

GILDEN TREE

Visual Merchandising Ideas

Use a consistent material like terra-cotta for displaying tools; sponges, brushes, etc. It helps create a neutral, but vivid display. You can either use several terra-cotta bowls, or you can use a variety of interesting clay pots.



Alternatively, use a variety of similar baskets. If you're using baskets, be sure to check them for damage, as a damaged basket is unappealing. Be careful not to use baskets which overshadow the product in them. Always be aware of interesting materials that could help display materials better. An eclectic shop used slate roof tiles that were being discarded from a building site to create interesting shelves and signage.



Create a focus for your foot care area by using wall and tabletop posters. Images are very powerful, and our Father/Baby posters have a strong emotional appeal. These are also a great window display item, as most people will slow down for an appealing image. It's best to group products by manufacturer, as they usually look good together and make it easier for customers to buy more of what they like.

Take advantage of educational/informational materials. One of the ways that you can stand out from the big box down the street is by having an "information rich" environment. Tent cards and educational pieces are often available for free from manufacturers, and if well done, can complement your store design.



Create a custom look for your educational/informational materials. Some stores have solved the problem of varying manufacturer's promotional pieces, by creating a consistent way to present them. They've purchased several larger frames, and had mattes cut from the same color material. They then simply mount the promotional pieces in the center of the matte, and frame it. Pieces can be permanently or temporarily mounted.



Use displays that group products well and are appealing. A display that looks shabby or is half empty does not sell product. Limit your use of displays to good quality displays, and keep them clean and stocked. Use displays in the space they are designed for. A display that's too big or too small for the space it's placed in can be awkward and dangerous.

Use marketing materials such as Window Clings to advertise the brands you sell. If you love a line, but no one knows you have it, you're lost. Of course avoid overloading your windows - you want passersby to be enticed into your store!



Use Testers liberally, or create a “Try-Me” Station. If the product you're selling is good, and people have a chance to try it, it sells itself. People are also more willing to purchase a larger size if they've had a chance to use the product. A “Try-Me” Station can be as simple as a tray on a counter or table, with testers placed upon it. Do check the condition of this area to be sure it's well tended.



“Would you like to try our new Shea Butter Balm, or some hand and body lotion?” Another interesting way to get people to try products is to have someone take product testers around, for customers to try. A small tray works well for this purpose.

This is particularly effective for salons, while clients wait for treatments, but can be creatively adapted to other kinds of stores. Many upscale salons offer clients a chance to try different products at regularly scheduled times, such as from 10:00 to 12:00 on Saturday mornings. This gives clients a reason to vie for these times, or perhaps to come in earlier or stay later. It is important for the staff sharing these products with customers to be knowledgeable about the products.

Ho-ho-ho! Reflecting the season is always a good idea. It keeps your store from feeling stagnant, and helps shoppers get in the mood for the season. But be careful to limit your decorating to be sure it isn't offensive, and doesn't actually distract from your products.

Usually it's most effective to choose a simple theme and then use it in multiple places. For instance, unless you sell Easter merchandise, it's better to decorate for Spring, with fresh greenery and a few flowers, which won't then feel tired after Easter has passed. Creating a tasteful basket of your merchandise can also be a great inspiration for customers.

Timing is important too. Don't hang on to items past season, or start the season too early. Let customers and staff enjoy being in the moment, instead of putting out Christmas decorations in September!



If you buy what you love, you'll create an unforgettable environment, and your customers will appreciate your focus. The big box stores have to please many masters, and often feel too busy and diffused. Your store can offer a unique experience for your customers, and it just takes a little careful thinking to make the environment work for you. *Good luck!*