirt, it's going to be not just good, it's going to look awesome.

Mark S: Right, because not only do you have the typical look which is that I am sure that it's a beautifully digitized and embroidered logo on the front of the polo or you know maybe it's a name tag or a electricians uniform or anything on those lines but now you've got the company name with the company website or the symbol on the sleeve so that they are even more identifiable, and one grade option for DTG was that I came up with was why don't you put the design on the

back? I mean there are all these fantastic the ink and screen printing in DTG and it's not the expensive part of the process, so you know why is it always that there is a nice and beautiful design on the front and then nothing on the back or the sleeves.

Marc V: yea, and you got to add at the back you know that is a great thing to talk about with any type of printing, which is add something on the back because they say, I want the front of the shirt to say nice big letters like Class of 2015 and a little slogan and then a blank back, to answer that you've got to say "So if you flip that shirt over for only \$???? we could put something there, even if it's the same thing" you don't have to make it too complicated.

Mark S: Yeah or you the athletic version is an important point because most of the time that is only on the back, so maybe there is a name and number on the back and you could put an extra school logo on the front. Or maybe if there is a nickname or whatever it is, what you are doing is make that order a meal, so if somebody is coming in and all they want is a small embroidered logo or if they want a screen printed name on the back of a shirt or you know you are talking about it now, offer them something on the sleeve offer them something on the back and one of the biggest ones for the embroiders are how about caps?

Marc V: Yes, you have to add caps and one thing before you move on to a second product, is if you picked a niche customer that you know, as if you know their industry if you have been working with mechanics and car folks because you are in that world, if you know what kind of certifications that mechanics need to have like an ASC certification or all the folks in that shop are ASC certified, what if I walk in their shop and every mechanic had the ASC certification logo on their sleeve, how much are their customers going to trust them more as they walk in and as they shake hands they look over and they look at the guy's sleeve reading ASC certified?

Mark S: Right, that's great

Marc V: That's another thing. If you know something about them or about their niche that you can bring some knowledge in, and you can say "You know when I did this, I put bonded and insured on the collar of every single shirt," and every time the customer walked in they saw the person's face and eyes and they saw "bonded and insured" and they built trust. That is something you can pass to them, that's going to be a win-win situation.

Mark S: And right now we are just talking about people that are already calling, so you know this is business that you've already got. This is going to be that incoming order, that person walking into McDonalds and they are already standing there, how can you make the most money possible from every transaction and get happier customers?

The last thing I have on my list is "dessert." If you are in a restaurant, 100% of the time, no matter how much food you've already put down, they will always ask you if you would like to see a dessert menu.

So what I am going to say for dessert is to offer the person that's in front of you or that is placing an order on the phone, *something a little extra* and I would even say to do this for free, so for example, if you are a Rhinestone or a Prospangle user then maybe when you deliver 50 of the 'cheer designs' on shirts then maybe you give them a bumper sticker, a rhinestone decal, just give it to them say, "here I just wanted you to have this and if you like it let me know because I can easily make those".

Marc V: Yeah, that's great.

Mark S: If you are an embroiderer maybe you didn't get the sale for the sleeve logo, but just put one on one of the shirts, and I guarantee that just like in a restaurant when you see the fudge chocolate flambé dessert go by, you'll sell three more of those because somebody saw it. It will be the same thing they'll see the little extra on one of the shirts or they are going to see whatever you put in the box to go with it, and again that's more sales for you.

Marc V: I agree, I call this 'put a hat in the box'. If you are delivering embroidered shirts, put an embroidered hat in the box, hats are just couple of bucks, chances are you might not have to re-digitize. Someone is going to wear that hat and then somebody else is going to say "why didn't I get a hat?" or "how come my sleeve doesn't have my name on it? I want that."; so it's a great idea to add on a little something especially if you asked for it in the beginning, like we said before as

in if you would like some hats with this too ? Do your guys work outside? If so, they are going to want wear hats, it might as well be a hat from you. Also you mentioned the rhinestone decal the sticker, that's a great idea too. I always loved that one because it gets attention. Your customers will ask, "how much are they?" and say, "I didn't realize that it was going to look this nice."

