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This is Anthony Mantova for community comment. My brothers and I own Mantovas Two St. music, in Old town Eureka. For six years we've built our business. 2015 was the best year yet. Cashflow & ^{store} sales are up. Negativity & Stupid Ideas are ~~at~~ @ an all-time low. To win in 2016 we must continue to practice smart strategies.

Doing business in Humboldt differs greatly from the rich money-belt of Marin County & it's quite different from the big box chain stores in Redding. In Humboldt County, a person's average income is over 20% less than the National average. That's not good.

So - Get out your Pencil - here's how you sell in Humboldt.

→ customers say they care about price, but they really care about value. Your job is to ask questions & pay attention to their answers.

→ Because incomes are low, you need to offer creative solutions like layaway & trade-ins.

→ Follow-up by owning your space. Look your customer in the eye & ask ^{the} tough questions "what payment plan works w/ your budget."

→ Be confrontational, Respectful & Upbeat.

→ Use Humor to break the ice, never letting a customer get away w/ saying "I'm just looking!"

Most important, you need to ask for the sale - You need to close...

Now, so far everything I've said sounds like something that should apply everywhere, right?

OK, Mr or Ms Merchant - Try to do all this when there is a drug-infested, homeless person standing in your doorway ~~and~~ yelling. Causing a scene and upsetting your customers [↳]

~~Or maybe when you are attempting to sell a guitar, and a hobo w/ open sores on his hands walks in & starts touching merchandise.~~

army artists.

Whatever the situation - the homeless, the drug dealing & the untreated mentally ill, make Eureka a difficult town for business.

Local officials are not going to solve this problem. The answer is to be constructive -- while confrontational. The answer is to improve your skills, your store's inventory & master your sales game. You need to bring your productivity level up to overcome the urban outdoorsman situation.

I'll leave you on an upbeat note. I have a customer named Jake. He can often be found holding a sign, panhandling for money ~~at the~~ ~~where~~ ~~Henderson~~ descends down the hill into Broadway. You should never give money to Panhandlers, but please consider giving a donation to Jake the next time you see him. He needs the money, to pay off a 12 Hundred dollar layaway @ my store.

Henderson meets Broadway.

thanks to your contribution

Hey! Before you laugh, he is only 200 dollars away from owning a nice guitar & sound system!

Stay tough, entrepreneurs. Focus on what you want & make success yours in 2016