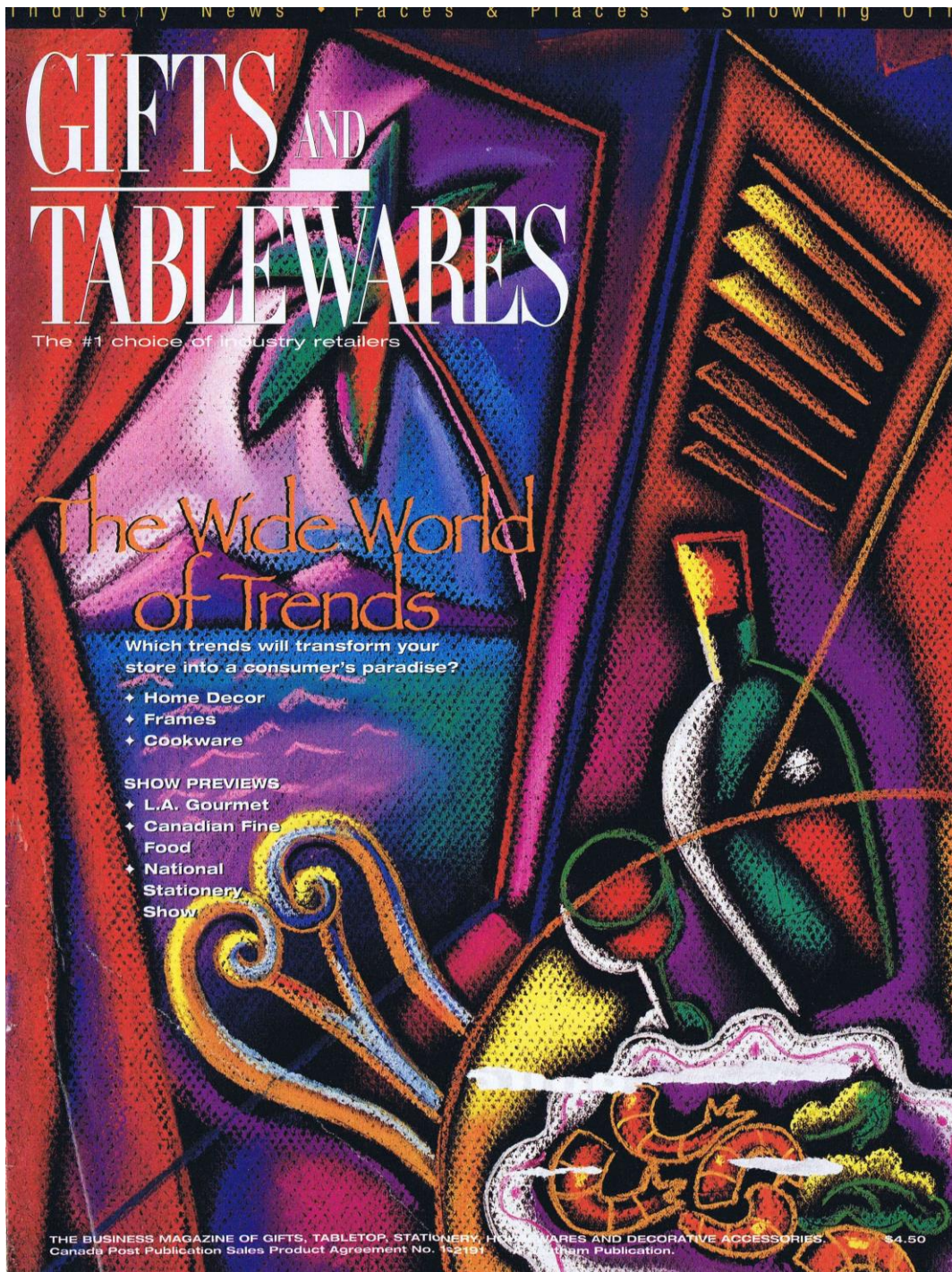


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BY LINDA MCKENDRY,
VMPG

A glass act

How to show off your store's glass and crystal collections.

As you may know, one of my hobbies is playing bells. Over the holidays, I performed at a ladies luncheon at which the featured guest speaker demonstrated great, inexpensive ideas for home decorating. At the time, I really needed some inspiration, and it came when we were shown a display that consisted of an oversized, clear glass vase filled with old, stale walnuts spray-painted gold and miniature pine cones finished in the same way. The effect was magical, and I immediately did a mental inventory of my home searching for an item I could use to duplicate the look. Unfortunately, the only large, clear glass container I could think of was a big, round fishbowl earmarked to go into a garage sale this spring. But, the benefits of using glass items to create amazing displays were made *clear* to me. (Yes, that's my very own pun!)