Mark S: Alright so what we have got so far is that you are going to try to make it "a large" by scaling design and offering a little bit actual physically larger or more varied sizes of your images. You will make it "a meal" by offering different locations, etc. and you are going to include some dessert and offer them "a dessert" which is the hat in the box or the rhinestone decal, it's something extra that you would want to include.

Next I think we should talk a little bit about when you meet or you make a phone call to somebody new, because we are in a sales environment and I we think we are both very conscious of how you answer the phone and what you do when you answer the phone. One of my pet peeves I think I bring one up in atleast every episode, (Marc V: laughs) Marc knows I have a lot of pet peeves, is when you are not friendly when you answer the phone. It drives me nuts when a salesperson or business owner isn't absolutely excited when someone calls them.

Marc V: yeah, this is the one that drives me nuts too. I have called a ton of embroidery and screen printing shops. Often the phone rings and then I hear, "EMBROIDERY." Did they just say embroidery? They said it so fast I am not 100% sure.

Mark S: or worse, "THIS IS MIKE"

Marc V: Or just "hello" ... oh is this Mark's embroidery and screen printing? "YEAH" well I am sorry I am calling to bother you (both laugh).

Mark S: Yea that is what it sounds like.

Marc V: There is a reason why there is a certain protocol to answering the phone when you call up any big name store, when you call up and they say "Hi, thank you for calling so and so home of the such and such"

Mark S: Yeah, I have called them. (Both laugh)

Marc V: I used to work at a auto parts store and they would say, "Thank you for calling Advanced auto parts and batteries, we offer free battery and wiper installation, how can I help you today?" That was a mouthful I would say it 35000 times but it was so much better than when you would call the competitor and they would say, "PARTS!"

Mark S: And here is what I am going to suggest, just do this don't even think about it and just say "thank you for calling and the name of your company" like- "Thank you for calling bob's embroidery, how can I help you?"

Marc V: Yup, that's simple enough.

Mark S: Fine, unless you DON'T work for bob's embroidery, pick your own company name. sYou would be ahead of most people in the business if you would just say "hey thank you for calling" and mean it by the way, like this- thank you for calling ColDesi, this is Mark, how can I help you?

Marc V: Yea and honestly that's good enough and then if you got some other ideas you wanna experiment with I say go for em, if you want to say that something specific that you do, where we now offer rhinestone decals..

Mark S: right, I like that.

Marc V: There is nothing wrong with that and nobody is going to get offended that you said that on the phone, and it's not a sales pitch.

Mark S: and it's hard to work in the regular conversation so just get it out upfront.

Marc V: Just get creative, but you just have to be excited about it, and even if you are in the middle of work and you are busy and you are frustrated you have to imagine that every time the phone rings its possibly somebody who is going to give you \$10,000 dollars.

Mark S: Right. That is a great way.

Marc V: it might be somebody who is going to say I am going to need a thousand dollars worth of shirts and you're going to say "oh that's great!" and by the way I usually over the course of next year or two I am going to need em like every other month.

Mark S: Right.

Marc V: it might be that and if you answer "embroidery" and went kind of cold while the other person answers with a smile, which I think is another tip, people can hear the smile over the phone.

Mark S: I'm sure you guys can hear it when we are excited about an idea we talk about, because we are excited about a lot of these ideas because we are, as you know, salesmen Marketing geeks, so we live and breathe this stuff, so if you are happy and excited it really comes through. Do that, start with "Hi, this is you know, thanks for calling bob's embroidery home of the free embroidered cap with every order of 10 shirts.."

Marc V: yeah.

Mark S: Here's the rest of the conversation: "How can I help you?" then they are going to say something like "Well, I am interested in getting 10 polos embroidered with my electrical company's name on it." I would say "That's terrific!" Then the first thing I am going to recommend for you guys is that you say something that I was reminded about recently "Do you mind if I take some notes while we talk?" What that does is that it lets person on the other end of the phone know that you are going to pay attention to whatever they will say.

Marc V: Yeah, You are engaged officially and that whatever you are doing .. you've essentially said that I have things in my hand; or I don't, however whatever they are its now a pen and a piece of paper and it's about you.

