

Full or Foolish?



The New Year is upon us. It's time to re-build your displays in the store. Do we re-think what we are about to do or succumb to the ways we have always done things? There is no better time than now to make a difference!

Retail is about change.

No simpler way to put it. The consumer continues to evolve into ways to save time, bend the rules, and in many examples defy logic. That means we have to present the unexpected more than ever in our approach to retailing. In many regions, March is the starting point for driving customer sales (and interest) in our stores. You can break the rules of display features up until Easter with gift and fashion and even baskets, but when those candy Peeps turn hard, it's time to focus on what makes you money at the registers. We get it...it's all about the plants for 10-14 weeks of spring. But, are we giving ourselves the best sales opportunities at the registers.

Product allocation or where you position your goods is a very important step towards ensuring store penetration. If we get our customers to spend more time in our stores, statistics tell us they spend more money. They also make more unplanned purchases. Making it easy to shop doesn't mean putting what they want at the registers all of the time. It's about adding to their wants and desires... or in our industry, making them successful with their newly purchased plants. It's getting them to explore and expand their happiness and abilities, too!

Register end caps are moving parts that should be refilled and their offerings changed regularly to provide the customer great products that are function driven after Easter, not fashion driven. It is also a great place to provide seasonal goods that are timely and promote good success in gardening. If you do not have any register end caps, the next best place is an end cap facing a return path highway or aisle leading to the registers. These displays are "seasonal flex" by their position in the store. It is best to showcase products that are either new, promotional by ad, targeted (because you endorse it or benefit because of exclusivity), or it's the right product for the season.

Dead air space is also something to avoid when displaying products. The product shelves and products beneath should have a space between them of approximately 3 fingers together or about 3 inches maximum. You must allow for customers



to freely grab and remove the product on the shelf from above. Sometimes just by using good spacing, all that's needed is to add a shelf to display more product or increase selling capacity. For best results, the maximum amount of different products should be at 4 different SKU's (products) or less for greater impact on feature end caps. If you are not filling the display adequately to make it look full, you are missing out on sales opportunities. In some cases where space is a premium and you must choose to display a category or department on the end cap, make it look full and broaden some of the facings to limit the confusion to your customers.

A complete display only happens when you have affixed visible and consistent price labels on the product or directly under each item in the channel strip rail using a label that is removable or placed on a plastic backer. More than half of sales failures nationally happen due to the lack of a visible price. If any point of purchase materials are available (header sign, aisle dangler, on shelf coupons, etc) now is the time to place them. Review progress to look your best. Then ask yourself, are we full or foolish? Good Selling!

John