

Castle Megastores Produces Training DVD

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After years of inviting vendors directly to their 17 stores to train employees, Castle Megastores invited manufacturers to help create an educational training DVD for staff. On August 2, Castle enlisted the help of professional videographers to film thirteen leading manufacturers as they spoke about their products.

Companies involved in the making of the DVD included personal body care makers Earthly Body and Kama Sutra; lubricant makers BBL., LLC (Boy Butter), Megasol Group, Trigg Laboratories (Wet), System Jo, Empowered Products (Pink, Gun Oil), B. Cummings (Enournters, Elbow Grease); and novelty and lubricant manufacturers California Exotic Novelties, and Pipedream Products.

"I started the seminars a few years ago," Castle Megastore CEO Mark Franks told AVN. Each seminar series has been centered around a theme, such as toys, novelties or games. Castle invites each vendor to give a 40-minute presentation about the use of their products and the benefits of their brands. "Those events have been instrumental in providing our frontline first-hand knowledge of the products we sell in our stores."

According to Franks, the seminars resulted in "skyrocketing sales" for participating vendors, and generated interest and excitement for both their retail staff and customers. "We've since tried many different concepts, including having our managers go to in-store seminars, but that was expensive for vendors."

The solution for employees and vendors alike was to create a DVD that could serve the same purpose as the seminars, yet could reach more of Castle's retail staff.

"We're making a sizable capital investment in the education process, but find that it's worthwhile for us," Franks explained. "We find that when we educate our staff, sales improves. They can sell more because they know more about the products."

Castle invited major lube and lotion manufacturers to come to their Tempe, Arizona headquarters to do their product presentations, this time recording them for the DVD.

Eyal Feldman, CEO of BBL., LLC (the makers of Boy Butter) was one of the manufacturers brought in for the DVD.

"Education is key now in the industry," Feldman told AVN, noting that his own company has created a three-minute training DVD that is available to distributors or chain stores. "Every chance I can get to help train a group of sales people, I take it."

"It's just one more attribute that sets us apart from our competition," Franks said.