

DRIVING RETAIL SUCCESS

MERCHANDISE WELL AND KEEP IT UP!

PEARL IZUMI

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

DEALER SPOT LIGHT



Christopher Zane, Zane's Cycles of Branford, CT

"The commitment to remerchandising our store is one of the best investments we've made in the past 29 years. Not only have clothing sales increased but our average customer spend is up more than 20%. Remerchandising our store is like adding an additional salesperson without increasing payroll. Our customers tell us the store feels more comfortable and, because our store displays and merchandising now tie all the products together, our sales have also increased throughout the store."

Yes, it's vital that incoming apparel is placed on the floor and merchandised correctly—and upkeep of the displays seems to be our weakest link!

Yes, create those interesting sections that promote add-on sales, then **KEEP UP THE SECTION!** Just because it's up doesn't mean you are done!

ACTION #1: ASSIGN SOMEONE TO PAY ATTENTION TO STOCK LEVELS AND DISPLAY APPEARANCE.

CHECKLIST:

1. Zip up jackets, neaten hangers.
2. Size product from small to x-large.
3. Stock the shorts...3-4 times a day if it's busy!
4. Go into the dressing room, clean it out, hang up the product that was just tried on.
5. Make sure size rings are on all products.
6. Talk to the customers and help them, it's SO important to have a staffer in the section!

WOMEN'S DEPARTMENT

Merchandise by color story, add a form or mannequin, add some flowers, have gloves and socks that match in the section and display a helmet with the same color tones on a shelf.

Do it Now

- It's spring so bring the flowers and the green inside. Your customer does their activity outside so bring the outside in! Place flowers (silk) on a shelf in the women's section.
- Place a group of reeds or twigs in the men's section. Both can be purchased at Hobby Lobby, Michael's, or similar craft stores.

Get Ready

A few recommendations to get you started:

- Your staff is one of your biggest assets so let them know that the next buy cycle is coming and get them together for a mini clinic and ask them to help you with these few questions.
- What products or changes do they think have been successful?
 - Has the new emphasis on the section made the customer's experience better?
 - What has been the most positive change?
 - What hasn't worked as well as they would have liked?
 - What would they do differently for next Spring having now had this experience?

What You'll See Next

- The Cycle continues...how to create a successful sale rack
- How to assess your department's performance and take notes for next year
- How to identify your customer that actually bought apparel from you



UPKEEP

Change the displays and selection every two weeks. That's right, every two weeks. Flip-flop your displays—put what's on the floor fixtures on the wall and what's on the wall on the floor fixtures. Keep it fresh at all times. The Mannequin needs a new outfit every two weeks as well. Having the same outfit on her the entire season defeats the purpose.

MEN'S DEPARTMENT

Merchandise by product category...i.e. performance, all road, all mountain etc. Place a mannequin on the shelf in the section and put a pump on the shelf with the mannequin. Cross merchandising makes them think of tools and service while in the clothing section.

UPKEEP

Size rings are especially important. If a guy can't find his size he won't even ask if you have it! And restock those shorts. Again, he won't ask so make sure he can help himself.

RESTOCK AND REORDER

- A missed sale is a LOST sale! Ordering and re-ordering determines the success of your clothing department. Never, ever run out of good, better, best shorts selection—that's like running out of inner tubes! Set up a reorder schedule and stick with it.
- Spend time in your clothing section. Talk to the person in charge of the department, get their feedback, assess performance weekly.
- Order some new jersey designs halfway through the season to freshen up the selection and create new interest for your regular customers.
- Keep an eye on the DOGS! Yes we all make buying mistakes. If something is moving slowly, be quick to mark it down. Be aggressive with those markdowns and turn those dogs into cash! Replace them with new items that are going to sell at full pop. And make sure you don't re-order those bowsers!

CREATE INTERESTING STORIES

The summer has seasons, and they are different for every region and every store. Here are some special merchandising displays that will increase your sales:

1. Look at your events calendar. Are there local rides: MS150, Ride the Rockies? Create a story around the ride coming through your town and store. What will that customer need? The section doesn't just have to have apparel. Think about add-on sales such as first aid kits, tools, tubes, etc.
2. Is it rainy season? Create a front fixture with just rain gear with a "RIDE ANYWAY!" sign. Place an umbrella over it.
3. Triathlons: Create a section if you just stock the product seasonally.
4. YOUR BRAND: Do you have a shop jersey? Create a brand-name section of your own.