

## The Best Kind of Advertising

He was a little old man, and he was confused. All around him were huge, confusing technological marvels, and he had no clue what he was really looking for...or at, for that matter. I was on commission, so the higher-end merchandise meant a bigger commission for me. I began by asking him what he was trying to do. It was simple. He had a huge record collection (you remember records, right?), and he just wanted to sit and listen to Bing Crosby, The Andrews Sisters, Perry Como, Dean Martin, Frank Sinatra...artists like that. This led to one of my next questions. Were any of the records 78's? Yep, he had a bunch of those. Well, in that time and place, the standard reply was that it was very hard to find anything that would play a 78 rpm record. Most people were looking for high-end sound reproduction also, so that cut out the few units that would play 78's. In talking to him a little more, I learned that he didn't care that much about sound quality, he just wanted something that would make Dean Martin sound like Dean Martin or Peggy Lee sound like Peggy Lee. I also learned that he was on a fixed income and didn't have much money, but, as he looked around at the systems valued at several hundred dollars, he made it plain that he was willing to pay whatever was necessary, but his means were limited. Well, after talking to him, I assured him that I had exactly what he was looking for, and walked over to a unit that was almost hidden behind a big entertainment center. The price was about \$89.00 if I remember. It played 33's, 45's, and 78's, had good sound quality, had an AM/FM radio, played cassette tapes (I'm showing my age here) and it was light. He had also mentioned that he would have to get it in his car as he lived several miles away, and would have to get it in the house as well when he got home. This seemed to hit the spot with him. In fact, he became very excited. He had not been able to listen to his favorites for a couple of years apparently. It felt good to have helped him out even if I didn't get much of a commission on the sale, but I soon forgot about the event. A few days later, however, I came in to work, and one of the clerks called to me and said, "There's a guy over there who has been waiting for you all morning. He was here when the store opened, and said he would wait, even though you weren't coming in for a couple of hours." I looked over, and it was the little old man. I got a sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach. Something was wrong! He lived pretty far away, and wouldn't have come in unless something was wrong with the system. He saw me, and as he started towards me, he proclaimed in a loud voice that carried across the store, "Don! That system you sold me is GREAT! It's exactly what I wanted. I've been listening to my favorites for days. It was so easy to get into and out of the car, too. Thanks for thinking of that. I just wanted to come over and tell you how much I enjoy the unit you helped me pick out. Thanks for not pushing that expensive stuff on me. I know you didn't make much on the sale, so I really wanted to come in person and tell you thanks!" He shook my hand vigorously and walked smiling out of the store. There were several customers in the store who heard his remarks, and I am sure a few friends of his who heard similar remarks from him as well. Even if they didn't come to see me, I am sure some of them went to other of our company stores near to them. Flyers and newspaper ads are nice, but few types of advertising are more effective than the enthusiastic comments of a satisfied customer.

## About the Author

Tektronix optical oscilloscope test equipment accessories, advanced probes, and interconnect devices.

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