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# Merchandising Matters

Educational retail blog focused on maximizing silent selling



## About Me

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▶ 2010 (2)

▼ 2009 (12)

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Mannequins and Dress forms for sale, rent, repair

Do you know who you are?

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Tuesday, December 8, 2009

## Do you know who you are?

A good friend who is a photographer, and I, were talking about our experience formulating a story about homeless young adults and how while we didn't know exactly where we were going with what we were learning, we felt relaxed and calm. She said, "It's because we know who we are now." And, for sure, while we might head into areas that were unclear and undefined, we have that sense of self keeping us steady.

Retailers, especially smaller retailers, who know who they are, and who don't try to be all things to all people can flourish during time periods that are disorganized, and fast-paced. The key is insuring messages sent in windows, store organization, displays, and of course, customer service, line up with what customers will find inside.

Ask yourself periodically: Who are you trying to reach? Who might enjoy shopping in your establishment? Why are you unique? Picture all of this, and then think of your windows and displays as a way to announce who you are in addition to being a tool to move product. Work hard to keep that message consistent and clear.

This applies to your signage as well. If you are an upscale women's clothing boutique, don't tape handwritten signs to your storefront advertising markdowns like the store I passed over the weekend. The clothing inside might be stylish and well-priced, but that sign says otherwise. For sure, some will venture inside hoping to take advantage of the savings, but it is likely the people this store caters to will be turned away.

How many of us have been excited to shop somewhere after a drive by glimpse stimulates our curiosity? We take the time out of our day, search for a parking spot, pay the meter, and get ready to satisfy that intrigue. If the images in the window lead us to more of what we hoped to see, we are delighted! If, on the other hand, we find that the display in the window was just as misleading as an exciting trailer before a boring movie, it could be hard to convince us to return.

We have mere seconds to make an introduction and positive first impression. It can be a costly mistake to inadvertently mislead customers. Be creative and thoughtful, and remember who you are.

Posted by Robin Enright at 6:02 PM

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