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(original ads replaced by appropriate illustrations for topic)



DEBENHAMS Flowers
Online "window" display
www.debenhamsflowers.com



Let your Displays include many special relationships beyond the traditional romantic ones.

Use Valentines Day to say, "Thanks" or "You're Great!" with props like greeting cards.



Many dollar stores, craft stores, even flea markets have miniature versions of the ideal embellishment or prop to send a target marketed message at a glance!

Use them on other occasions as well, or when you need sales!



CF VISUAL DISPLAY



By Linda McKendry

Capture Attention with Valentine's Day Displays

Make a huge impact visually by creating a display in your window, in advance of Valentine's Day, to get all the shoppers who pass by your shop thinking about their Valentine's options. Many messages can be sent by the 1,000-word picture. With the help of greeting cards tucked into little cross-merchandised displays, create beautiful bouquets that will appeal to a variety of target markets. For example: a student sending a Valentine's token of appreciation to a favourite teacher or coach; maybe a piano teacher; a patient to his or her medical caregiver, doctor, nurse or dentist; or an employee to a manager, supervisor or colleague. These are all stretching the envelope, as they say, and include many special relationships beyond the traditional romantic ones.

Rather than just a 'love' message between couples, consider how you can make a display that will send a thank-you or an appreciation message. First, think of the environment that you are targeting, such as motivating a piano student to send a Valentine's bouquet to his or her teacher. The prop in this case is going to be a piano. This can be an actual miniature piano with a greeting card stating "To my piano teacher," along with a couple of ideas for floral bouquets.

Keep in mind that from a young student with a limited budget to a parent paying for the token of appreciation, you will be able to create floral arrangements with a nice variety, from simple to elaborate. For example, tuck in musical notes instead of hearts, or use ribbon with imprinted musical notes, to round out the message. Using the traditional red/pink

themes will keep the Valentine's theme.

Another idea is to use a black and white soccer ball as the prop and create floral arrangements for students to present on Valentine's Day to their coaches. This will encourage the idea for an entire team to come up with the money for a really great bouquet.

It's up to you to look around your community and discover the interests and relationships that are formed. Use a single prop to attract the attention of that person or group and send a message about how a Valentine's greeting in the form of floral bouquets can make a difference. It's up to you, the florist, to build arrangements that are custom made and show them off with the right props to make them a great idea and motivate a new market to send more than a romantic message on Valentine's Day.

When you see the way a single arrangement can be 'mass produced' and promoted in the media, you can build your own arrangements for a certain segment of your society and call it the "Say Thanks" bouquet on Valentine's Day, or the "You're Great" bouquet on Valentine's Day. With the appropriate props and little changes in the seasonal or themed decorative picks and ribbons, along with targeted message greeting cards, you will increase your sales and get people thinking beyond just romance. **CF**

Linda McKendry of VMPC offers on-site consulting and instruction for retailers, wholesalers, distributors, and manufacturers. Linda has presented seminars at the CGTA Gift Show and the Alberta Gift Show. To order her book, *VMP & Display*, call (905) 813-8725, fax (905) 819-8505, or e-mail lrnckc@attglobal.net.