

Amy Sharp

901.218.6909

asharp101@comcast.net

Career Highlights



Created a business that employs 20 people and generates \$3M in net annual sales

Is experienced in all aspects of the business: buying, selling, merchandising, product placement, window displays, fashion forecasting, inventory control, employee training, hiring/firing, sales incentives

Continues to grow business each year; quadrupled the size of the original store in Germantown, Tennessee; opened a second one in Little Rock, Arkansas

Created a sound business model; stays true to core values—never compromise quality, adapt to changing market demands without losing business focus, and provide outstanding customer service

Ensures the business is committed to making charitable contributions (local, national, and global) on a regular basis

Listens to feedback provided by customers and representatives in the business; is flexible and open to change; takes direction well from other professionals

Encouraged employees to reach for their best; three former employees now own stores

Amy Sharp is a successful owner of a retail junior clothing store based in Germantown, TN. Her career in the business began more than 20 years ago when she ran a clothing franchise store. During that five-year period, Amy learned much about the business. When the opportunity to open her own store arose, she said yes to the exciting challenge. For the past 16 years, Amy has been instrumental in her store's success. It has always made a profit, demonstrating her ability to make the right decisions in each area of operations. She also understands that there is an art to running a business—she intuitively knows what will sell and how to position merchandise, and she connects successfully with her customers. Amy knows her market extensively and remains assertive when it comes to offering the best clothing lines for her customers. Charlie Brown, the owner of Charlie Brown and Associates, a wholesale junior clothing company based in Dallas, Texas, stated, *“Long term retail buyer with some of the most successful businesses in the Southeast, you can trust that Amy Sharp will increase your sales and strengthen your business.”*

Knowing The Customer By Focusing On What They Want

Amy knows that her success as a business owner is dependent upon her ability to select merchandise that her customers will buy. Her understanding of what they want comes from reading the trade magazines, talking to representatives in the field, and most importantly, spending time with her teenage customers when they come into her store. She listens carefully to the girls as they look through the merchandise on the racks. She wants to know what they like and dislike and why they react positively or negatively. With each interaction, Amy adds to her database of knowledge about what appeals to her customers. Therefore, every time she attends a trade show, whether it is in New York, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, Atlanta, or Dallas, she is prepared to buy carefully. Following are key steps Amy takes to make sure that she is a winner when it comes to buying merchandise:

- She stays true to her customers by ensuring that she buys what they like, not what she likes.
- Amy internalizes all of the relevant information about her customers. For example, she knows the type of music they like and the movies they watch; she knows how and where they spend their leisure time; and she knows what they consider to be “must” items in their wardrobes.
- Amy can predict which items will sell with a high level of accuracy. When she decided to sell animal-print hand bags even before they were popular, for example, she was told she was crazy for buying so many of them. However, she could not keep enough in stock—her customers loved them.

The Result: By focusing on the whole person, Amy has consistently selected merchandise that her customers will buy. She has produced a profit for her store because of her ability to buy the “right” items at the “right” time.

Building and Maintaining Strong Working Relationships With Industry Professionals

When Amy first started working in the fashion industry, specifically the junior clothing business, she knew she had a lot to learn about building and maintaining strong working relationships with those involved. Her success relied on it. Her “can-do” attitude was integral to being able to build a reputation as a true professional. Her goal was to be recognized as someone committed to being in the business long term. Following are key steps Amy took to build a solid, credible reputation with industry professionals:

- Researched the lines, determining the ones she wanted to buy at market
- Met with the representatives of each of the selected lines; knocked on a lot of doors before being able to place orders
- Brought a level of assertiveness necessary to gain the respect of the representatives
- Built a high level of trust with each representative, following through on all of her commitments
- Communicated effectively, listening to what they believed were the best sellers
- Paid her bills on time
- Demonstrated her ability to sell the clothing lines

The Result: Amy has built a strong reputation. Freddy Simon, who owns a showroom in Atlanta GA, stated, *“From going to market and buying for 16 years, Amy Sharp has a strong understanding of what building a brand means from both the wholesale and retail sides of the business.”*

Building a Marketing/Advertising Approach Based on Customer Satisfaction

Amy possesses a natural ability for marketing and advertising—she enjoys everything about this part of the business. Her focus has always been on building and maintaining a loyal and satisfied customer base. She knows that customer referrals are the most efficient way to market and advertise. And, this type of marketing requires an attention to all details. For example, she:

- Welcomes customers by name when they enter the store
 - Knows her customers likes and dislikes
 - Informs customers when new items arrive
 - Gives customers honest feedback about the look and fit of clothing items that they try on
- Amy also understands that entertaining her customers is basic to her success. It starts by creating an ambiance that draws individuals into her store. Her window displays, for example, say to individuals passing by, “Come in and take a look.” Once potential and repeat customers enter the store, they are given a first-hand look at what is new—the merchandise is displayed beautifully and each display is carefully thought out.

The Result: Amy's attention to all details, including the selection of music played and the desired aroma in the air, pays off each day. She has created an environment that her customers can trust will be consistent. The strong reputation of her store has been her most important and successful marketing and advertising tool since the inception of her store.

