

Selling Sansin: Secrets for Success

Selling high-end stains and finishes in a recession can be challenging, but these dealers have the tips and tricks for success in a tough market.



When some stains and finishes cost \$20 a gallon, selling a high-end one like Sansin can be an uphill climb. Couple that with current economic conditions, and the challenge becomes even greater.

But recession or no recession, there is something to be said for the high value of a quality wood coating. You need less product, there's less labour involved, and the end result looks and performs better. The key is educating staff so they have the tools and knowledge to help customers make the right choice for their home. To help with that, we spoke with four of the most successful Sansin dealers in North America. Their

strategies can boost your own Sansin sales, which will not only help your customers, but also help your bottom line.

#1: Use It Yourself: When Chris Kulpa of Highland Lumber Company in Colorado became a Sansin dealer, the first thing he did was finish his own deck with Sansin SDF. "I was happy with the product and how easy it was to use," he says. "It has held up well and still looks great." This gave Chris the first-hand experience he now uses with customers when telling them why they should use Sansin.

#2: Know the Product Inside & Out: When customers are going to spend big money on stain or finish, they need a dealer who knows more about the product than just the literature. That's why Doug Janzen of Janzen's Paint & Decorating in Manitoba makes sure his sales reps know Sansin like the back of their hand. This includes first-hand experience working with the product, so they can explain to customers how it works.

#3: Set out Samples: Every stain and finish product claims to last a certain amount of time. But when you see how well they work in action, it really makes an impression. Bjorn Hanson of Burnell's Décor in Wisconsin accomplishes that by having decking and siding samples outside his store. "We intentionally don't do maintenance on them, so people can see how well Sansin holds up," he says.

#4: Let Them Try It: Hands-on experience can often make or break a sale. So why not let your customers try the product in the store? That's what Doug Janzen does. He has samples of Sansin that he lets customers brush onto wood right in the store, so they can get a sense of how it works and how it looks. "This gives people a first-hand sense of the rich, warm tone of the finish," he says.

#5: Go to Your Best Contractors: Many customers won't be working first-hand with Sansin themselves, but their contractors will. That's why Bjorn Hanson let his best contractors try it out first. "They were so impressed with the product that I now make most of my sales to my regular contractors," he says.

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#6: Focus on Custom Colors: Unlike many other stains and finishes, Sansin allows you to custom-tint the product. “Not only can we do the 80 colors in Sansin’s catalog, but the custom-tinting process allows us to make any color our customers want,” says James Houser, the owner of Houser’s Paint & Wallpaper in Ontario. “That’s a major selling point for Sansin.”

#7: Go Green: Another key selling point with Sansin, says Houser, is that its water-borne formula makes it a more environmentally friendly choice. Not only that, but it also dries faster, has less odor, and is easier to apply.

#8: Offer Tips & Tricks: When you have strong knowledge of the product, you can provide pointers about using it that will make customers more willing to try it. That’s what Bjorn Hanson does when he’s selling Sansin. “The water-based formula makes it easy to apply, but because it dries fast, people should not apply it when it’s too hot,” he says. “I try to offer my customers as much information as possible so that they’ll have success with the product.”

So if you want to boost your bottom line, give some of these dealer-tested tips and tricks a try. At Sansin, we also offer a range of award-winning point-of-sale and merchandising tools – everything from our full-size real wood merchandiser, to posters, shelf talkers, brochures and more.

If you’re interested in finding out more about our merchandising tools, or if you have some tips and tricks of your own that you’d like to share, please call us at 1-877-SANSIN-1.



MAXIMIZE FLOOR SPACE

- 1 Designed to fit at the end of a standard aisle with a compact 42" X 26" footprint. Custom sizes available

EASY SAMPLE STORAGE

- 2 Samples jars and product brochures stored in sample drawer for easy storage and access

SHOWCASE THE PRODUCT

- 3 Picture book featuring a gallery of exotic wood projects coated in Sansin

REAL WOOD SAMPLES

- 4 Over 80 beautifully-finished real wood colour samples demonstrate the Sansin difference and let customers touch and feel the real thing

SELL MORE PRODUCT

- 5 Simple, effective messaging combined with striking real wood display for stand-out customer appeal