

June 22, 2023

## How to effectively engage clients at a trade show

I caught up with Jim Haritonas and Phil Saddleton on a recent trip to Melbourne. Phil is the CEO of Source It Retail and Jim the Director of Online Growth Consulting. We have known each other for many years and worked together in various industries. During our conversations Jim said he had been to the Retail Fest trade show as an exhibitor and the conversation highlighted key but basic skills in sales.

To give you an indication of the size and importance of the event:

- There were over one hundred exhibitors, two thousand visitors, businesses, and staff members
- The trade show is an annual event for retailers, e-commerce specialists and industry professionals
- The latest trends, best practices, and technologies are presented.

People lined up patiently waiting to speak to Jim to ask for his advice about their e-commerce problems. The question that came to mind is, what did Jim do differently that attracted this level of interest? He had no giveaways, gimmicks, or free handouts. It was Jim and his stand.

The answer lies at the heart of sales. Jim genuinely cared for the retailers he spoke to, particularly those who are struggling in their business; he actively listened to their e-commerce problems; asked relevant questions, and openly gave his professional advice. There were no strings attached. He simply wanted to help and be of the greatest value to them. This was done in a non-subservient manner.

The typical feedback Jim heard was, *"You have been courteous and taken your time to answer my questions and not tried to sell me your products or services."* Some clients appreciated Jim's manner so much they gave him their e-commerce business there and then.

So, what was the outcome? In monetary terms Jim achieved \$22,000 in sales, with more business to follow up, post event. He also created a world of goodwill.

In summary Jim:

- Was being himself, genuine
- Treated customers with respect
- Showed empathy for customers' situations
- Actively listened
- Asked relevant questions
- Provided a solution in a concise manner
- Asked for feedback on his advice
- Asked what they would like to do.

We can get caught up in selling information overload particularly through the internet and end up losing touch with what selling is about. Stick to the basics of finding clients and take your time to develop the relationship based on trust. When a client feels 'I like, trust and believe you' the sale follows shortly after. Clients are not interested in products and services perse. They are interested in the value, the outcomes, products and services provide for their business...the basics of selling.



Kurt is a sales practitioner who created sales records in five industries and won major sales awards including Salesperson of the Year. The products and services he sold were newly released, consultative, relationship and retail. He is a recognized sales expert, successful author and respected sales and personal development coach who has guided organizations and salespeople to vastly improved sales performance and profitability. His clients range from small to multinational companies in Australia, the Middle East, Asia, and Europe. Kurt is the author of 21 Timeless Insights for Sales Success sold in eight countries. Available on [www.amazon.com.au](http://www.amazon.com.au) or [www.salesconsultants.com.au](http://www.salesconsultants.com.au). His latest book The Most Unlikely Salesperson will be released in July 2023.

If you have any questions about this article or want to discuss a specific sales situation then contact Kurt directly on +61 412 252 236 or email [kurt@salesconsultants.com.au](mailto:kurt@salesconsultants.com.au).