

Press release for Swadlincote and Melbourne
For immediate and general release

Shop doctor inspires retailers

Retail marketing specialist and Shop Doctor Diane Jackson recently delivered two ‘surgeries’ for independent businesses in Swadlincote and Melbourne on different aspects of marketing – and delegates were delighted at the inspiration and help they received.

The programme from the popular series “Retail Survival” and “The Shop Doctors” has been running throughout Derbyshire during 2009. It was devised by retailing specialists Main Marketing & PR Limited and presented by MD Diane Jackson, on this occasion at the Sharpes Pottery Museum in Swadlincote.

Jo Kucharzelsska, manager at the Yard Bar and Cafe in Swadlincote was really enthusiastic “I very much enjoyed the course”, she said. “I found it very inspiring on a number of levels. It was a good reminder of things I knew but maybe had forgotten to do for a while; I certainly feel I have ways to move the business forward. I was motivated and inspired personally to help me in my work, to pass on to my staff, to improve the customer experience here – and to learn ways to encourage more people to the town.”

Melbourne business owner Yvonne Robey from Firm Figures echoed Jo’s sentiments. “I thought the programme was very useful – it made you more aware of how you do business and the service levels you offer. I now see things so much more from the customer’s point of view.”

Aimed at supporting local businesses and creating prosperous towns, the programme is part of Derbyshire County Council’s Market Towns Initiative, funded by the Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership (DDEP). Each series contains four workshops which explore different facets of retail marketing, including injecting great customer service ideas into business, specialist help and ideas on advertising, promotions and visual merchandising. ‘Doctor’ Di included some significant insights into the psychology of retailing and shared some of the secrets and tricks of the trade that many retail giants use.

Delegates included a variety of business owners with different levels of experience – but there was something for everyone. Sheila Cunliffe, owner of Shumart in Swadlincote said, “I’m so pleased I went. The course was very well presented, easy to follow and I’ve learned an awful lot. I’ve been in retail for over 20 years and I didn’t think I would learn too much, but I really did. I’m so glad to have made the effort after a long day’s work – you always wonder if it’ll be worth it, and it really was.” Ann Booth, who runs Phoenix Pet Foods commented, “I’ve got a master’s degree, but it still made me examine and assess everything that we do in an objective way. It refreshed lots of things I knew already and brought them to the forefront of my mind, which was very useful.”

All independent retailers in Melbourne and Swadlincote were invited to attend these free workshops and predictably some felt that after a long day’s work, they didn’t want to make the extra effort to go along. Those who did go, found their effort was well rewarded and came away with more than just updated knowledge. The reaction from Linda Ferriday, owner of Ashbourne’s soft furnishing business Linda Elaine, was quite typical: “Initially it’s hard to commit to taking time out for two full evenings, but I’m so glad I did it because it was excellent. It gave us the confidence we needed – it was a real boost. Diane has certainly given us ideas on finding a competitive edge, but the most significant benefit is the new found confidence we’ve got now.”

Further workshops in other parts of Derbyshire – and in other parts of the UK – are also scheduled. For more information about the rest of this series in Derbyshire, or other similar programmes, contact The Shop Doctor on 0845 129 9948 or by Email to shopdoctor@retailsurvival.co.uk.