Christmas Tree Retailing Hints

Tree Type
In recent years there has been a move to 'low-drop' trees like the Nordman Fir away from the traditional and cheaper Norway Spruce, which do tend to shed needles more readily. The Nordman Fir have around 80% of the market, although the Norway has a greater share in less well heeled areas. We suggest having a choice but the split is something you must decide. We suggest a 80% Nordman, 20% Norway Spruce mix unless you know the demand is different in your area. We can also supply potted trees, which some people like. However they are heavy, bulky, difficult to store and easily damaged if you are setting up and taking down your site every day.

Tree Size
The most common sizes are 5-6ft and 6-7ft sizes although if you are in an area with lots of bigger houses they may be a demand for larger 7-8ft trees. There is always a demand for smaller trees (2,3,4ft) especially in areas where there are lots of flats. We can supply trees up to 40ft.

Display
Customers like to see a selection and to be able to choose their tree. All trees are supplied netted but you will need to remove the nets to display the trees properly. You will need stands or some other forms of support to display a good number of trees. It is a good idea to offer stands for sale at the same time. We have never found it worth selling other accessories such as baubles and lights on temporary sites. We are often asked whether we sell trees in wooden blocks for easy erection. The answer is no as trees are a living product and they should be treated as cut flowers and put in a stand that holds water and regularly topped. You would not expect a vase of flowers to last 4 weeks without water and a tree is no different

Netting
Trees will need to be netted again for customers to easily handle and put in their cars so you will need a netting machine. These cost £325 + VAT to buy. They are very simple and last for years. Nets are £45+ VAT each and each will net about 100 trees depending on size. Alternatively we can offer netting machines for hire and sell you nets if you buy trees from us. Hire charge is £120 + VAT plus a returnable deposit of £165 + VAT. Nets are extra. This covers the hire period up to 25th December. We will deliver the machine with your tree order but you are responsible for returning it within a week of the end of the hire period. In periods of warm weather trees can heat up in the nets which can lead to needle loss upon opening. We would recommend storing trees outside if possible, vertically and removing from the nets asap

Tree Quality
All trees are supplied as 'cut' trees i.e. without roots. All the trees we supply are all top quality and are exactly the same as we will be selling on our own retail sites. **Beware** there are many different grades available. Be very careful when comparing prices. If you are quoted a particularly cheap price there is a reason for it. The trees are likely to be poor quality. You get what you pay for. Remember in your first year you are trying to attract new customers and tempt them away from other retailers. People are very fussy with Christmas Trees. If you offer them a poor tree they will either walk away to the next retailer or remember next year and never return. It is not worth the risk to save a couple of pounds. We welcome customers to inspect our trees before delivery so they can see the quality they are buying.

Payment Terms
Payment terms are cleared funds by BACS transfer or cheque at least two weeks in advance of delivery. We are unable to take credit cards. Payment must be made in advance as we sometimes use independent hauliers and they cannot handle cash. All prices quoted on the website are exclusive of VAT

Retail Prices
Actual retail sales price depends on the location, both in terms of the wealth of the area and the level of competition locally Typically in Surrey a 6ft Nordman Fir will retail at around £65-70, more in central London. A 6ft Norway sells for around £45. In central London a 6ft Nordman may fetch £80. We suggest visiting local garden centres to see what they are charging before setting your prices for the year

Selling Dates
We normally start selling the first weekend in December and trade 7 days a week from then. The very last weekend before Christmas is usually surprisingly quiet. Beware having much stock left by the last weekend. You will have to judge how many trees you may need. We can usually re-supply within 48 hours, often 24hrs. We cannot take back any unsold trees. The first weekend is usually quite quiet but you need to be there to get noticed. It is up to you whether you trade during the week. It depends on the location and passing trade. Weekends two and three are the busiest.

Location
Passing trade is important as you are a new business and people need to see where you are. Decent quality printed signs attract more people than something written on a piece of cardboard. There does need to be easy parking. Trees are bulky and awkward to carry. People will not want to carry them 200 yards and will simply not stop if they cannot park next to you.

You can contact Trees for Christmas
Office: 01428 723927 Mobile: 07831 644838
Email: enquiries@treesforchristmas.co.uk Website: www.treesforchristmas.co.uk