Mark S: Yeah and you're more important, and honestly that's a signal for you too, because if you say that, now you actually have to take notes, and if you do take notes you'll remember the customer more, you'll screw up order less, "so, do you mind if I take some notes; your order is important to me".

The next thing that you are going to do is because they know that you are writing it down they should be okay with this: "First let me get your information and that is "you name is, your company name is, well I got you, can I get an email address, how about a phone number in case we get disconnected?" because you are going to use all this down the road. Because even if you don't get an agreement in this deal, you know that you're talking to a person that buys embroidery or bling or screen print or DTG, and I guarantee that if somebody does this once it's not going to be the last time in their life they'll ever need this kind of service. So what you are going to do is you are going to use that information later on.

Marc V: So what's going to happen is this that you go through that process and you say "okay I am going to take some notes, hey by the way what's your name" -everyone is going to give you their name then you are going to say, "okay, what's your phone number in case we get disconnected" that's like a line that's crossed. How you answered the phone is going to change how often people are going to be perfectly comfortable with answering that question. So if you answered the phone "embroidery!" and your next question is "oh what's your phone number?" that's going to give an impression that this person is not 100% sure that what I need and they'll excuse it like "let me have my boss call you".

Mark S: Right

Marc V: And people would be like I don't want to give you this information because I don't trust or like you very much, so the beginning of a phone call that is friendly and trusted in that 8-20 seconds you are going to build enough trust that

they're going to say.. I am going to give this guy my phone number because he legitimately probably wants to sell me something and I wanna buy something.

Mark S: Right, there you go, and then now the next things is this is the space after you get all the information and you say "okay that's great thank you very much, how can I help you, what do you need?" and they are going to say everything that they need: "well I need a logo digitized I've got it on a business card and I don't know what to do about that and I need 57 shirts." Just let them tell their story, and make the appropriate sounds like you normally would in a conversation to show that you are listening like Marc does all the time.

Marc V: "Got it" "you got it"

Mark S: Then what I want you to do is say "okay let me say this back to you to make sure I've got everything." Now you have gone to another level here, because you answer the phone nicely you've asked permission to take notes and they said "yes" you are taking notes and you got all the right information and now you just want to make sure that you get the order right and that is another, it's another trust builder, something else, you are asking them to spend a little more time on the phone with you, but you are going to get something for that.

Marc V: yeah and I think this is also; this is a good point to check their knowledge. as well on this, so what you can say is "Have you ordered custom apparel before?" because that is going to determine how you might go into the next part of the conversation, this is all a sales process, you're not cold cool calling somebody but this is all a sales process, so you say "oh have you ever ordered custom embroidered shirts before, have you ever ordered screen printing before." "no, this is my first time." let me give you just a minute on what this is." So now you know that they will be confused about what fees are involved, how do you charge for those services, they don't know anything, "Let me tell you a little bit about embroidery and kinda how this works. Usually we will determine what your design is where and you want it, then we have a few different grades of shirts depending on what you are looking for, and what you want embroidered. You'll probably have an art or a logo, and we will need to get that imported to an embroidery file. But I am going to walk you through all of this I am going to take care of all of that for you, so some of the questions that I am going to have to ask have to do with this."

Mark S: right, that's great you should write that down. Just stop right now and replay that and write all that down.

Marc V: so, I think that that is what you have to go by, if they have done it before. Then you also know that they bought before and they have shopped before, and that just means that you now know that much more.

Mark S: Right, here is also a point where, now you can circle back to that fast food experience, okay, so you need, 144 embroidered shirts and now you can start talking about, well normally I would do this 2 inch by 2 inch logo, maybe that's the way you're used to but you know "have you thought about doing it larger?" This might be a place where you *make it a meal*, where you tell *them have you thought about putting a website on the sleeve*, does that sound like a good idea, and now you're being just incredibly helpful especially to somebody new, because they've no idea that you could do this stuff.

