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Spotlighting BESTSELLERS



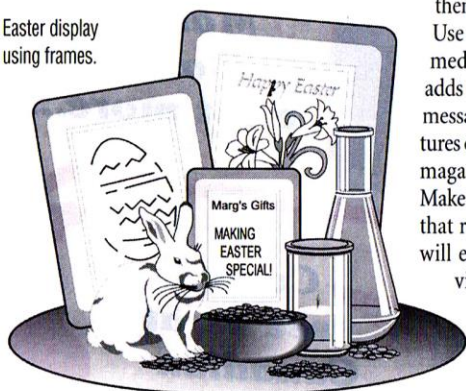
BY LINDA MCKENDRY, vmpc

Retailer Question: “Please help me, I need more ideas re: setting up effective displays. Should our bestsellers be displayed in front of the store, in the rear, or near the cash register?”

Linda’s Answer: When you want to maximize the momentum and maintain the sales of a “hot item” make the most of it with displays in all the key areas of your store. Never let your regular patrons get bored and do everything you can to attract new customers.

The experts say that you should always put your bestsellers at the back of the store because customers will come through the store to get to them and pass by many more items on their way out. This extra exposure has the potential to produce more impulse buying. Greeting card shops, for example, always have the basic gift

Easter display using frames.



wrap, tissue, ribbons and stationery at the back of the store and the front and windows reserved for those trendy or seasonal promotional items that have a “shelf life.” Still, you don’t want to risk losing good customers who go by the store every day and who may think you don’t carry a favorite item anymore because they don’t see it in the front of your store.

Putting a popular product by the register is a

reminder to you and your staff that an extra sale can be made easily and quickly while the customer is already making a purchase. An eye-catching display with tempting little dollar items can dramatically affect your bottom line when added to 80 percent of those regular purchases.

Your bestsellers should be exposed at each of the areas you’ve mentioned by keeping at least a “sample” of these lines as part of key displays in your windows and on shelves at eye level.

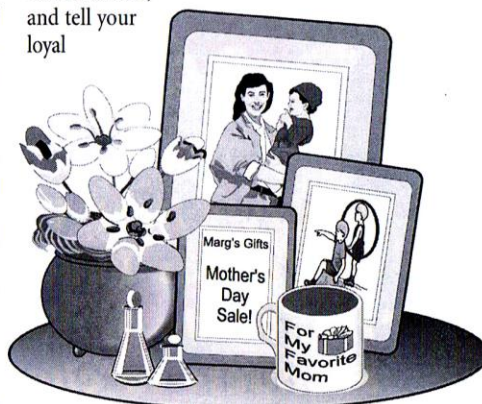
Let me show you how to take a basic, non-seasonal, bread ‘n butter item and incorporate it on an ongoing basis into a single display that maintains interest and appeal while target marketing and selling to a specific promotional event.

Let’s take basic brass photo frames and show them in an Easter and Mother’s Day display. Use a grouping of three frames: small, medium and large—this combination adds interest, moves the eye, and “frames” the message each frame is going to give. Put pictures of typical Easter illustrations, cut out from magazines or greeting cards, in the frames. Make sure to pick the colors, patterns and styles that relate to other items in your set up. This will encourage add-on sales by showing the viewer items placed together that make the same statement and enhance each other. You do the mixing and matching for them.

In this case it may be decorated ceramic eggs with touches of gold that work with the brass frames or maybe porcelain rabbits that have gold ribbons around their necks. Place a brass container, such as a bowl or goblet nearby for contrast in shape. Fill it with Easter candies that pull together the colors you are using. This appeals to yet another sense: taste.

Use the same frames in your next display for Valentine’s Day, exchanging the cards in the frames with love notes and the multi-colored

candies in the dish for pink and red ones. The same simple procedure can work again with green items and shamrocks for St. Patrick’s Day, for Mother’s Day as illustrated, etc. These simple updates will keep the “same standard products,” otherwise known as bestsellers, looking fresh and new, and tell your loyal



Mother’s Day display using frames.

customers that you still carry their favorite items. At the same time, they’ll stimulate a response from new customers by appealing to a variety of tastes and lifestyles.

I advise against moving basic back-up stock around the store too often or too far. When a customer comes into your store regularly to purchase the same item, they get annoyed if each time they have to look for it in a different place. That’s why you should set up key areas for displays that group one or two items from different product lines into an attractive presentation that is changed at least every three weeks. Your store will always look fresh, interesting and charged with momentum; it will have the exciting energy that makes people stop and take a second look each time they go by. And, not only your customers will be excited, you—the bestseller’s seller—will be to. □