

DRIVING RETAIL SUCCESS

Here Come the Holidays!

PEARL IZUMI
This editorial feature is sponsored by Pearl Izumi with Mercedes Ross.

There are two different Holiday customers: The Avid Cyclist who knows what he or she wants and the Loved One who needs plenty of buying help. The Loved One doesn't know what a chamois is, as far as they are concerned it's something you dry your wet car off with.

Avid Cyclist

You're the best source of high-end apparel year-round! With winter apparel, the fit and saving time trying apparel on become more important, price is secondary.

Winter apparel is more technical than ever before, so make sure there's plenty of P.O.P. supporting the benefits and features. Web conscious consumers demand it, even when they're buying in-store.

The Main Wall: Tells the story "The weather doesn't matter, as long as you have the right clothes!" Highlight your best technical jacket (yes, it can go on a waterfall, it's special!). Accompany the wall display with a framed or laminated write-up from a magazine or vendor catalog describing the technical superiority. Display thick, warm tights (on a straight-out) and a nice selection of long-sleeve jerseys on a hang rail.

The Focal Point: Dress a mannequin torso with layers that go together from a visual and color standpoint. Accent the display with a pine tree (a fake one of course!) and a small sign... "Don't let the weather ever stop you!" to emphasize the visual display.

Add-On Sales: Stock a secondary fixture at the entrance of the section loaded with gloves, arm warmers, hats, booties, etc. In addition, dress two or three head forms, either on the wall or on the floor fixture to increase sales.

Staff Training: Winter gear features more technology. The customer needs to be comfortable parting with more money. Sell them on the benefits of the Cocona* soft-shell fabric in the jacket and the WxB, 3-layer system in the tights.



"The Focal Point Example" A mannequin displayed with visible layers.

The Loved One

Why have they come to your store? To buy the one who knows what they want a Holiday cycling gift! This consumer may rarely visit a bike shop, so make it easy for them to get something special for the cyclist in their life. If they are overwhelmed by the technical winter gear offer to help them select something for NEXT SPRING.

To help the "Loved One," create a customer registry. Maintain a card on each Avid Cyclist with information such as short and glove sizes, and what brands they like. This takes all the guesswork out of shopping.

The Main Wall: Tells the story: "Yes, we have summer stuff!" You need to stock good-better-best shorts, short-sleeve jerseys, summer gloves, and never run out. Smaller and/or weather-challenged shops be cautious; you may not want to try this.

Go for the flash! The Loved One is more apt to buy that fun jersey an Avid Cyclist may not buy for themselves. They will also buy the "best" shorts if you lead them there, it's a special gift!

The Focal Point: A display with a mannequin, sporting the hot, fun jersey and high-end shorts. A sign: "It'll be hot before you know it!" You can even add some flowers, tulips for the ladies section and a fake palm tree for the guys—have some fun!

Add-On Sales: Socks in packs of three, a \$20 no-brainer for this shopper! Anyone can buy socks and feel comfortable that they're making the right decision. Fun, fun, fun, and never run out of white or black—it's safe! Stock an entire fixture with gloves of all colors. Remember the gift shopper is much more daring. And never run out of black, it's safe!

Staff Training: Again—this consumer thinks a chamois is a goat in the south of France! Train your staff to keep it simple, friendly and fun for the non-cyclist. Be very clear on return policies, make it easy for the shopper to buy and the cyclist to exchange (not return) apparel, so you keep the money in the shop!

Do it Now!

- Use the cash wrap area for stocking stuffers
- Stock an assessor cart close to the cash wrap for add-on sales.
- For the shop staff create daily and weekly sales contests.

Get Ready

GIFT PACKAGES

- Package One: Jacket, set of three socks, head band, bike tune-up certificate
- Package Two: Tights, set of three socks, gloves, bike fit certificate
- Package Three: Jersey and shorts, set of three socks, bike cleaning kit

What's Next?

- It's time to crunch your 2010 numbers to prepare for 2011
- Get ready to clean house—fixtures, warehouse, back-stock operations
- Look at your systems—ordering, re-ordering, layaways, special orders