

December 4th 2015

We had the pleasure of meeting Mike Weddings at a Hunter Douglas sponsored seminar in the Fall of 2012. Both principals of our company, Rick Damerou, Dawn Damerou (Brother/Sister Team) attended along with our Showroom/Marketing Coordinator. We had in the past been to many HD sponsored events however this was to be the first time we would hear Mike speak. The title of the seminar was Inbound Marketing that incorporated Social Media, e-marketing SEO, Google and more.

Have to say that Mike is the most Dynamic, Humorous speaker we had ever heard that gets and keeps your attention the entire course. He uses many of his own personal experiences as well as others he has mentored. It was perfect timing for us at ASAP Blinds we were looking to build a Brand and not just a name. And without a doubt this seminar change the way we looked & were doing business.

There were many things discussed at the seminar that we took away and implemented. For example for consistency throughout & visibility, all of our ASAP Blinds staff wear company logo wear. All of our vehicles have been vinyl wrapped with our ASAP logos & QR code, that when used go directly to our website. What we did to offset the cost of the wraps was we discontinued some of our print advertising that was costing us more over the course of the year than what it cost for the wrap. The investment of the vehicle wraps alone we can't put a dollar amount to the amount of business they have brought in. These are moving billboards that we call our Annuity with endless Impressions, saving our advertising budget about \$25,000 a year.

We are active on several social media sites; one specifically we hadn't known about till Mike shared with us is Houzz.com. Now we are considered a Houzz influencer...a little upgraded status. We have an ASAP Interactive card that is separate from our business cards that lists all the social media areas you can find us or reach out to us, on the other side is an appointment card. Regularly we follow up with all of our customers ensuring that they are happy with the installation and if they have any questions. Also, we send out mailings and ask for reviews on various social sites to increase our Customer Relations and SEO. We have an About US Brochure that shares with our clients or prospects about us and what we offer. All helping to build the ASAP Blinds BRAND.

We realized too from the seminar that we needed to make an investment in a few additional TEAM members if we wanted to take our business to the next level. We have since hired a Marketing Coordinator based on our needs who works 20 hours a week and who handles our website updates, Houzz, Facebook, Pinterest, local advertising etc...No other company in our area/industry has a dedicated person to Marketing. All this Frees us up to do what we do best and that is selling. Another key member that we have added to our TEAM is a New Business Development Director to

ASAP Blinds
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nurture existing business contacts as well seeking growth in areas that we may not be doing business. We have increased our Gross Sales with the addition of this position by 40% YTD.

Another large sector that we have wanted to be more involved in was Motorization. And Mike pretty much said it, "If you aren't talking to your phone your already behind the times" If your advertising / promoting technology you need to have the latest. Our entire Sales Staff and Installers have iPads and iPhones. All scheduling, quoting & payments are taken thru our devices. We take before and after shots on 75% of all of our jobs, "When taking a photo on a job it validates the clients purchase was the right one" as well. All photos, video clips are forward to Marketing Coordinator to post to uTube, Houzz, Facebook etc....

Another suggestion that Mike brought up was to charge for Installation. He said, "Nothing is FREE", you need to charge for installation. In his seminar he broke down how much FREE cost us. This industry as a whole includes installation with the cost of goods. We are still able to maintain a high margin and charge for installation. Ask yourself, what a FREE Installer would look like. What we did almost instantly after the seminar was changed our Invoices to have a line item for Installation and S/H, we started small charging for installation and over the course of 2-3 brief months we collected approximately \$7400. Since incorporating Installation Fees, we have collected over \$400,000 in installation fees. We thought we would get resistance? And what Mike suggested if you do you can always take it off for that job? What it does by charging Installation fees is it VALIDATES our installers' positions. Our installers are craftsman on top of it and as a company these fees collected pay for their salaries.

Above is a sampling of the many things we have taken away either from a seminar by Mike or in general conversation. If Mike is doing the presentation WE want to be at it. All the information, suggestions, experience that he has is invaluable.

Richard D. Damerou



Dawn M. Damerou

