

Holiday Preparations

to linger and help distribute store traffic to other areas. A costumed “cowboy” santa or elves are always a hit with children. Horse-drawn sleigh or wagon rides provide family fun and an ambiance not often found at malls. Strolling carolers put shoppers in a buying mood. Local photographers can be engaged to do a couple of weekend stints. Some retailers even create “me and my horse” photo contests around these events.

Advertise, advertise, advertise

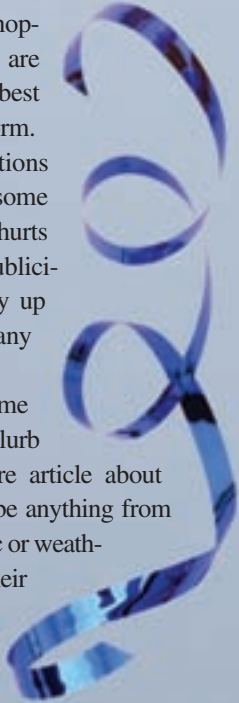
ONCE YOU’VE FIGURED OUT what your holiday specials will be and on which dates they will run, call your newspaper or radio station. The beauty of these two advertising mediums is that you can buy an ad today and you could see it or hear it as soon as tomorrow.

When creating your advertisement, make sure you include some key points to encourage customers to buy early and help stretch out store traffic over a longer period of time.

Play up the “holiday stress” angle by pointing out how

much easier and more enjoyable the shopping experience can be when stores are less crowded. Emphasize getting the best selection. The early bird gets the worm.

Many newspapers and radio stations are also willing to give your store some publicity. Always remember: It never hurts to ask. What kind and how much publicity they give you, however, is strictly up to them. It is generally not tied in any way to your advertising dollar.

For newspapers, freebies could come in the form of anything from a small blurb in their holiday calendar to a feature article about your store. For radio stations, it may be anything from a “brought to you by” tag line for traffic or weather reports to a phone interview on their morning talk show. If you get either one of the latter gigs, consider yourself very lucky. 

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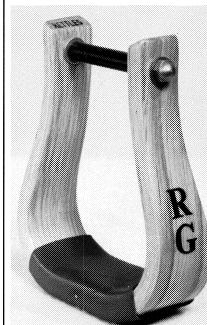
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