



"We Make the Wait Worthwhile"

## MARKETING STRATEGIES: In-Store Merchandising

### POP Power

*"Silent" salespeople can help offset a lean store staff.*

The role of in-store promotions in retailing has changed dramatically over the last decade, in part out of the need to provide a substitute for good sales help. Responding to the shortage of quality sales clerks and lean retail operations that simply can't employ multiple clerks, manufacturers have sought to provide "silent" salespeople in the form of informative packaging and innovative merchandising displays.

The result? A proliferation of manufacturers who seek to reach out to shoppers while they're in the store and communicate that one last message prior to purchase, and a flood of in-store marketing programs that can be essential tools in today's retailing environment.

### Point of Purchase – The In-Store Salesperson

There are several good reasons to use point-of-purchase (POP) displays:

**Increased Learning.** With the lack of solid sales help, manufacturer supplied materials deliver a complete and clear message to the consumer about the features and benefits of the product/brand. It's a great opportunity to reinforce the brand to loyal customers and introduce the product to new ones.

**Increased Purchases.** In-store marketing in the form of POP displays has shown to impact the purchase behavior of customers. As we all know, many purchases are "unplanned" and in-store messages influence purchase behavior. This is a plus for retailers as "unplanned" purchases increase checkout averages lifting revenues.

**Reduces Advertising/Communication Costs.** Let's face it. You can't advertise everything in your store to the public through newspapers, events, and direct mail. By employing the use of in-store POP displays, you can effectively advertise the line of products you carry to everyone who enters the store.

There are several different types of in-store marketing tactics that have proved successful in all classes of trade:

**Digitized Counter Displays.** Often used for self-serve items, these displays



can also be used to advertise a particular special or event in the store. Best used when near the checkout. These tend to be for only small articles such as batteries, flashlights and the like. With digital advertising, you can market your higher value items and perhaps trigger more spontaneous purchases, of higher value items.

**Digitize Your Display Racks.** Most often supplied by manufacturers, these are a great way to organize categories in your store. Many allow for color graphics to be affixed to them to indicate specials or special brands. Now imagine a full color, animated display that shows the products as they are shown on TV commercials, as the manufacturers originally wanted them to be marketed. Many manufacturers may also be willing to share in the cost of initial setup or to have their product displayed randomly on screens.

**Banners, Posters, Streamers, and Shelf talkers.** These are effective for a quick delivery of the brand or product you would like to promote. Be careful, though; using too much of these particular items will crowd your store and hurt more than they help. With an electronic display from ETA, on one display screen you can feature several items, reducing the space required by larger more clumsy posters and banners. The computer generated displays are more eye catching and visually pleasing. Through moving graphics and computer generated animated characters the displays will catch the customers attention more effectively. Why show a photo of a piece of sporting goods equipment, when you can show it in action being used the way it was meant to be.

The key to any in-store POP display is the right message and what we like to call "traffic stoppers." It must be dramatic enough to stop a customer. Examples might be **electronic signs or displays**, three dimensional cardboard pop-ups, or even ceiling danglers that rotate on batteries. In my opinion, the best in-store marketing tactic is having knowledgeable and friendly sales people. However, with a high turnover rate and lack of available labor, in-store tactics like POP displays can offset customer confusion in the store and make a sale when a salesperson is not present to do so.

#### The Benefits:

- Enhance the visual appeal of your store
- Boost sales through more compelling in-store advertising
- Minimize the time, cost and effort required to produce signs and labels
- Respond to market changes and competitive threats with greater flexibility
- Improve customer service by increasing the quality, accuracy and timeliness of product information
- Provide input into visual merchandising production
- Announce sales and promotions in a timely and effective fashion
- Enable supplier/manufacturer collaboration through the exchange of product information, images and logos

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