

When the Cat's away... Maintaining sales performance even when managers aren't around

Retail is people and people are human. No matter how great your salespeople are, from time to time, they will let their performance slip, it's only natural. This is a tough issue to spot and for the most part retail managers are powerless to do anything about it.

A large specialty chain had started using HeadCount and was in the early stages of understanding how to best use the traffic and customer conversion insights. As they started to review the traffic reporting month-after-month, a number of interesting patterns emerged. One item that particularly caught the eye of the regional manager was the fact that every third Wednesday, conversion rates across the stores in his region 'sagged' between the hours of 2 PM and 4 PM. At first he thought this was some kind of anomaly, but after seeing it consistently, he started to wonder if there was more to it.

After discussing the issue with his store managers, the answer became very clear: every third Wednesday all the department managers held their monthly meeting – all the department managers were off the sales floor for two hours – exactly the two hours when customer conversion dropped. Armed with HeadCount results, the managers made a few "adjustments" and the mystery of the 'sagging' customer conversion was soon solved.

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