

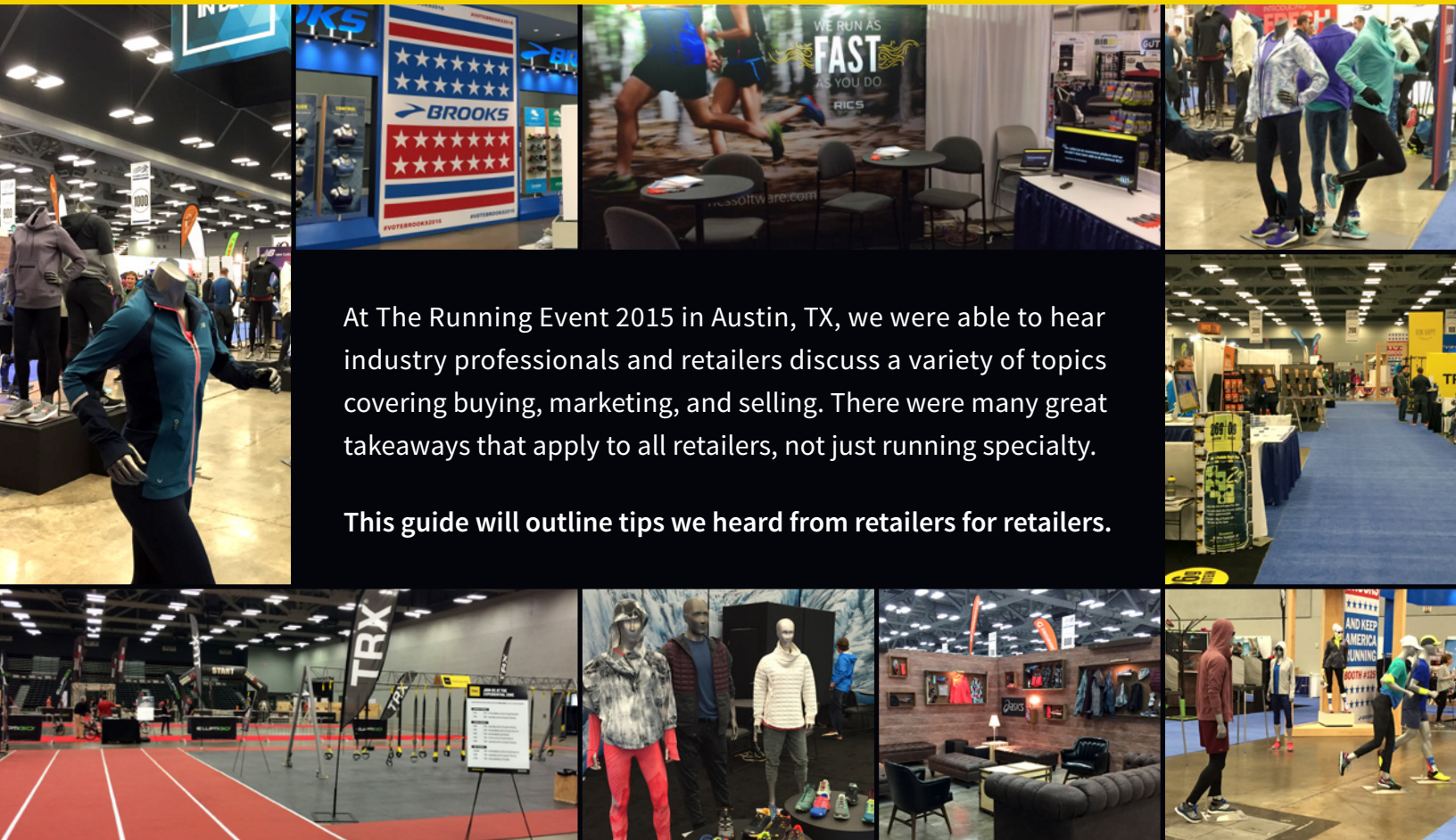
A photograph of three people running on a paved path during sunset. A man in a light blue long-sleeved shirt and black shorts is running on the left. In the center, a woman in a bright yellow-green long-sleeved shirt and black leggings is running, her back to the camera. On the right, another woman in a teal short-sleeved shirt and black leggings is running. The background shows a cityscape and hills under a warm, golden sky.

# RETAILER TO RETAILER

TIPS FROM **THE RUNNING EVENT 2015**

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## TIPS FROM THE RUNNING EVENT 2015



At The Running Event 2015 in Austin, TX, we were able to hear industry professionals and retailers discuss a variety of topics covering buying, marketing, and selling. There were many great takeaways that apply to all retailers, not just running specialty.

This guide will outline tips we heard from retailers for retailers.



# BUYING

Buying is an important part of retail business. Making sure you are buying the right products, at the right time, for the right customers, will help your business grow. It is essential to form relationships with your vendors, reps, and customers in order to be a successful buyer. Also, having insight into your data and knowing what has performed well in the past, what the current trends are, and what customers are asking for will help guide your buying decisions.

- **VENDOR:** Retailers need to work together with their vendors to ensure they are selling what consumers want. It can definitely be frustrating that brands can so easily sell directly to the consumer. It is important you talk to your vendors and find solutions that will work for both of you. Their main goal is to grow brand awareness, so work together with your vendors to help them achieve that.
- **SALES REP:** It is also very important for reps and retailers to have a strong relationship. They should be seen as partners working

towards a united goal with clear expectations. Store owners should collaborate with their reps to create a yearly marketing and sales plan to provide focus and grow the business with the specific brand. Make sure you have regular visits and check-ins to make everyone is on track. You should treat the rep as you would your own employee.

