

Auditors report on museum and gift shop

At the end of each business day I review the sales summaries and reconcile the day's receipts with the report. When I find a discrepancy, I match each sale with a credit card receipt and then I can correct the error. This is part of my daily routine.

During this year's audit, the auditors identified 11 of these incidents which I had already corrected via this procedure. There were 11 overs/unders in the samples that the auditor tested. After reviewing the samples, the reasons for these results need explanation.

What I found in these samples were "innocent mistakes". For example, one day showed a shortage of \$63.00. When we tally up each day after the store closes and find an amount that is short and more than \$10.00, I review each sale comparing the day's printout with the credit receipts I have for that day. In this instance a credit charge was put through for \$7.63. It should have been \$70.63. I match the receipt to the sale and note the error and pull the individual receipt out. In the next day or two I must call the credit processor to report the account number and obtain the expiration date on that card. After obtaining this information I can put the charge through for the balance that is due. On the day that I make the correction the days total will show that we are \$63.00 over. So now we have 2 days with overs/unders even though there are no funds missing.

Following are the other days:

\$3.40 should be \$34.08 corrected three days later

\$14.33 s/b \$44.33 corrected three days later

On another day tested we sold a framed poster that is dropped shipped from the vendor to the customer. The price of the framed poster is \$195.00, plus the shipping cost of \$15.95. We put the sale through on the register, but it does not include the shipping cost. We add the shipping cost to the credit card charge. The printout at the end of the day from the register does not show the shipping charge, therefore we have another day of overage \$16.00. This is not a mistake, this is the accurate amount.

On another day we were \$18.00 over probably due to a sale not being completed in the register. The sale was recorded on the credit card receipt.

Again, no funds missing.

Another example of a receipt that does not match is with the museum register total for the day, the printout has \$805 in museum admissions. Well, I just have to take one look at that and know that is a mistake. I have absolutely no proof of that except to note we have never had any admission day close to \$800 in my 16+ years as Director. It is obvious to me that 391 adult admissions are not accurate, another "innocent mistake". The day's total was \$362 which is a normal range. This was an anomaly. Another day showed \$800 in admissions. Actually, that was a two-day total. The day before the register was closed with an X report which is a sub total instead of the z totals report. The two-day total added up to \$800. These are examples of mistakes that rarely occur. The vast majority of days the amounts are spot on. On another day the register paper ran out without any notice (pink striping) and by the time we reloaded, it would not reprint the day's total. The last example from the museum is a volunteer put through a \$12.00 amount and the visitors changed their mind and the volunteer left a signed note

explaining the error in the register. The note was left in the cash drawer and it was too late to void the transaction.

The Museum and Gift Shop are staffed by very dedicated volunteers. They are making over 300-400 sales transactions on most days. On some days in the busy cruise ship/foliage season we are producing sales of \$5,000 between 9am-1 pm. It is to be expected with that pace and volume moving through the gift shop that errors might be made. I can correct these "innocent mistakes" on the following day or the day after.

The test samples were from the month of Sept- Oct. These are our busiest months with sales for each month well over \$100,000. Sales for the year are \$600,000+.

The business model for the Museum and Gift Shop since its inception was to have volunteers staff the museum and gift shop with minimal support staff. This business model has worked beautifully with sales exceeding expectations in such a small space, a converted two car garage. As with any endeavor, there will be mistakes but our volunteers perform so well under very busy circumstances. The volunteers should be so appreciated for all their efforts. I believe there should be more allowance for mistakes that volunteers make as I am able to correct these innocent mistakes by reviewing sales summaries daily.

The Town of Cape Elizabeth did a study a couple of years ago titled Aging in Place. One of the suggestions in this report was to provide volunteer opportunities for citizens wishing to remain in Cape Elizabeth. The Museum and Gift Shop are fulfilling this recommendation.

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