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# SHOOTING INDUSTRY

THE INDUSTRY'S BUSINESS MAGAZINE — EST. 1955

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AUGUST 2016

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# PROFITS IN A FLASH

Nightstick NSP-9842XL

By Pat Covert

**FLASHLIGHT SALES PRESENT  
A PRIME OPPORTUNITY  
TO BRIGHTEN  
YOUR BOTTOM LINE**



Streamlight ProTac Counter Display

▲ Countertop displays, such as this Streamlight unit, allow customers to handle flashlights for size, tactile feel, brightness and functions – which can make all the difference in garnering a sale.



Larson Electronics LE-224

▲ When it comes to flashlights, it's important not to overlook the first-responder market. Larson Electronics offers a variety of flashlights that are rechargeable, waterproof and explosion proof.



Browning Black Out 6V Head Lamp

▲ Browning's Black Out 6V Head Lamp produces 635 lumens with an effective distance of 165 yards. It features four brightness settings, plus an emergency strobe mode.

**S**elling flashlights to your customer presents its own set of challenges, but if done right, you'll see the impact on your ledger. Unlike "no-brainer" add-ons like ammunition and holsters — which will easily complement a firearms sale — hand-held flashlights remain an under-utilized secondary sale. As you know, even gun-mounted lights aren't usually on a customer's list when purchasing a firearm. How can you create a natural tie-in to add a flashlight to a firearms sale? Well, it turns out there are a variety of resources at your disposal. We thought it might be informative for our readers to gain insight from the corporate side of the flashlight market, so we turned to Michael Dineen, Streamlight's VP of sales and marketing, for his input on how dealers can take advantage of flashlight sales.

Understandably, Dineen sees flashlights as products prime for secondary sales to benefit firearms retailers. "We don't see carrying flashlights as a disadvantage for retailers. Often, the sale of products like flashlights and weapon-mounted flashlights can be at higher margins than the sale of primary products," he observed.

Selling flashlights and weapon-mounted lights begins at ground zero with a trained sales staff and manufacturers have turned toward new methods of providing education to retailers. "We offer training opportunities to retailers through our rep network and through [www.3point5.com](http://www.3point5.com) online training," Dineen said. This is something we've seen from other manufacturers as well, especially since online access through smartphones and tablets has made online training easier than ever before.

Streamlight also works through their distribution system to provide a host of other services to firearms retailers. "The distributor support section of our company website features many resources, including a virtual shooting range, information on product features, beam patterns, LED technology, plus the latest advertisements, product videos, POS displays, web banners, and other marketing support materials," Dineen said.

Many of these promotional aids are provided free to retailers and ones that are out-of-pocket are typically deeply discounted or sold at cost. Manufacturers want you to promote their products and try to make it as easy as possible!

### **PRO-ACTIVE POSITIONING**

Dineen provided insight on the important aspects of positioning and displaying flashlights to best take advantage of the customers' awareness. "We recommend displaying flashlights near their point-of-purchase on individual modular slat wall bracket displays or

grouped countertop displays depicting the important features," he said. "Displaying weapon-mounted lights on displays that include special blue display guns also show the proper mounting of the lights."

Additionally, Dineen also said he "strongly feels" flashlights are best displayed when available for hands-on use. If you take advantage of in-store display options, you can make it easier for customers to find your product, educate them with informative information and allow that all-important "hands on" experience. Also, you can create customer awareness by displaying flashlights with your firearms — either positioned next to them or mounted in their main displays.

## **YOU CAN CREATE CUSTOMER AWARENESS BY DISPLAYING FLASHLIGHTS WITH YOUR FIREARMS — EITHER POSITIONED NEXT TO THEM OR MOUNTED IN THEIR MAIN DISPLAYS.**

### **CURRENT TRENDS IN FLASHLIGHTS**

Few other segments in the outdoors, L.E. and military markets are as fast moving as the flashlights and gun-mounted light segments. Consumers are much more conscious of industry trends, thanks to the smartphones, and want the latest technology in their hands. Dineen provided his insight on the current and future trends in flashlights.

"The biggest trend is advances in high-lumen LED technology, which continues to evolve," Dineen noted. "Manufacturers will continue to further these advances and by combining them with proprietary design and engineering capabilities, will offer a wide range of high-lumen products (800–2,000+ lumens). High levels of candela, long-regulated run times and innovative beam patterns will continue to be important."

In today's marketplace, where consumers value on-the-go convenience, multi-use flashlights are gaining in popularity according to Dineen.

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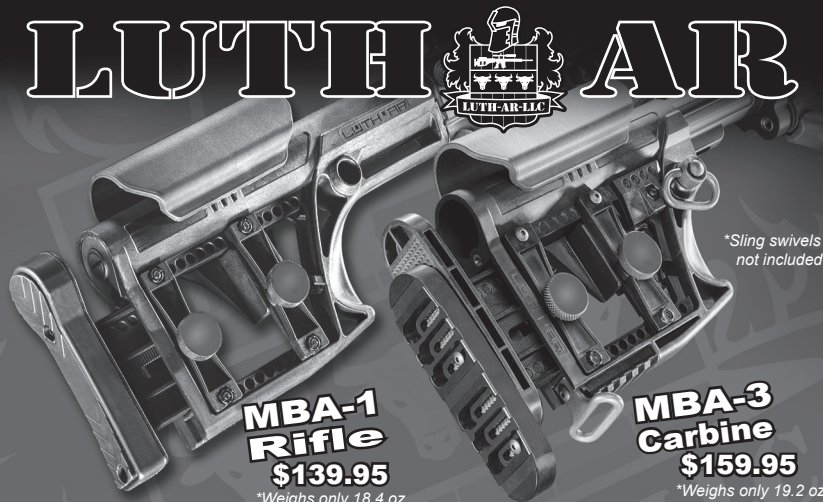
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BECOME A "GO-TO" STORE

Given dedicated retail outlets for flashlights are few and far between, there's no reason your store can't be "the" store for selling flashlights and weapon-mounted lights. The demand in the sporting goods market is growing, but don't underestimate the product-specific first responder market (including law enforcement, fire and rescue and military segments) which can also generate handsome profits.

With the right mindset to go after the flashlight and gun-mounted light market in your area, all you need is a strategy for staff training, in-store positioning and display, promoting lights to the broad range of customers who buy them and — last but not least — staying on top of the rapid advances in technology. Taking advantage of the numerous resources manufacturers offer can make your goals much easier, and the sooner you get started the quicker you can enjoy the broader margins this lucrative market segment offers!

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