

## What Makes a Store Window Successful?

Reprinted from Main Street News Number 42 1/89

By Kennedy Smith

Many factors contribute to the success of a window display. Some of the most significant ones are:

### ~**Changing displays frequently.**

Displays should be changed at least every other month and, ideally, every month. Downtown shoppers become accustomed to window displays and, after walking past a window once or twice, no longer pay attention to the merchandise shown. A change in appearance signals them that new products are on display.

### ~**Featuring advertised merchandise.**

By displaying merchandise shoppers may have seen in a newspaper or on TV, merchants can build on an idea or impression already in a shopper's mind.

### ~ **Displaying only a few different items.**

Pedestrians usually decide whether or not to go into a store in less than three seconds. They simply can't absorb too much information in that time.

Thus, by featuring only a few items in a window display, a merchant helps shoppers understand the visual information and make a decision.

### ~**Using color.**

Color, used creatively, attracts attention. The human eye is drawn naturally to color, regardless the object. Yellow and red draw attention most quickly.

### ~ **Using pattern.**

Like color, pattern attracts attention and can be used to draw the eye to certain objects or areas of the display window.

### ~ **Using light to draw attention.**

Accent lighting is often more effective than general lighting in a display window. For instance, spotlights can be used to draw attention to featured merchandise.

### ~ **Showing merchandise at it will actually be used.**

Make it easy for pedestrians to visualize how they can use merchandise.

Show dried flowers in an innovative arrangement, yarn being knitted into a sweater, toy blocks built into a castle. A scene with something taking place in it will engage pedestrians and draw them into the action.

### ~ **Surprising pedestrians with the unexpected.**

Catch shoppers off guard. For instance, some stores use live mannequins in storefront window during high traffic hours (such as lunch time) to interact with shoppers.