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Ideal BUSINESS Ideal LIFESTYLE



Escaping Flooring Industry Groupthink

(2 of 2) *By Jim Augustus Armstrong*

Every flooring consumer has an unspoken question: *why should I buy from you instead of your competitor?* The company which does the best job answering that question wins. The problem with too many dealers is they do a lousy job answering this question. Most flooring advertisements and websites use the name, rank and serial number formula: business name at the top, a list of products and services, and contact information. This message screams, "Hey, we're just like everyone else!" Dealers spend thousands upon thousands of dollars broadcasting this message.

The laziness, apathy, and/or lack of marketing savvy which causes the majority of dealers to remain trapped in flooring industry groupthink represents a golden opportunity for FSS members.

You Are Not A Floor Dealer

Escaping industry groupthink means thinking differently than your industry peers and colleagues. If you ask 100 dealers what they do, 99 will say, "Sell flooring." This is wrong on two counts. First, you're not a floor dealer. You're a marketer. As the owner of a flooring business your number-one job is to be the rainmaker.

**"WHEN ALL THINK ALIKE,
THEN NO ONE IS THINKING."**

- Walter Lippmann



Continue on page 2



“Nothing happens until a sale is made.” - Thomas Watson, Sr., President of IBM from 1914 - 1956

If you don't have enough clients walking through your door, then the inventory, back office support, building, vehicles, and all the other components of your business are nothing but money-sucking overhead.

Second, you're not selling flooring. What you actually ARE selling is more complex than that. You are selling:

- “Home” (which means different things to different people)
- Peace of mind
- Prestige
- Happiness
- Warmth
- Memories
- Comfort
- Health
- Pride
- Family
- Beauty
- Style
- Image
- Tradition
- Wealth
- Keeping up with (and surpassing) the “Joneses.”
- Success
- Convenience
- Connection
- Community
- Recognition
- Satisfaction
- Inclusion

People aren't in your store to buy flooring. They are there to buy what flooring provides: a powerful emotional experience. Flooring is merely the mechanism through which you provide this experience to your clients. The floor dealer who “gets” this concept and—most importantly—acts on it has a massive competitive advantage over dealers who think they are selling “flooring.”

Many of the strategies in FSS are designed around this concept. They are carefully engineered to “sell” people powerful emotional experiences. Let's break down some examples:

The Neighborhood Advisor client newsletter. This uses client recognition and client involvement devices to create a sense of community with other clients, and connection with you and your business. Social proof (testimonials) provides peace of mind, a sense of community, and makes them want to have their own “success story.”

Design Audit. Provides peace-of-mind because it positions you and your team as trusted advisors. The Design Audit questionnaire identifies which of the emotions your client is trying to achieve by buying flooring. “What's important about new flooring to you?” is one of the questions in the Design Audit. By asking this questions, and listening carefully to the answer, you'll learn a lot about what is motivating your client to buy flooring. The Design Audit, more than any other strategy, taps into virtually all of the emotions listed above. In fact, there are over 21 trust-builders built into the Design Audit process.



Continue on page 3

Facebook. All the posts we design for our members are engineered to trigger one or more of the emotions listed above. However, the posts which most effectively communicate these emotions are photos of your clients. In the Digital Floor Dealer Facebook training video I spend significant time training you on how to get these kinds of photos so we can create posts out of them.

Testimonials. These provide peace of mind to your clients. They position you as a trusted advisor, and they make consumers want to have their own “success story.” These prove to prospects that they will experience the emotions listed above if they work with you. Some places to use testimonials include:

- Testimonial brag wall
- Throughout your showroom
- Website
- Facebook
- Neighborhood Advisor/e-Neighborhood Advisor
- Email signature line
- Instead of “on hold” music, have recorded client testimonials
- Welcome pack
- Shock and Awe campaign
- 5-Around strategy
- Any marketing, digital or offline

Reviews. These are online testimonials. Everyone reads reviews, so it’s important that you have an ongoing stream of online reviews being posted to Google and other sites. We provide our Digital Floor Dealer members with an automated review-generating system.

Continue on page 4

SHOWER THOUGHTS

“ When you say “forward’ or ‘back’, your lips move in those directions.” *By ManofProto*

“ When you want the wind to go away, you actually want it to stay.” *By Keisangi*

“ When you read a fictional book, you’re basically imagining someone else’s imagination.” *By EightLeggedLizard*

“ Somebody is eventually going to die while operating a self driving car and ruin a party when they get there.” *By dr337*



Zero-Resistance Selling Environment. One definition of environment: The aggregate of surrounding things, conditions or influences. For FSS members this means creating an immersive experience for your clients which compels them to buy from you even if you're more expensive. The Design Audit process is a big part of this. Sitting down with clients and going through the questionnaire with them is immersive. It also means setting up your showroom so people feel good about opening their wallets and spending money with you. Here are some tips:

- Clean
- Clutter-free
- Curated (You don't need 200 samples of beige LVT.)
- Open (Not over crowded with displays which block out windows and lines of sight.)
- Warm lighting
- Clean, tastefully designed restroom
- Music to banish the silence
- Laminated beverage menu for walk-ins
- Cookies, bread, popcorn made in your store. (These make nice treats for your clients, and the aroma is inviting and relaxing.)
- Testimonial brag wall
- Photos of clients with testimonials in picture frames hung throughout your showroom
- Man cave
- Kid's play area
- Sales team dressed professionally

You have access to tools, training and done-for-you marketing to create complete and total differentiation from your competition. My advice is that you implement one or two strategies per month from this series of articles and from the other training in FSS. Never stop implementing strategies which differentiate your business. Doing so will also keep you miles away from flooring industry groupthink.

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