



Q4 / 2019

Happy Holidays

Regardless of which holiday you are celebrating this year, we want to celebrate you!

THANK YOU

to all our dealers and customers who have worked so hard to provide top-tier service, cleanliness and maintained a standard of EXCELLENCE in 2019!

LOOKING FORWARD TO A NEW YEAR

We were able to accomplish a lot together in 2019! Looking forward to 2020, here are the biggest ways we can continue to grow our standards:

Name Tags: The largest missed opportunity in 2019 for image scores was name tags! Many of you missed getting that 100 score (and the \$350 dollar award) because the cashier didn't have an attached or sewed-on nametag. In the coming year, don't let such a small obstacle keep you from scoring big and earning rewards.

Hand-Written Signs: Another easy win! Hand-written signs look sloppy and unprofessional. You have a computer and a printer, if you need a temporary sign, simply type it out and print it!

Lot Cleanliness: No one wants to pull up to a dirty fuel island. Make it a priority this year to train your employees to check for trash and other debris around the fuel island.



Read more at midstatespetro.com/news

LOTTERY COMES TO MISSISSIPPI

For the first time, Mississippi residents can purchase lottery tickets in the state. Mississippi has earmarked lottery revenue to fund its infrastructure and road maintenance for the first \$80 million each year, with the remaining going to education. The Mississippi Lottery Corporation approved four games, with new games being introduced in the coming weeks. Powerball and Mega Millions will be available starting January 30.

If your store isn't selling tickets, visit mslotteryhome.com to apply.

WHAT MAKES YOUR STORE DIFFERENT?

It is unlikely that yours is the only convenience store in your city. Even if you're in a small community there's likely at least 3 other convenience stores within a few miles of yours, and a few dollar stores as well! So what then is setting your station apart from the rest?

How unique is your:

1. Deli and food choices
2. Coffee station
3. Bathroom amenities

If there is nothing different about your station, there's no reason for customers to visit you!

THREE WAYS TO DEAL WITH ANY CUSTOMER

"There are only three ways to deal with any customer. Acquire a new one, upsell a current one or make one buy more frequently. Now acquiring a new one is very difficult, but if I'm already stopping by, ... the customer is already there, so now you can upsell him or make him buy more frequently. You already have the customer... and some [retailers] take advantage of it, and some don't." -Daymond John

Convenience retailers are missing big opportunities to increase revenue every month by not properly training their employees to cross-sell, and upsell. Cross-selling is the skill of selling an additional item that complements the product the customer is buying: A drink with a slice of pizza, a snack with a soft drink. Upselling is getting the customer to switch their intended purchase for a more profitable product, such as a suggestion to buy a 32-ounce drink over the 16 ounce, or pointing to a larger bag of chips for only 50 cents more.

Many retailers don't educate their staff in sales techniques, but the need is still there. If you can upsell every forth customer who walks in, you've added a major boost to revenue. Train your staff to ask the customer if they'd like a deli item, or have them point out any promotions you may be running. Just getting the customer to think about another purchase increases the chances of more sales day-to-day.



IDEAS TO GO

SELF CHECKOUT IS HERE

You've probably used or seen a self-checkout kiosk at one or more big box locations such as Wal-Mart, Target or Lowes. Believe it or not, this technology already exists in convenience stores across the nation.

Is self-checkout a good investment for your station? That depends on several factors. If you frequently have long lines, have a young clientele that understands technology, self-checkout may be a solution that keeps your overhead costs low while keeping customer service high.

Gilbarco Self-Checkout



Gilbarco is offering a self-checkout system that will allow customers to scan items in the store and pay with a credit card. Hotkey's can be programmed for Deli items as well. Carded items such as beer will alert a cashier to check the customer's ID. Currently the self-checkout does not ring up gas, but potentially will in a future update. This solution has a large up-front cost with no monthly fee. 2 of these systems can function side by side so customers don't have to wait if someone is already using the self-checkout.

Skip Self-Checkout App



Skip is a mobile app that allows the customer to scan items using their phone, pay using their account, and leave without interacting with the cashier except for carded items and gas. The only hardware required is an iPad, which will show the cashier how many Skip customers are in the store, and what they are purchasing. Skip has no upfront cost except for the required iPad but has a monthly fee of 100.00 dollars per month. They do not take any percentage of the sales. With Skip the customer's phone is the point-of-sale, so your cashiers have more time for other things and there is less upkeep with POS hardware.

Are you interested in Self-Checkout?

If you are interested in setting up self-checkout in your store, let us know. Having self-checkout in your store is an opportunity to break out from the competition, as you would likely be the first station in your area using this technology. Not to mention the savings in overhead costs! Having an electronic cashier can free up your staff to do other neglected work.

Midstates will be releasing more information and training on self-checkout as it becomes available.

Award Winners

100% Q3 Mystery Shop, 2019

Check the scorecard for your results!

