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(Neb.)-As 2012 Fades, Chadron Businesses Set Sights On New Year

By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 01/02/2013 09:51 AM

(CHADRON)-With Christmas 2012 quickly becoming a memory, some local Chadron businesses say sales were better for them this year than last, while others say shopping was about average, possibly due to the economy. Duane Gardener with West Second Appliance said sales at his store were alright this year, but "nothing to write home about." He said it was an average sort of holiday selling season for the business, and people did stop in to buy things, but it seemed a little slow. He thinks a lot of it has to do with the economy.

Bill Nemecek, hardware manager at Chadron Home Center, says he wasn't sure if store sales were better this year than in years past and were probably were closer to average. However, he said that online sales were exploding. Since the store has made its transition from a True Value to a Hardware Hank brand, the store started selling items on e-Bay. Nemecek says that those sales have been going gangbusters. He says it's been going so well that it kinda caught buyers at the warehouse off guard trying to get certain items back in stock. "It's amazing what you can sell on the Internet," he says. Even what he would consider to be strange items are being purchased there. He says housewares this holiday season seemed to be good sellers as well.

At A Posh Affair, the clothing store in downtown Chadron that changed names and owners in August after Impressions was sold, store manager Sara Sirota says Christmas went really, really well for the store. She said inventory was practically walking out the door, and the store's gift cards, which allow recipients to come in and select exactly what they like at a later time, were a big hit. Sirota says the store is selling misses, petite, and junior women's clothing in addition to cowgirl boots, gloves, scarves, hats and more. They are also beginning to carry some men's clothing and some Cardinal and Eagle merchandise as well.

Tim Milner, store manager at Bomgaar's, says the Christmas selling season was fantastic for their store as well. He said Black Friday was an especially good day and helped to justify the company's decision to move to the Eisenbarth building across the street. The move, which will begin on January 28th and should be finished by January 30th, will help the store expand its offerings. Milner calls the move "exciting."

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Christmas usually brings greater income to businesses as people stock up gifts and special sales. Once January rolls around, sales tend to slow down. Gardener says January and February are pretty slow months at West Second Appliance as “people are trying to heal and get those credit card balances back under control…if they’re anything like me.” He says the store has a few closeouts and year-end deals right now on older models, but nothing fantastic. For the most part, he said, it’s business as usual.

Nemecek says Chadron Home Center’s slow time is in January as well. He says the majority of items sold during this time are repair items. Spring is when it really picks up again as people prepare for planting and other projects. Nemecek says there are some in-store items that are specially priced right now, but that’s about it as far as sales go.

Sirota says it’s a good thing January is here because the slower shopping season will give A Posh Affair employees some time to get the store back in order after the Christmas rush. She says she’s not expecting it to be too slow, however, because people will probably be coming to redeem their gift certificates that they received as presents. She says the store has got some brand new things coming for its springtime line as well. She says the store is building its customer base and always enjoys the coffee strollers and people who are out on walks and who stop in to browse. Sirota says it’s nice to meet new people and get some conversation in here and there if nothing else. The store now has its own Facebook page and strives to keep a list of current inventory available there for customers from further locations such as Gordon or Alliance, so they know if they want to make the trip or not. Sirota says “Technology is the way to sell stuff now.” As far as promotions go, she says they do have a big box of inventory at the store right now for bargain shoppers.

Milner says business has definitely dropped off at Bomgaar’s some since the Christmas season has passed, but it’s nothing that they weren’t expecting. He said the store’s slowest months are indeed January and February, as with most businesses. However, the store is celebrating customers with its Customer Appreciation Sale that starts Wednesday (January 2nd) and will run for two weeks. They are having an inventory reduction sale as well.

(Questions? Comments? E-mail roxie@chadrad.com.)

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