

Yes, February is so slow... but it's a great month to...

By Bonnie Kallenberg

I know, here comes February, the slowest retail month of the year. So, make the most of this down time! Think about all those things that you have put off because it was too busy, make a list and get going! Here are a few ideas to get you started:

◆ Buy a guide book on this year's Conference city and read it. I got mine this fall at a yard sale. Highlight places you want to see while you are at the NARTS Conference and plan an extra day or two to visit them.

◆ Do your employee evaluations. Take time to write helpful examples under each category. Schedule a meeting with each employee to thoughtfully go over the evaluations. Evaluation meetings have given me great insight into each employee and it is a good time to tell them your goals for the shop for the coming year. This meeting will help get everyone "on the same page."

◆ Paint your fitting rooms and restroom. Spruce them up if needed. Clean baseboards.

◆ Redesign your ad copy for this spring. Freshen it up and be ready for heavy spring advertising. If you do commercials, shoot a new one. If you do radio, have a company create a jingle for your shop. If you do postcard mail-outs for spring consignments, go ahead and order them and have employees address and stamp them while it is slow..

◆ Change your credit card processor if you can find a better rate or better service. Negotiate rates with your current processor if you feel your sales volume for credit cards has increased since you first signed on. In most cases, the more volume your store does, the lower the percentage rate, but I have yet to have a processing company call me to tell me I have earned a better rate, I have always had to call them. Be sure to contact Cynergy Data, NARTS Official credit card processor, for a quote. I switched . . . the transition was seamless, they saved me money and the customer service is great. Check it out, it could save you money.

◆ You should have your W-2's by now. Start with that and collect everything you will need to prepare your taxes. Organize receipts, add up charitable contributions, contribute to your IRA, call your accountant and make that appointment—get ahead and file early!

◆ Last but not least, register for the NARTS Annual Conference!



The next thing you know, March will be here and you will be ready for a busy spring season. So February really is a great month . . .

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