Marc V: yea, you also have to play the role that you're the expert, so one of the more irritating things to me when I am going to buy anything is, I believe I mentioned this in a podcast before, because this is one of my pet peeves, is that I've never ordered, let's say I've never ordered shirts before and I am calling you as an expert, and I am going to say "I want the shirts to be really nice, what do you suggest" and the response is "I'll put it on whatever shirt you want."

Mark S: Right, yeah, no.

Marc V: that is not the answer that I wanted. They want you to say that "Nike makes are really awesome moisture wick shirt" and that's like their favorite, it's not the cheapest but it's the favorite, and you know Hanes make this ,t-shirt that's really comfortable -Gildan makes this shirt.... and they are going to ask for your suggestion and that's where the making it a meal comes into play. A lot of people when they do their hats they get all the real estate upfront but they don't do the backs, one of the more popular things people like to do is they add their websites, or a little version of their logo on the back of the hat.

Mark S: yeah.

Marc V: and I think part of the reason why some embroiders and screen printer guys and such don't offer this as those are some of the things that they are intimidated about, which is another podcast about learning and growing to do different things about, but learning new skill is like learning new things and then sell those,

Mark S: so I think so far, we are coming out on two parts already to this, simple sales ideas, and the first one is you know, do the fast food thing, and the second thing is answering those new phone calls, you know those people standing in front of you and the right procedure to answer the phone and take an order and incorporate that fast food stuff back into the up sell.

What would you say that the third part of that is? Or how are we going to talk about a little prospecting and getting out there and meeting people?

Marc V: Well, I would say that there is something that I wanna add to this but I think I am going to add it in prospecting

Mark S: okay.

Marc V: ..because that's a part of a whole cake, so maybe we are going to keep that till the end of this one.

Mark S: Okay.

Marc V: But we are talking about prospecting, so what we mean by this is these are folks who aren't your customers yet, you are not a sales person, how are you going to get to go about getting people to call you back or finding people you could call?

Mark S: So here you are, you are in a small town, you have a setup in your garage, or your back bedroom and you are just sitting there waiting for the phone to ring. I actually did a success story for ColDesi, for a company here is the Tempa Bay area where he was in that situation, he actually bought a bunch of equipment and it was slow, because he got a retail location and just assumed that people walking by would buy a bunch of stuff from him. That just didn't happen that way, so he would stare at the phone all day, and what he decided was when he was starting at the phone, is that every time he had the urge to do that (to stare at the phone) because he just didn't have anything else to do or he found himself like opening up face book for no reason or playing solitaire for no reason, that he would do one of two things: either pick up the phone and make an outbound call or throw some sample in the back of the car and start to drive.

Marc V: Yeah and so let's talk about we're looking for new customers and you're the end and you either are not comfortable with sales which is probably about 90% of the people out there.

Mark S: 99%.

Marc V: Yeah 99%, you know even a lot of sales people are not comfortable with sales.

Mark S: right

Marc V: but you are not comfortable with sales because you don't want to feel intrusive, because you don't like that if somebody is doing that to you, you don't want somebody to bother you. Or you don't know what to say, or you might be a little bit shy about it. So the samples in the car is a great idea and having a flyer make it nice by the way, you can order stuff online that looks nice that's not printed from your desktop printer, when you break down the cost of the ink on that printer its going to be the same price, so get a nice printer, get a nice flyer about who you are and what you do; maybe make up some samples, and there is nothing wrong with getting out there just walking in somewhere. You know you could always say "hey I just opened up this store like a mile down the road, if you guys need any of this, just wanted to get this to you thanks!" and maybe 3 quarters of the time somebody may say, "oh thanks! have a good one!" and walk by, and that's fine you should expect that, but then 1 out of every 10 or 2 out of every 10, or maybe 3 out of every 10 maybe even more are going to say, "oh cool I didn't know that. We order shirts all the time, I'm going to give this to Mary because she's the one that takes care of that" and you can say "oh, okay, I'd love to meet Mary" "oh she's here on Tuesdays" Write that information down and then it doesn't mean that you are coming in to pitch to Mary, you can always

say "hey I just stopped by here and she said you order it, by the way if you need it here and I am" that's very passive that's not persuasive.

