



Barb Kastens
Editor

A Talented Bunch

Since beginning our quest to bring Retail Tips to readers of the printed publication each month, our staff has had the pleasure of visiting many more of your stores and getting out in the retail community on a much more frequent basis. Unlike the Retailer Profiles that we bring you almost every month, which can take several hours on site and include extensive photography and an interview, the tips involve only quick visits to snap a few photos and chat with store owners about their display techniques.

One thing has surprised me with this endeavor. Because we also feature Retail Tips in our weekly e-Newsletter, I remember thinking at the beginning, "How are we ever going to keep this up? There can't possibly be enough tips to keep presenting them week after week." Well, I am the first one to admit when I'm wrong, and in this case, I was definitely wrong. I am constantly amazed at the ingenious things you're doing in your stores, and at how many tips I can gather just by visiting a single location. It has certainly expanded my knowledge of the retail world in general.

Sometimes when I ask a store owner to show me some of their best display techniques, it takes a while for the answers to come. Heads are scratched, index fingers are tapped against lips in a thoughtful pose and glances are taken to all corners of the store. Most of you are so involved in your business on a day-to-day basis, that you don't even consider your talents at retail as, well, talents. But eventually, the answers come bubbling to the surface as I am escorted around the store, usually with a constant narrative accompanying the tour.

I enjoy these visits not only because I get interesting content for the magazine, but also because it gives the store owners or managers the chance to talk at length about their techniques as a retailer. As I said above, so often that information is ingrained, but not necessarily called forth. They're things you just know and do. Things you teach to your employees, but never talk about with your customers. Maybe that's why most of the retailers I've talked to are so modest by nature. They constantly operate in a "behind the scenes" way with the goal of making the buying experience exceptional for their shoppers.

So, how about you? Do you have some great retail techniques that you'd like to share with your fellow readers? By all means, send them my way. At this time of year, when the fall markets are over and our travel is minimal, store visits become much more localized or limited to where one of our staff might be taking a personal trip. I would like to continue to provide tips from a wide range of stores across the country, so don't be shy. Take a look around your store and think about the things you do and why you do them. Take some pictures of what you do best, and email them, along with a few words of description, to bkastens@tackntogs.com. It can only serve to help make our retailing community even stronger.

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