

10 Easy Ideas to Set Your Sales Floor To Sell

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Shopping today is all about the experience – shoppers can buy what you sell in any number of places, so your store has to be right. And ready.

Your sales floor and displays require constant reinvention so that shoppers don't get bored and go somewhere else. We bet your sales floor could benefit from a little reinvention. Let's take a look at areas that typically need attention.

1. Start with the store windows.

Your windows should entice a customer who hadn't intended on stopping to come in and shop. Fill your windows with ideas and inspirations! If you don't have space to set an actual display, then blow up a photograph and hang it in your window. Companies like TruckSkin.com make it easy to create low cost window clings that are masterpieces.

2. Decompression Zone.

Just inside your front door is a 5' space of "no man's land" called the Decompression Zone. It's no man's land because customers breeze right through it without stopping; never seeing anything that you place there. You may, for example, wonder why your cool new class isn't filling up – there's a big sign right inside the door. That's the problem: people are not focused on shopping yet, so they don't really see anything until they are at least 5' inside your front door – anything you place in the Decompression Zone is essentially invisible.

We've been in plenty of stores that have important product merchandised in the Decompression Zone that just doesn't sell. But once it's moved just a few feet further in it suddenly gets noticed. This isn't an opinion; it's a cold hard retail fact. The next time you're at the mall, check out the front end of your favorite chain stores. Every retailer should respect the Decompression Zone.

3. Know what else doesn't belong in the Decompression Zone?

Carts and baskets. People who shop with a cart or a basket spend 25 percent more than they originally intended to spend, and up to 15 minutes longer in the store.

Locate your baskets just past the Decompression Zone and throughout the store, so they're handy when a shopper decides she needs one. Visit BigBasketCo.com for plenty of cart and basket options.

4. First impressions.

Customers who enter your store make a value judgment about it in 10 seconds or less. In that 10 seconds they are determining whether or not it's a good place to be.



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What does your store “say” in the first 10 seconds? Do customers immediately know what you sell? Is the sales floor interesting? Do your displays invite shoppers to play with the product? Stand inside your front door and take an objective look. Like the saying says, ‘you never get a second chance to make a first impression.’

5. The flow.

Did you know that typically 50 percent of your sales floor is never seen by shoppers?

Once shoppers are on your sales floor, where they go next is up to you. If you are like most retailers, you probably utilize a Free Flow layout because it offers you unlimited opportunities to highlight merchandise and create display vignettes. A Free Flow layout has no set aisles – shoppers roam the sales floor freely, influenced by your placement of fixtures. Avoid straight lines when you can, instead angle your fixtures so that shoppers are unconsciously directed throughout the store. The more they see, the more opportunity they have to buy!

Do yourself a favor and create a schematic of your sales floor, devoid of fixtures. Better yet, if you have a blue print mount it to a piece of foam board, and overlay it with tissue paper. Now you can merchandise and re-merchandise your sales floor on paper before you ever touch a fixture.

6. Lake Front Property.

It’s a proven fact that 90 percent of people enter a store and look or turn to the right. This area is prime real estate, or as we like to call it “Lake Front Property.”

Too many retailers use this area as just another space to house merchandise. Or worse, it’s where we find the cash wrap counter. (Your cash wrap belongs on the left side of the store, at the natural end of the shopping experience. If this physically does not work for you, just reverse the flow, making the left side of the store your Lake Front Property. If you need help luring people to the left side special lighting can do the trick.) Use your Lake Front Property to feature new items, to tell product stories, and to display high-demand, high profit items.

7. Speed Bump Display.

Just beyond the Decompression Zone, front and center on your sales floor, is the area to place your Speed Bump Display. The Speed Bump’s job is to slow down shoppers and refocus them on the task at hand. Speed Bumps are also used to set the flavor of what shoppers can expect to see throughout the rest of the store.

Use a single small table or cluster a few together at various heights for a bigger impact. Add product from different departments to create fun-to-shop, “I have to have that!” displays. Change your Speed Bumps at least once a week, whether they need it or not. Remember, this display is a BIG part of your store’s ambiance.

8. Cross-Merchandise everywhere you can.



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Merchandising complementary product together helps shoppers visualize how the items will work together. Plus, it encourages add-on sales! Cross-merchandise items on Speed Bump displays, end features, and on j-hooks and clip-strips throughout the store.

9. Music.

Did you know that the music you play in your store has a job to do? Music does more than just entertain shoppers, it provides a psychological lift that encourages them to buy. Companies like Muzak employ audio architects whose job is to create the right mix of tunes to keep us shopping. And it works. In our opinion, disco is the sound of money. Young or old, it makes shoppers smile. Before you crank up the tunes, you need to check with the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASACP). ASACP holds the “public performance” rights to 97 percent of the music played in the United States. Playing music in your store without a license can result in big fines.

There are “two ‘small business exceptions’ that allow certain small businesses to play radio or television broadcasts in their establishments without having to pay any additional licensing fees. The exceptions apply to:

- Any establishment with less than 2,000 gross square feet, and any food service or drinking establishment with less than 3,750 square feet
- Any business establishment with greater than 2,000 square feet, and any food service or drinking establishment with greater than 3,750 square feet provided that they use fewer than 6 speakers or TVs, no more of 4 of which are any one room, and with a screen size of less than 55 inches.

10. Take a good whiff of your sales floor.

What do you smell? If you said, “nothing” then Aromacology – the science of scents – can help you increase sales. Remember that old retail adage?: “If it smells, it sells!?”

Turns out it’s true. Pleasant-smelling environments have a positive effect on how we shop. The scent of grapefruit energizes shoppers, vanilla is calming, and cinnamon is said to attract money. So put out the potpourri or purchase scent diffusers and place them throughout the store. Visit ScentAir.com for even more scentsational ideas.

Vow to keep your sales floor fresh! Get a blank calendar and plan your merchandising moves. Check your 10 second impression daily. Change your Speed Bump displays at least once a week. Tweak your Lake Front Property, and change your window displays on a monthly basis. Refresh your entire sales floor at least once every quarter, making changes to customer flow as necessary. Change your music and aromas to fit special events or the season.

Have fun! And remember, if you’re not sure what to do first, give us a call! We’re always good for an idea or two. q



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