- **CONSUMER:** How well do you know your customers? Because they are who you are buying for, it is crucial you know them as well as you can. Do your research, get out of the store, find your customers in their normal environment, and form relationships with them. Learn their habits, passions, routine, etc. so you can know the exact experience and products they are looking for when they come to your store. Using data to find your most frequent customer can also help you with the buying process. A great buyer knows the customer, visualizes assortment on the floor, and hits the bottom line.

“If we’re not listening to our customers, we’re not learning and developing a relationship with them.”

– Tom Griffen, Retail Trainer at The Mann Group



# MARKETING

Having a marketing strategy that attracts customers to your store will help you be a more profitable retailer. If you are not putting yourself out there and creating awareness, people will be less likely to visit your store. The selling process starts before a customer enters your store and continues long after they leave.

- **AUDIENCE:** Know your target audience. Personalize your customer experience by segmenting your clients and running targeted campaigns. These days, Millennials are holding a lot of spending power and are likely your largest client base. Are you capturing their attention through your marketing campaigns? You should ensure you are offering the omnichannel experience Millennials expect. Are you reaching your customers across several mediums, like mobile, social media, email, web, etc.? Being digitally active is essential in this day in age.
- **BRANDING:** One way to capture Millennials and market to them is

through belief-based branding. Are you carrying brands Millennials believe in? They are more likely to choose brands that see the world the same way they do and believe in making the world a better place. As a retailer, you can demonstrate what you believe in and value. Convey that to your consumers and connect with them to attract them to your store.

- **CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE:** Are your marketing campaigns bringing customers to your store? If so, are you offering a customer experience that is making your shoppers want to stay and buy? It is important you are engaging your customers in and out of your store. Make your customers feel like they are a part of a community by organizing events that are social and inviting. Happy hours, running events, and social media contests were tactics retailers shared as being an effective strategy for creating a store of the future for their customers.

“Retailers: align with brands that are going to bring more people in. Brands that people believe in.”

– Tom Flierl, VP Marketing and Business Strategy at Hanson Dodge Creative

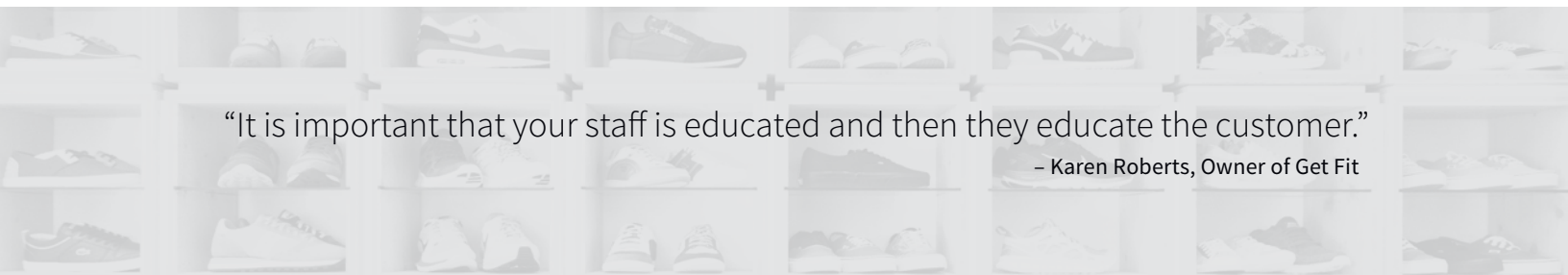


# SELLING

Selling is where you see the return on your investment. A successful selling strategy combines people and technology. Are you equipped with invested employees and reliable technology to help you sell? Buying and marketing are what will set you up for sales, but it is essential you also have the right staff and technology in place.

- **STAFF:** Is your staff good at selling your products to consumers? What could they do to sell more? First, you should understand what your staff's goals are while working for your company and help them get there. Goal-setting is the cornerstone of building a team that is successful. If your staff feels valued and appreciated, they are likely to sell more. If employees don't believe in the product they are selling, they're not going to be able to effectively market it to your customers. As for running specialty trends and issues, it has been found that customer service, the fitting process, and staff product knowledge are what drive in-store purchases, so it is important you can depend on your staff to deliver.

- **EDUCATE:** Having product knowledge and being able to educate your customers will help you sell more. Educate your clients through demos in-store to keep them coming back again and again on their own accord. If you're a specialty run retailer, you can put together a demo that teaches customers about fit, cushion, and how long running shoes really last. If you give your clients the knowledge to replace their own shoes, you've created a system to get customers back into your store to test their current shoes against new versions.
- **CHANNELS:** Being able to sell on multiple channels is only going to increase your profits. Having an ecommerce site is essential. Also, considering how quickly mobile commerce is growing and how many people are using their mobile devices to research products, it is important that your site is mobile-friendly. Another essential channel for appealing to Millennials is social. They are using social to connect with brands and for product research as well. Make sure you are plugged in to these different channels so you can sell more!



“It is important that your staff is educated and then they educate the customer.”

– Karen Roberts, Owner of Get Fit

# RETAILER TO RETAILER

Using these tips will help you become a better retailer overall because you will have the knowledge to buy, market, and sell well. Create strong relationships with your customers, employees, vendors, and reps, and make sure you are up to date on the latest retail trends, so shoppers will continue to seek your store out.

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