

Sensory Appreciation

A sensitive approach to changing technological winds keeps SleepMate.com (a manufacturer and seller of diagnostic sensors) on the cutting edge, and an improved online presence keeps customers coming back.

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM) set the tone back in July 2008 when it addressed several criteria for the proper scoring of sleep. Companies such as Ambu Sleepmate, a Glen Burnie, MD-based medical device manufacturing company, promptly followed the AASM's recommendations and developed sensors to help sleep labs meet the new standards. The fruits of those labors are now documented in the company's reinvented web site at www.sleepmate.com.

Long before AASM's July 2008 document, the company had introduced its first Piezo respiratory effort sensor, the "Resp-Ez" in 1989. The updated Piezo now joins a range of products that address thermal airflow, pressure airflow, snoring sensors, and more. **Daniel Toomey Cardiology & Neurology Market Manager of Sleepmate** has helped the company to boost its online presence, with additional upgrades planned for February 2010. He discusses the company's long-time commitment to staying ahead of the technological curve, and its renewed commitment to online sales.

What is the online sales strategy for sleepmate.com?

At Sleepmate we are trying to boost our audience and offer the best customer service we possibly can. We want to make it easy for customers to order, easy to browse our products, and for web users to be comfortable with the overall portfolio that we offer.

On Sleepmate.com, you can research and view all our products. We offer designated areas for specific information such as the history of the company, and where you can meet us at upcoming trade shows or conventions. If people are scheduled to attend a meeting, they can plan ahead to meet with Sleepmate officials and demo our products. We offer an on-line help section for Q&A as well contact information for technical support if there is a product question or difficulty. All questions go directly to engineer Paul Boatner or myself, so we can quickly assist customers when needed.

The web site offers the ease of being able to buy online. If the office is closed, and you need to order at night, you can easily sign on to Sleepmate.com, and order the products you need. Just sign in to your account, place the order and away goes the product. You get immediate order confirmation, and we ship within 24 hours. As soon as the order is shipped the customer will receive shipping confirmation as well.

Tell us about some featured products at sleepmate.com?

When you first sign in to the web site, there is a rotating flash presentation of several products, which encompass the major areas. You have your standard thermal and airflow sensors,

the RIP-Mate RIP belts, piezo snore sensors and microphones. Another featured product on the front page is the CannuTherm, which is our answer to the AASM for dual recording of hypopneas and apneas. The CannuTherm records airflow pressure for nasal, nasal temperature, and oral temperature, all at the same time in one unit. If a product catches your eye, click on it and you will be directed to the product descriptions and ordering information.

We try to highlight the AASM-required products up front so that you can see what options we provide. From there you can scroll down and find more of the specialty products that we offer. There are also links to the Ambu.com web site, which can take you through our disposable EEG cup electrodes, blue sensor ECG electrodes, and other surface electrodes for EOG/EMG and limb movement.

Tell us about the new rewards program?

The rewards program is one that Sleepmate has adapted to help improve customer relations, as well as customer retention. At the same time, it offers a reward for being loyal to Ambu. Based on the products you buy, you receive what we call Ambu dollars, or rewards points, similar to that from a credit card or a hotel stay. The more products you buy from us, the more points that you accrue. When you gain enough points, you can receive items that may work for the lab or for personal use.

We have coffee mugs, long-sleeved T-shirts, short-sleeve T-shirts, tote bags, hats, backpacks, pens, CD players, DVD players, digital cameras—all small scale products that people can use personally or within the lab—and it is essentially just to say thank you for being a Sleepmate customer. We will be enhancing our e-commerce program by merging Ambu.com and Sleepmate.com together, and we will be adding many more products to appeal to all audiences.

How does the trade-in program work?

It is basically a promotion that we are running this year. We know that it has been tough in this past year for labs to convert from Piezo to RIP. The cost point has always been a high one and the cause of financial concerns. To help labs that are trying to make that conversion, or update their current products, we offer a favorable trade-in program on your belts. With an exchange of your old Piezo belts, or non-Sleepmate RIP belts, Ambu Sleepmate is offering \$100 off of our price for your new RIP kit. This will help you save a little money on the conversion and ensure that you are using a quality RIP system at the same time.

For more information about the new Ambu Sleepmate web site, visit www.sleepmate.com.