

transformation comes as standard

New Forest High Streets & Village Centres Conference





Jim Smith

**Customer Experience
Director, Hampshire**



What is the Context?

- Online retailing has increased during the pandemic
- Staycations are up, maybe to stay
- People are still cautious about venturing out
- Customer service standards have been hampered by Covid restrictions, but service expectations remain high
- High Street businesses need to trade well to catch up on deferred bills etc
- All pointing to the fact that the High Street needs to thrive





So why is the High Street visitor 'experience' so important?

- At a Town / Area level:
 - meeting the expectations of visitors to the New Forest
 - meeting the needs of locals / residents all year round
 - Overall success of businesses - image
- At a business level:
 - The High Street experience is the sum of experiences in the businesses visited – if one experience is poor, it reflects on the rest
 - Not just retailers, but all businesses and local authority services, (transport, parking, toilets etc)
 - If it is good, people will come again, tell others, blog, review,



What have we learned?

- Worked in over 40 towns countrywide, a number across Surrey and Hampshire, including a number in the New Forest
- Findings:
 - New Forest towns – 89%, all towns – 87%
 - Do well – generally good service, particularly independents and specialists
 - Not so well – window / outside image, use of social media, subtle sales and promotion skills



So what can we all do?

- Online presence – make sure people know where you are, what you do, and what you are good at
- Facebook is free, use it to do the above, and build a following
- Court online reviews – people look
- Does your business look as good as it can? Go and look at it from across the road, are your entrances and windows clean, interesting and eye catching?
- Are your staff geared up to give great service? Do they do the basics: smile, engage, ask good questions, show good product knowledge, promote etc



So what can we all do?

- What can actual stores do that online firms cannot?
 - See
 - Try on
 - Test out
 - Colours
 - Advice
 - Additional sales
 - Take back
 - Help
 - Emphasise value



So what can we all do?

- The *big one* – subtle sales:
 - Upsell – the power of suggestion
 - Promotions that add sales
 - Emphasise ‘value’





Actions

- We hope these few minutes have triggered some thoughts
- Nothing changes unless you do something, so what will you do – write down the 2 key things you'll think about
- Any questions or further questions – contact us

transformation comes as standard

New Forest High Streets & Village Centres Conference

Jim Smith
Insight6
Hampshire

Jim.smith@insight6.com

07721 535429

