



## Ten Tips for Effective Retail Book Displays By Karen Whiting

### **Displays start at the windows and doors**

Windows are the eyes to your store. Try to tell a story or celebrate a season in window displays. Avoid clutter. A few enticing items creates a feeling of spaciousness. Help customers see featured products.

Look at your door and entryway. Be sure it's welcoming and uncluttered. Create a place shoppers can stop, touch, or smell to involve their senses and entice them to enter.

### **Focal Points**

A focal point grabs a shopper's attention. It's the spot in the store that stands out. It creates curiosity in the display.

Walk around your store and notice what appears at eye level and what draws your attention first. What makes you smile or sigh? What draws your eyes naturally? Think about focal points when you visit your favorite shops.

The main focal point of the store can show off your best selling items. Consider whether to use horizontal or vertical lines when you lay out product as part of the focal point.

Work in odd numbers. Three, five, or seven items grouped in different heights and depths is more visually pleasing than even numbers of items.

Enhance it with color through paint or a piece of carpeting. Lights can help create a focal point, especially with a spotlight or one that creates a "glowing" effect.

Within a display, the book/product should be the prominent focal point. Move it around until it's the first thing that draws your eye.

### **Lead the Customer**

Studies show that shoppers tend to move right and push a cart around counter clockwise because it's easier to turn a cart left when right-handed. Draw shoppers toward the right with an eye-catching display or most popular items. That's why many grocery stores have fresh flowers toward the right.

Continue to lead customers around the store with end cap displays. If there's room, angling displays toward the center of the store creates visual interest.

Create a break, because a long shelf unit can be easy to skip over. Adding a display in the middle of a long unit breaks up monotony and beckons customers to pause and look.

### **Listen Up!**

Get feedback from employees and customers. Ask what attracted them and what did not. Take some photos. Post them on your social media. Watch which photos get the most response.

### **Don't Block the View!**

Using high racks or shelves in the front blocks the view of the rest of the store. Let customers see the depth of merchandise by placing a few lower display holders toward the front. That helps the store look full but also lets customers' eyes wander toward the back.

## **Effective Visuals**

Consider balance, color, and size as you plan displays. Create balance with asymmetrical displays rather than symmetrical. Balance with one heavier or larger piece on either side. Balance creates a feeling of stability and harmony.

Place the largest item in the setting. Consider the background, or other colors in book covers, and reflect those in the display colors. Simplicity is best. Less is often more eye-catching.

## **Hug Shapes Embrace Customers**

Round and oval shapes attract shoppers, like wrapping them in a hug. That also builds a friendly atmosphere.

## **Signage**

For display signs, use easy to read fonts and keep the message short. Use words that reveal a benefit. Use the words "You" and "Yours" (Be Your Child's Hero). Edit until you feel it's perfect. Test it by putting it up and walking around to view it from different angles and distances. Have fun with amusing puns.

## **Keep Records**

Record sales of items in special displays to discover what generated interest and income. Use a U-shaped background or circular signs. Nordstrom found success with these shapes.

## **Handy Tools and Props**

Create a toolkit for putting up displays. This may include hammer, nails, tape, tape measure, scissors, pins, staple gun and staples, staple remover, clear fish line, poster board or foam core for signs, screwdriver screws, and a cutting tool.

Collect old frames, ladders, and interesting pieces of furniture that you can paint and use to display books and other items. Frame a book or use a ladder as an interesting bookcase.

## **Involve Your Customers with a Book Display Contest**

Run a contest for the best book display of a customer's favorite book or genre. Advertise a sign up period and set aside room for displays (limit the size to a tabletop or tray size). Set a date to put up displays and let the voting or judging begin.

Creative displays help sell product and start conversations to build relationships with customers. a win-win tool for retailers.

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