



November Retail Tips

Top Tips - part eight How to have a Cracker of a Christmas !

1. Tidy up your shop: Clean it, paint it, scrub it down and generally get ready for the craziness that is about to descend upon us. Things are much less stressful when you can actually find what you need, when you need it. Also a well cared for shop looks professional and a place where you might want to part with your hard earned cash.
2. Train new staff now – Don't leave it any nearer to Christmas, you are going to be busy and you'll need help with the sales. Staff should be fully trained, know the merchandise and be able to cope with the increased levels of custom without getting flustered!
3. Dress up in the festive spirit – Now personally I'm not the girl that likes to wear the flashing reindeer antlers in the shop! But there's always some that do. So let them get on with it – most customers seem to like it and its harmless, (unless of course you sell ultra expensive baubles !)
4. Goods inwards – clear a designated area for parcels coming in, so they don't litter the shop floor, which is **a)** a bit dangerous and **b)** unprofessional – anyone can see who your suppliers are...!
5. Stocktake your supplies list – Now is the time to order bags, ribbons, till rolls, all that kind of stuff! Anything that could seriously slow you down two Saturdays before Christmas should be sitting in a cupboard on your shelf now..!
6. Trends upfront – Trendy items have a shorter lifespan, so get them in early and get them out early....! Billy the fish anyone ? Display trendy stock at the front of the store along with the best sellers to move them quickly.
7. Decorate the shop – Ok, forgive me, I know some of these things are a bit banal – but I've got to say it.... When to decorate? Definitely after Halloween, and I prefer after Remembrance Sunday – it just seems respectful to me ! I know big stores do it earlier, but they have shareholders to answer to, we have our consciences ! Which brings us to the Christmas tunes – the bane of retailers lives,,,,, but it works, so our rule is from the 1st December, let the crooning commence !
8. Offer Giftwrapping – ooooh a fab one this one, especially for male customers ! They will love you for it – and come back throughout the year. You could even take it a step further and offer to giftwrap for a small Charity donation – Then you could publicise the amount raised in your January newsletter !
9. Upsell. That old chestnut ! For example: This item needs batteries – We have this pack or this pack, which one would be more suitable for you?
10. Incentivise extra purchases – Buy two get one free ! – This is the perfect time to move some of your slow moving stock. Don't wait till January when you'll have to practically give it away.
11. Repeat sales – Make sure customers are aware of your refund policy / after sales service. Check they are clearly displayed and your staff are aware of them. Good after sales service retains customers.
12. Humour ! Everyone's stress levels rise nearer to Christmas – keep it all in perspective, don't return stress with stress. After all what can you remember from the run up to last Christmas? Its only Christmas, dig out your reindeer antlers, put on the carols & enjoy it.

Happy Selling, let us know how you get on....