

Happy Employees, Happy Customers

RETAILERS IN THE EQUINE TRADE WORLD struggle with finding and keeping good employees. Insight and help might be available in a new book, "Trader Joe's Adventures," by Len Lewis. It details Trader Joe's success in proving that happy workers make happy customers. Among the theories in the book: Wages aren't everything. Lewis claims employees remain at Trader Joe's because the company has created a culture of success in which everyone does the same job at one time or another and where suggestions are respected. The company encourages employees to engage shoppers in conversation designed to make them feel as if they have an expert to turn to for assistance. Trader Joe's also uses formal training to teach employees about the products sold in the store.

Ringling Up Purchases

IN THE NEAR FUTURE, when your customers come to the checkout to pay their bills, they may get out their cell phones instead of their wallets. Mobile commerce, as it's called, is expected to be available in the United States in the coming months. It's already popular in Japan, South Korea and Germany, according to a report published in *Business Week*. Credit or debit cards, along with electronic cash, would be stored on phones. Customers would use them to beam data to electronic checkout systems, authorizing the purchase of everything from groceries to saddles. While futurists are giddy, realists point to statistics that show cell phone users in the United States have been slow to warm up to using their phones for anything but talking. There are also concerns about security.



Retail Thieves Getting Organized

WHILE AN OCCASIONAL SHOPLIFTING INCIDENT here or there has been the rule for retailers in the past, thieves are getting organized to boost their profits. Organized retail theft happens when a cadre of scofflaws swoop into a store and remove thousands of dollars in merchandise, then resell the items over the Internet or out of their home.

More than three-fourths of loss prevention execs nationwide told the National Retail Federation (NRF) in May that their company had been a victim of such theft in the past 12 months. About half said they have witnessed an increase in organized criminal activity.

"From small 'mom and pop' stores to big-box retailers, the entire retail industry is feeling the impact of this growing problem," said Joseph LaRocca, NRF vice president of loss prevention. The federation has created a national database, which will allow retailers and law enforcement to share organized retail theft information and intelligence. 📱

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