

Customer Connect's 'Million-Dollar District'

Flushing, NY Branch 294 member Gary Lam is on a hot streak. His recently submitted Customer

Connect lead for Pharmapacks, a startup business specializing in online health and beauty products, led to a \$4.5 million sale. That's the second million-dollar sale he's been responsible for. District-wide, the Triboro District has had eight million-dollar sales, leading Region 15 National Business Agent Larry Cirelli to dub the Triboro District the "Million-Dollar District."

Branch 294 President Tony Paolillo said that success for the district, which is composed of Queens, Brooklyn, Staten Island and western Long Island, is not a fluke. "We've had quite a bit of success in the Triboro District because we're very proactive with it," he said. "In Flushing, every station has a Customer Connect coordinator. On top of that, we make sure that, every week at least, they are given stand-up talks on Customer Connect."

Paolillo thinks the success they've had in the district only leads to more sales. "It puts wind in their sails and motivates them more because they can see the results," he said. "We also get the word out there that no sale is too small. You never know what that might lead to."

One of the most important elements of the success is the cooperation between management and letter carriers. Ronald Don, a business development specialist for the Triboro District, sees that cooperation regularly. "We have been very grateful and thankful to our carriers and our carrier coordinators for working hand-in-hand with management to get the message out that it takes teamwork to bring in leads and turn them into revenue," he said.



Members of the business development staff have frequent office visits with NALC and speak to carriers two or three times a week, thanking them for their work. "You want to make sure you get that message out to each and every carrier that their work is being appreciated," Don said.

Management understands that letter carriers are "the eyes and ears," he said. "You're the ones who are privy to know if a company is under new management or moving from one location to another. So we stress for them to get the lead into the supervisors."

Don explains that revenue is everyone's concern. As he often reminds the carriers, when they have success bringing in leads that become sales, that is one more bargaining chip when it comes time to negotiate the national contract.

One of the best parts of his job is to present rewards to the carriers who turn in the successful leads. For smaller leads, it can be as simple as a certificate of appreciation. For Gary

Gary Lam received a certificate for his million-dollar lead from NALC and Postal Service officials.

Lam, the Postal Service presented him with an engraved watch and arranged for him to ring the bell at the Nasdaq stock exchange.

When it comes to success, Don stressed that it comes from the ground up. "I put it all on our carriers," he said. "Our carriers have really done a great job."

"The success of the Triboro District is truly heartening to see," NALC Executive Vice President Timothy O'Malley said. "The revenue that is brought in by Customer Connect helps preserve our jobs. I encourage all letter carriers to participate and help generate leads.

"If you are not currently participating, please talk with your Customer Connect coordinator. He or she will be able to assist you in how and what you need to do."

For more successful Customer Connect stories, see Executive Vice President O'Malley's column on page 24. **PR**