Mark S: let me lay some groundwork here, I just want to throw some cold water on everybody that is out there and have you relax because in the 30+ years that I've spent in selling one thing and another, I've only talked to someone ONCE in person that was angry and rude, and they were having a bad day because of some completely different reason. So, you know you are not going to run into "OH, GET OUT, GET OUT MY OFFICE" and they are not going to throw things at you, so, basically you're going to just go in, especially if you are wearing your work, or if you have a sample in your hand or a brochure that you are going to leave behind, and you do just what Marc said, "hey I am from Bob's screen printing and we were right around the corner, I just want to let you guys know we're here, a lot of people don't know; here is my card, here is a brochure, you know "how do you like my hat?"

Marc V: And there is also, nothing wrong with being 100% Honest, about why you are there, and I tell this to sales people on the phone all the time, just say "I'm trying to get more business, you're here I don't know if you know anybody or if you need it, but if you do I'd love to help you" and nobody is going to be offended by that. For a handful of days I sold printers and copiers, office to office.

Mark S: Ouch! That sucks, that is hard work right there!

Marc V: I would walk in into a building it reads "no soliciting"

Mark S: Right

Marc V: But I had to go in anyway and immediately when they see that the guy who looks like me, because I had to wear the shirt and the tie and I had a briefcase..

Mark S: yeah, yeah.

Marc V: and they knew that this guy is coming to sell me something and you're dealing with the receptionist in an office, whose job is to tell you to go away, even then I can think of a handful of times when those people whose job was to tell me to go away, weren't a 100% nice, "oh yea, its Mary that handles that, can I have your card" "Sure" so even when you are selling something that people don't like to be sold, they would have somebody who would block you and you're not even dealing with that, you are walking into a store that sells custom tools, and you're walking up to the sales person or the manager and say "hey by the way I do this-", and then you look around nobody here is wearing a shirt that has their company's name on it and then your comfort level can adapt to that.

Mark S: Yeah, or really, even if they do, let's say you run into, or you walk into some kind of service business, like a plumbing operation or a whole sale or parts place or whatever it is and you see they got the embroidered patch with their name on it, and they got the company logo, you can say that -"why isn't the website on your sleeve", or "why aren't you guys wearing caps?", so that's the one response that I say you might get from this is that "oh we already have somebody who handles that" and you could say "okay great!" I'm just going to leave you my card, you know what you should ask them about getting embroidery done on their sleeves, because that's really popular, all my customers get that."

Marc V: yeah, yeah. And those popular things, and if you have somebody that "do that next time, it would look good," and now like you've left them with a tip, you've left them as an expert, because you got to be the expert if you are talking to them and telling them.

And now we've talked, you've got to get out there and prospect, and prospect to the niche that you have that you're into. We've mentioned dance schools before, if that is something if your kids are in it and you love it, and you have a family member in it or you've done it yourself then just say, "you know what I'm going to do since I am the most comfortable going into a dance place and I can speak about it comfortably, and I am just going to drive to those places and stop in because I know about all the leotards and all the terms that are used in there and you can speak the language"

Mark S: if anyone out there is into rhinestones, and if you have ever talked to ColDesi salesperson Tracy.. Tracy is great, she is a bling expert, she sells the more CAMS machines and ProSpangle machines that you can shake a stick at and you

know why? It's because a lot of the people that call, can relate to her because she is actually a baseball mom. So when she is talking about "oh you should like, my daughter where is this my brother plays baseball rhinestone shirt to every single game her older brother plays." that is a great and powerful sales idea.

Marc V: yeah, yeah.

Mark S: you know she is looking into her own life, these are the things that I am comfortable with and these are the things that I do, this is how I use the product, offer the same thing to other people in your niche.

Marc V: Yeah. So, start with talking to people in your niche and if that's a comfortable way to do it, or any small business is another one to that's another place you could go to, that's an easier place to go to, so if you are going to walk into a big brand furniture store, that might not be the best place to start for you.

Mark S: you're going to end up there because that's going to be a bigger deal if you do get it, but I agree better place to start is with a small local company.

