

ISS45 *Express* — 5 Lanes, Better Configs,
Nice Big Margins, and “45 for 45 for 45...”

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When he opened that Halliburton Zero, I knew I was in for a long, long afternoon.

It was no less than a visit from Bernard himself, slipping silently into my office in those woven Italian loafers. His yellow wool slacks were cut so large that it was impossible not to imagine Christo wrapping the twin towers of the World Trade Center — and then there was his very casual sweater — made from fifteen kinds of exotic yarn — that probably cost as much as a Subaru. He brushed off the table and placed his buffed aluminum treasure gently down upon it.

The attaché was full of fur. Or at least it looked like fur. Little puffs of white fur, gray fur, brown fur, two-toned fur, weird shaggy fur. “Details,” Bernard said in a grave voice as he turned his gaze slowly toward me. He paused. “De-tails...” he intoned again, slowly.

He raised one eyebrow toward me with a hopeful expression, as if he were trying to extract some kind of response.

My mind raced — the first thought concerning whether I really wanted to know why Bernard would have a briefcase full of fur. The second thought was a vague recollection of Christmas and his comment about “exactitude” and that details made everything work.

“De **Tails...**” said Bernard again, impatient now, and louder. I smiled, pretending to understand, but I knew that he knew that I still didn’t have a clue. He grabbed a fist full of acrylic fur and waved it in my face, then victoriously high in the air.

“**Tails, Tails Tails!**” he shouted joyfully. De **tails. Tails** for the bunny, get it? **Easter.** The Stanford Easter **Parade.** I got the tail samples. Got to choose. Got to be just right.

I will spare you Bernard’s lengthy discourse regarding symbolism of color, size and fur styles on bunny tails. It appears that in the shopping center pageant business, there’s no aspect one can afford to overlook.

Eventually, Bernard eventually took a deep breath, rolled his eyes and said — in fact rather too crisply for my taste — “Now, about this PoS ... **stuff** ... of yours — where are we? Piggie-Wiggies all happy-happy from the nice deal we did for them last year? Oh — and *Express* ... that was our first thing together what, about a year and a half ago? Still going great?”

Actually, it was gratifying to be able to tell him how well **ISS45 Express** has been doing — how it had given **ISS45** dealers a good low-cost option, expanded the market, provided competition for low-ball quotes, provided a platform for dealers to sell up, and made it possible for **RETAILpartners** to use a single product platform across the board.

He nodded, slowly. “All very good,” he replied, “but I track this too and I know some things you need to work on. First of all: my advice? Don’t stop with just two and three and four lanes: they need 5 too. Next, you still sell **ISS45 Express** with those old boxes. Time to upgrade, my boy, time to upgrade those terminals to at least a DX/4 with twice the RAM and bigger disks. And the PCs — goodness, goodness me don’t you think it

would be easier for a dealer to sell *Express* if you put it with a nice 200MHz box, gobs of RAM, a big disk. You get the idea. And MMX. You **have** to put MMX in the box — you **know** how I love multimedia. **Oh! Oh! Oh** — and printers with cutters. People want the cutters. Pay the extra already and give ‘em cutters.”

Bernard took a breath, but, I fear, just a quick one.


“Next thing, the pricing is perfect. Don’t touch it. But sonny, you have to start thinking from a dealer’s point of view. Who are they selling to? They’ve got independents out there with old ECR junk good for nothing but a home-sweet-home for the local bass, but these guys still think like they bought this stuff just last week and they want trade-in money. But a dealer can’t give them trade-in on 37½ points, especially on wholesaler deals, so they say “no” and the grocery guy walks away. You need to give them more room. And if they don’t need it for trade-ins, they’ll need it for the big Fleming promotion we’re doing. So don’t cut the list price, but give these guys a little **wiggle** room, already.”

[I will report here — albeit reluctantly — that Bernard wiggled for emphasis.]

“Now I’ve been playing tweakie-tweakie-tweakie spreadsheet-o with the *numeros* and I’ve come up with a certifiably majestic new slogan: ‘45 for 45 for 45’. Now you run off to your mondo condo and puzzle it out, kiddo. Myself, I shall delve into a little fur...”

Well, as you know by now, Bernard is not your average marketing consultant. But you will quickly agree that he had some good points, and, after all, it **was** Bernard who launched **ISS45** *Express* a year and a half ago. In fact, he was right about everything. So, here are the resulting changes:

- *Express* is now available in 5-Lane configurations
- *Express* now includes TeamPoS 5000 terminals with a minimum of DX4/100 TeamPoS processors, 2GB drive and 8MB RAM
- *Express* (starting in March) includes Pentium PCs with a minimum of 200MHz clock speed, MMX, 32MB RAM, CD-ROM drive and a 2GB hard drive
- *Express* includes License-only DOS package (so you don’t have to pay for shipping and then throwing away the big documentation package)
- *Express* includes Axiohm AT-93 printers with cutter
- *Express* includes OPC unit in all cases. Your NRTs are safe in the OPC CMOS.
- *Express* software options have been simplified to include and specify NRTs, etc.

 And as for margins, the dealer discount for **ISS45** *Express* is hereby raised from 37.5% to **45%** effective immediately. Don’t just sit there smiling; do what I did and get out a calculator, and see for yourself that you can now source complete Hardware/ Software **ISS45** packages from ICL including all PC/CPU’s and Orion 9500 Scanners/Scales for just **\$4,500 per lane**.

And suddenly I saw it, right there on the page: 45 for 45 for 45. Bernard had it all figured before he even walked in. An updated copy of Marketing Bulletin 1100 will provided you with all the, ah, ... **details** ... (That word again...)

So don’t say that Bernard never did you any favors. When I last saw him he had a ball of fur in each hand, soberly examining them in turn and making up his mind. As I left that evening, I felt I had to say something nice, and “Great sweater...” was the best I could come up with.

Bernard looked up. “You know,” he said, “it’s Tommy Hilfiger’s world — we just live in it.”

To your success,

Tony

Tony van Seventer
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