

I love bumper stickers.

Everyone seems to have something on their car that describes something humorous, or the stance on

some subject. The other day I was driving in stop and go traffic and there in front of me was a bumper sticker that I could almost read. So I scooted up and just as I was about to be able to read it they moved forward a little. So I scooted up again and almost had to hit them to read it. Then traffic took off and I was never able to read it. What a pain! Why couldn't they have used larger letters? Some bumper stickers are easy to read and some are not. Which brings me to the front window on locksmith shops.

Most locksmith windows need to be revamped and rethought. Start by driving through town and seeing what jumps out at you, or grabs your attention. You will notice that on the freeway it has to be really large 3-4 foot tall letters. On a neighborhood street it doesn't need to be as

large to get my attention, maybe 1.5-2 foot tall letters. You will also find you can't read more than 2-5 words on anything. Think of your window as having a hand reaching out to traffic and pulling them into the store. Once they are parked in front of the store the customer has committed to coming into the store. So signage on the inside is going to look different than signage on the outside.

Where many locksmiths go wrong on this is they take signage like a poster from a brand name company and post it in the window. The only person that can read the sign is the person that is parked in front of the store. Once the customer is in the store it is out of sight, and out of mind. I would like to encourage the retail locksmith to display posters such as a "Detex" poster on the inside wall of the store with a display of what a Detex is and does under the poster. Show how it's used. Most customers may have seen one, may have used one. But they really don't know the brand, or what it is. They just know an alarm is going to go off if they go out a door with one on it. Also put a price tag on it. Now you have

a nice display with good signage and clear pricing. That builds trust. There is nothing worse than going into store that doesn't have items priced. That only creates distrust. More on that in a later article.

Once you remove these posters, stickers, and other tiny lettered items from your front window you will begin to see light. Please use as a "general rule" that anything with letters smaller than 8 inches should not be in the front window. It won't grab anyone and pull them into the store. I can't tell you how many glass door fronts I have seen with stickers all over them. Do they really want me to stand outside the store front and read all this junk? This only makes the front of the door and window look cluttered and messy.

Now the question of what should go in the front window. Well, that depends on your signage. Locksmiths in general have poor signage. Your sign should advertise your company name so you can start building your brand. If you are "Louie's Lock Shop," then your sign on your building should read that, not "Locksmith." Your signage should also be as large as you are



allowed to have it. It should also not have anything else on it but your name. It is not a yellow page ad.

Once signage is corrected, then use your window to supplement your message. Paint in large letters a product line that you are wanting to push. Such as "CCTV Sale," "Safes On Sale," "Perfect Keys Every time," "Gun Safes Super Center," or "High Security Locks." Then follow through on the inside. Such as a "Multi-Lock" poster over a display of Multi-Locks. There is also nothing wrong with having two or three brands of locks to demo and to select from. This will make you the "go to guy" for

high security locks, CCTV, or even safes.

You can find paints for signage at the local craft supply store. It doesn't need to be perfect just legible. If you don't want to paint it yourself, just look up signage in the phone book. They will either do it, or know someone that can. Average price is around \$200-\$300 for a large window (I have faith you can do it, as I have done this for a client and I cannot draw a stick figure). I would also change the message quarterly. Scrape the entire window clean. Leave it clean for a week or two then a new message and a new focus on a product you want to push. So if you painted "High

Security Locks Sale" last time, then paint "Gun Safes Super Center" the next time. If you have a lot of window space, I would go so far as to paint a larger than life size gun safe next to the wording. This gun safe is going to be about 8-9 feet tall and about 4-6 foot wide. That should make a statement!

The best time to look at your signage and front window is NOW. You have some ideas in your head and you know what to look for when you are checking it out.

**TNL**