Marc V: if it's a local company start there, because chances are that the person that you're going to walk into if it's not the owner, they know the owner directly. And it's going to be more likely for you to get a call back.

Mark S: and also it's not just that, you are going to have a better opportunity to make a difference there to have an impact. Because if you go into a big car dealership or ace auto parts, they are pretty well kitted out. they know what they are doing, but if you go into a three man plumbing operation and you say "you are now the expert", "I see you've got a patch with your name on it you should have a logo here, you should have a cap you should have something on the sleeve, let's get started and let me help you grow your business."

Marc V: yeah, put the certification on the sleeve put the certification on the sleeve, put the license and bonded on the collar as I said before, then they are going to say "I didn't even think about that!" so, and then now you mentioned about the gentleman here in Tempa who would pick up the phone and that was a really intimidating thing to do, so that's why I kinda started with go with your niche and just go and talk to people, but now that you've gone out there and you've found out that Mary makes the decision and you found the owner and he said "oh yeah that'd be cool if I put that on the shirt sleeve and I put licensed on the collar."

Now can call them up and you can just say one day, "hey, thanks for your time that day, you know by the way when we spoke you know it's a good idea to create, a question that you have to write an answer to, so, if you are talking to that plumber, "oh, how much is that going to cost," "oh what shirt you have there, do you really love this shirt?" "because I know I have this cold Adidas shirt that I just started doing embroidery on that I love (Exhale), I don't have all the details on me, how about this I'm going to go back and I'm just going to find out the cost and then I'll find out what it'd be to embroider that on it, I'll call you to just let you know, I know that you are not ready to buy right now" and if he is like you're trying to sell me this and to it you can say "I am not selling you anything now, you know because you're not" so you can just give them a time and then you can just call them to thank them and say "hey remember who I am" there is nothing wrong in doing this.

Mark S: I think we might be into the middle of the road or the advance kind of stuff here, I'm going to kick one in as well, if you are in the situation where you don't get the opportunity to talk to the owner, or the general manager, somebody does give you a name and when you do go back and you call later that day or the next day, then you can say, make a note of the receptionist or the person on the front counter for when you call. Then you can say, "hey john this is Mary from Mary's embroidery shop, John at the front desk gave me your name and the receptionist said that you were the person to talk to about embroidered shirts or screen printed shirts, the person at the front desk said that you had a charity even coming up and said you might need some T-shirts," so, what you have done there is kinda like bridged that gap and now you are not a complete stranger and now it's no longer what they call a 'cold call', you've got somebody to reference or something to reference.

Marc V: yeah, they know you through Joe who works upfront, now they know you through him because you spoke to Joe, Joe said that they have a charity event coming up and I was wondering if you need, if I could help you out with that.

Mark S: So I think literally Marc and I could talk about this stuff, all day.

Marc V: Yeah (laughing)

Mark S: because, you know we've sold a lot of different things and its actually fun for us to do that.

Marc V: I'll finish with what I was going to mention before when I said I have one more thing to add, and that's the 'follow up phone call,'

Mark S: Right.

Marc V: so, if somebody calls you up or if you go out and somebody asks you "well how much do you charge for hats" or if somebody goes out and asks you about an order you provide, a quote whatever it is almost nobody is going to give them a follow up call.

Mark S: that is right.

Marc V: I'm telling you that to test it, call 3 people, if you don't wanna do it in your city, pick a random city, call 3 places, ask for a quote on embroidery or screen printing or whatever it might be..

Mark S: Anything

Marc V: ..give them your phone number, see how many of them will call you back. I am going to guess: Zero.

Mark S: Right and I'll tell you that I am in the middle of it right now. Because I am part of a condo association and we need new windows and we need it painted. and I have called at least 11 people, emailed or called, filled out the forum on the websites and I've gotten no calls back on the windows and I've gotten one quote on the paint and the guy who quoted never called me back.

Marc V: yeah, so it's just call back and again it's not any intrusive, invasive type of phone call, "hey we spoke about some shirts last week I am kinda putting together my plans for next month and my orders for next week, wanted to see if are you looking to order that soon, because I can then add you in the mix" and then they might say "hold em off I don't know yet" "all good and just call me when you are ready, thanks!"