One of my most prized and adored collections is a set of crystal, pressed and clear glass bells. Currently, they are displayed on a round, cut glass cake plate along with two crystal candlesticks and a couple of miniature crystal ornaments. But, depending on where we were living, this collection has found its way into many different rooms.

I share this with you as a reminder that your products find their way into many different venues in the hearts, minds, and homes of customers. For example, when

and display, the more markets you will target. You can also increase sales opportunities by using for-sale display units, such as wall shelves, to showcase glassware. Think about these ideas as you read the following

rules for displaying crystal, pressed glass and colored or stained glass.

Departmentalize

- ◆ Separate name brands into departments, fixture, or shelves—sign appropriately.
- ◆ Further separate colors, patterns, and styles into smaller spaces.

- ◆ Wherever possible “cluster” items of different shapes and sizes to avoid monotony.

Provide Correct Lighting

- ◆ Use direct, focused lighting directly above cut glass and crystal.
- ◆ Use diffused or daylight directly behind colored glass.
- ◆ Avoid glare or reflection of light sources in shoppers' eyes.

Pay Attention to Backdrops

- ◆ Backdrops stop the eye at the display and help to focus on the products themselves.

- ◆ Contrasting backdrops silhouette and define outline shapes.
- ◆ Darker colors and flat finishes of backdrop materials enhance gleam and sparkle.
- ◆ Cross-merchandise by including crystal in displays with other lines.
- ◆ Regularly rotate key items from different departments or brands in main display areas.
- ◆ Always show a variety of colors, patterns, styles, shapes and sizes in feature presentations. ►



New from **INTER-CONTINENTAL MERCANTILE**, Merlino is the newest edition in Bormioli Rocco's Studio Line. It features a modern massif design in blue with clear crystal. 514-271-1101.

Cranberry glass vases are from **TAURUS INTERNATIONAL SALES**, 705-454-2996.

TURCAN TRADING's collection of decorative accessories includes glass vases, “tulip” vases and accent pieces. 905-678-0601.



preparing homes for resale I have often used crystal cream and sugar sets from dining room hutches as props in a master bedroom with the cream container serving as a miniature vase for flowers and a string of pearls spilling out of the sugar container nearby. When you are creating displays, do not forget that the original intended use of the item is often not the reason to purchase in the mind of the buyer. In fact, the more practical and/or unique uses you can dream up

(original ads replaced by illustrations for article topic)



A Glass Act—continued

Selling the Sizzle!

◆ Invest in a turntable that includes an electrical outlet for a light source.

◆ Place props, like truffles in a candy dish, candles in candlesticks, and good quality silk flowers in or near vases, to:

1. connect to a seasonal celebration or current event
2. add drama which will catch and hold more attention
3. target market by appealing to different segments of population
4. define a practical use to justify the purchase in the shopper's mind
5. pull color into displays to avoid monotony or boredom

Warning: Good lighting will not only enhance the sparkle, gleam, and features of all types of glassware but it will also expose two enemies that devalue—dust and fingerprints! It's critical that all glassware merchandising begin with glass cleaner, lint-free paper towels and a good anti-static dust system. Check with your local heating and air conditioning systems engineer regarding electronic air filtering systems and humidity control in your shop if you have an alarming amount of dust building up on a daily basis. Even in my own homes, I've noticed that my highly polished, dark mahogany coffee tables need dusting less often when we have invested in and maintained state-of-the-art systems that reduce air pollution.

If you follow these rules, everything will be "clear" to your bottom line in sales and profits as well as in the eyes of the shoppers who enjoy the collection of crystal and glassware you offer.

To book Linda Ewert call 905-813-8725 or write to VMPC, Visual Merchandising Presentation Co. Ltd. 6309 Donway Drive, Mississauga, Ontario, L5V 1J6. □

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Group based on Color, Pattern, and Style.

Tall items to the back and shorter ones to the front. Largest items on highest and lowest shelves to be seen from a greater distance. Smaller items at prime selling space and in comfortable reach. Excellent!

Vertical merchandising puts more products in prime selling space.

Small scale and white shelf units that match the backdrop show off the main features of the colored glass



Natural back lighting shows off glass as it will be.



Mix whatever colors you want and the container shows all!



Products become props to show off other items.