

Retail Spotlight

Make Your Location Your Brand

BY RAY KEENER

A lot of talk these days is about “making your store the brand.” Building a brand through advertising is too expensive for all but the largest shops. Your location is a brand you can more easily establish and exploit.

University Bicycles in Boulder, Colorado, one of Bicycle Retailer’s Top 100, spends well under 1 percent of its gross on advertising. “Advertising in the traditional sense is unnecessary in order to build your store as its own brand,” said Lester Binegar, the store’s general manager.

The store recently took a non-traditional marketing approach. It painted a huge mural on the side of the building. “Our merchandising and signage serve to back up our

sales staff as being interesting and inviting,” Binegar noted. “The new mural supports this philosophy.”

The mural, painted by local artist Scott Knauer for the cost of a bicycle, is a subtle but cool way to let people know there’s a bike shop here. “The biggest word is ‘Bicycles,’ so it’s obvious what we are doing,” Binegar said. “It’s fun to watch people crossing the street just so they can check out all the details.”

If you’re looking for an off-season project, make your location more identified with bicycles. Study your city sign ordinance and try to find a loophole. Especially if you own the building, do your best to say “bicycle” as loudly as possible.



U Bikes’ mural lets cyclists know where to shop.