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Tools of the trade cost a lot less at the Tool Consignment Store

Wednesday - August 05, 2009 | Author: By Tracey Weiss | Photography by Lisa Brisson and Tracey Weiss

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Contractors and homeowners, rejoice: your fix-it tool of choice might be a whole lot less expensive than you originally anticipated, thanks to a new business called the Tool Consignment Store.

“They do this with women’s clothing, why not tools?” thought owner Frank Kosowicz, who opened the store in late May to what has fast become a popular business.

“I don’t know why someone didn’t do this before,” he added. “I put my sign out and they keep coming in.”

“This is a great store,” said Bob Dutton, who lives in town.

“There are lots of toys here that could have been thrown away. I’ll be bringing stuff in to sell. I love this place and there are a lot of guys I know could use this place.”

A contractor for 25 years, Mr. Kosowicz has been selling surplus supplies on eBay for seven years.

“I sold a lot,” he said, and when a former business in a building he owns on Grassmere Avenue decided to move out, he moved his retail operation in. He estimates that 30 percent of his business is done online, and 70 percent is now coming from the store.

During the week, he draws contractors coming to the neighborhood, which is loaded with industrial and service businesses.



A contractor for 25 years, Frank Kosowicz has been selling surplus supplies on eBay for seven years and now owns a thriving store on Grassmere Avenue.



Frank Kosowicz opened the Tool Consignment Store in May and business has been so good, he’s had to hire three people to help him run the store and the website.



Mr. Kosowicz estimates that 30 percent of his business is done online, and 70 percent is now coming from the store.

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“On Saturdays, I have someone stand on the corner with a 12-foot hammer I built to show people the way to get to the store,” he said. The store also draws homeowners looking for shovels, rakes and mowers.

“I’ve got a router for a contractor at \$89.99 and one for a homeowner at \$19.99,” he said.

A gentleman brought in a Power Dyne industrial torque wrench for aircrafts. Mr. Kosowicz has one for \$9 for home use and will probably sell this one for \$1,000 –even though it’s worth \$5,000.

A recent visit revealed a \$200 belt sander for \$100, a 3B drawer cabinet that was filled with electrical fittings for \$199.99, a wood shaper that was never used for \$199.99 but would have originally cost \$350, and a band saw for \$99. Brand name items include those by Marathon, Ryobi, Black & Decker, Lincoln Welders, Stanley, DeWalt, Snap-On and more.

There are displays of gate hooks, safety hooks and a line of Stanley brass lock sets still in their original packaging for \$36.95. Commercial signs for restrooms and telephones are still in their original plastic wrappers.

The store has jumper cables, welding supplies, and table saws, and Mr. Kosowicz said there’s so much merchandise to sell, he has three trucks full of merchandise that he can’t fit in the store.

A look through the bins in the front of the store will uncover everything from flashlights, and pliers, to hammers and other treasures, ranging from 50 cents to \$4.

There’s even a load of chicken feeders, hayracks and feed buckets from a horse rescue farm that closed in Granby.

“I guarantee everything in the store,” Mr. Kosowicz said.

“If it doesn’t work, bring it back and I’ll refund your money 100 percent.”

Mr. Kosowicz’s rule is, “bring it in and we sell it for you. We’ll do the research to find out what the tool is worth and try to offer it a good price.”

If the item sells for \$100 or under, the store will take a 35 percent commission; 25 percent if it goes for \$100 to \$250; and 20 percent if it sells for more than \$250.

“We’re doing all the work, putting it on eBay, and shipping it if need be,” he said.

Unlike conventional consignment stores, the price of the item doesn’t go down at certain intervals, but “if the item has been in the store for a long time, we’ll take off 10 percent.”

Mr. Kosowicz looks at his business as a win-win.

“If a contractor needs a tool, he can get it used and save money in a bad economy.”

And if someone needs to unload some items for cash, he can leave them with Mr. Kosowicz.

He’s also in the unique position of adding more staff to his business since he opened.

“I started off with a part-time person and now I’ve got three people working for



From 50 cents for a pair of pliers to \$1,000 for an industrial torque wrench, the Tool Consignment Store sells new and used items for the homeowner and the contractor.



Contractors and homeowners alike can find tools for a reasonable price.

me. I've got someone doing the online business all the time."

And the best part?

"I never worked in retail and I'm finding that people are so nice to talk to," Mr. Kosowicz said.

"I'm having the greatest time all day talking with people."

The Tool Consignment Store is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to noon. Go to www.toolconsignment.com.



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