

Creating Effective Displays and Store Signage

There are a number of eye-catching features in today's collectible products, but before you can convince customers to make a purchase, you need to draw their attention to your business and the products inside.

While advertising is necessary to make customers aware of your store, signs and displays are necessary to grab their attention once they're near or inside your store. A window sign announcing an upcoming event or a new product arrival may be enough to convince someone to take the time to walk in the door. A display of the newest product releases or cards that are on sale for a limited time may help a customer who was "just looking" decide to make a purchase.

Signs and displays are used by retailers in all categories because they are valuable in sparking the impulse to make a purchase. Do the same in your store by remembering the following;

- **More Than Mere Window Dressing** – The appearance of what's in your store's window can have a tremendous influence on getting customers to walk through your door. A bright and visible "Open" sign tells customers you are ready for business. Posters or other materials showcasing the newest products and hottest athletes should also be visible. Colorful, eye-catching signs announcing upcoming events or new services are also essential. If what's in your store window looks drab, old, faded and basically ignored, customers will have a negative impression of your store. Give them a reason to come inside.

- **The Power of Computer Graphics** – A computer and a printer are great tools for creating effective store signage. Make sure signs are legible from 10 or 20 feet away. Keep the message short and sweet, such as "Great Gift Ideas" or "Special of the Week." The more information on a sign, the more cluttered it will look and less likely someone will take the time to read it. Also, computers have spell-check features. Use them to avoid embarrassing and unprofessional mistakes.

- **Keep Things Fresh** – Update your signs and displays on a regular basis. Window signs can be updated to highlight new product arrivals and upcoming events. The themes of store displays can remain constant over time, but the products displayed should be refreshed on a regular basis. For instance, a display of gift ideas should be updated based on the time of year. Displays featuring items relating to the local team can be updated by season. Bargain bins should also have new items added on a regular basis. If consumers notice different products going on sale on a regular basis, it gives them more of an incentive to visit on a regular basis.

- **High-End Products Deserve High-End Treatment** – If you carry high-ticket items such as autographed memorabilia or sports art, those items need to be displayed in a way that maximizes their visual appeal. People love to look at these items in the same way art lovers enjoy walking through a museum or a gallery. Don't hide these items behind a counter or in a floor-level display. Consider a display in the center of your store or on a prominent wall. Utilize special lighting as well as UV-protected displays. The nicer your items look on your showroom floor, the more sales appeal it will have.

- **Whet the Appetite of Box Buyers** – If someone asks you about one of the various boxes of trading cards on your shelf, what do you usually tell them? The answer probably includes some of the key rookie cards, cool inserts, the odds of finding an autograph or memorabilia card, as well as the pack or box price. That kind of valuable information can easily be printed onto an index card or small sign that can be placed on each box for customers to see, saving you the time of having to memorize what each product offers and making it easier for your staff members to sell those products as well. Utilize different color signs for each sport to help customers focus their attention on the products that interest them the most.

Being creative with store signage and merchandise displays is a great way to help draw attention to the products and services your store has to offer. Better signs and better displays will almost always lead to better sales.