Mark S: Yeah and that's something which you can setup when you do that first initial phone call with them. Of course you'll ask: "when you're going to need the shirts?", but you can even ask permission to say, listen "I'll probably give you a call Monday or Tuesday, of the next week if that's okay to see if you have any questions."

Marc V:, yeah just to follow up with it. I am going to email and then create a timeline, that this is kind of the last thing that I would say that if this is the event and then the follow up, now this is a little bit of an advanced technique but create a timeline for the customer and stick to it. So two things I think that 's a great last point; so they call you up and you say "let me get that quote together for you because I cannot do it on the phone" lot of time you can't especially in a complex order, "I'll have the prices for you or I'll email it to you is 4oclock today, is that okay?" –You MUST get it done by four "and then how about if I give you a buzz on Thursday make sure you got it and see if you have any questions?" and then call them on Thursday. Because you build trust and you show that you stick to a plan and because now what you've proven to them in a subconscious way is that you know how to take an order, you know how to deliver an order on time, because you just done that.

Mark S: yeah you're a pro. You do this for a living.

Marc V: you do this for a living and that's going to mean that that will make the difference between you getting a sale or not getting a sale, and the follow up phone call which I said is kind of the key thing, it's going to make the difference between "you know what, I am going to go through this he seems like a nice guy"

Mark S: you know what I am actually at the end of this. So, excited about the potential money that you guys are going to make if you do *anything* that we talked about, if you are not doing any of the things that we talked about in this podcast today, then when you implement any of them your business is going to go up, you are going to make more money from every sale, from every phone call, from every visit that you make when you are out doing prospecting, and I am happy for all of you guys because I think it's going to make a difference. If you need to stop right now and play this thing again because there is some great information here.

Marc V: Yea, it's going to feel great that first time you make an extra hundred bucks, 200 bucks or I mean 1000 dollars but even that first little bit or somebody said, I was at 20 shirts when they add the logo on the sleeve to you and that was just only 2 bucks a shirts I just made 40 extra bucks for asking a question,

Mark S: Right, that's the way it works.

Marc V: and so the first time when that happens it is going to feel good and then you're going to get addicted to it, and you're never going to stop.

Mark S: Okay, I've got we've got some homework for you and then we've got a request. Your homework is to listen to Episode 3: Social (not Social Media) Marketing. I'd like you guys to listen to that podcast because there is a lot of stuff about the prospecting side of what we've been talking about; who to target and how to get out there in the mix and the questions to ask when you are in front of somebody, and that works nicely with the sales that we've been talking about.

Marc V: yeah when you combine those two together the knowledge of those two together and within a month I have no doubt that you're going to have a customer that you wouldn't have gotten before.

Mark S: that's absolutely true and because we've provided such great information for you I am going to make a request and that's if you are listening to us through iTunes, if you found us on iTunes, if you would do us a favor and rate us, I don't care, if it's one star or if its 11 stars, just go ahead and rate the podcasts that helps us just spread the word about what we are doing here and you know you can help other people in the apparel decorating business by doing that.

Marc V: yeah, absolutely and also we ask to share this amongst your apparel decorator friends even just small business owners, you know we discussed a lot specific, to our field, but this is great for any small business owners, so if you know anyone else who could benefit from some of these things please share it, whether you share it on social media or you forward somebody a link or both, that's fantastic. Share our website, and then go on our website and comment or connect with us directly, we are approachable people so if you go on to our website, you click on the contact link and ask us a question 100% you're going to get an answer from us and then we just ask that you share it with other people and iTunes rating is really great for us, it's going to help us to do this longer through motivating us to be better and knowing that we are helping some folks out and actually helps with some of our iTunes rating, so more people can find us the people who need this kind of information, so you're going to help other people out too, in addition to helping us.

Mark S: Our egos, our egos, we really need some more inflated egos.. and I think that's going to be it, I think we better get out of here and sign off before we get into any more trouble.
Alright so thanks for listening to another customer apparel startups podcasts.

Marc V: Thank you, and remember it's a caspodcast.com and we'll see you next

