

indie bookstore entrepreneur

IDEAS, INSPIRATION, BEST PRACTICES

autumn 2013

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Winter Institute: **Introduction to Retail** **Bookselling**

Profit strategies for new owners & managers
Tues., Jan. 21, 2014

Pay & Associates
THE BOOKSTORE TRAINING GROUP

While we may not be wild about the credit card rates at American Express, we can be grateful for their ability to widely communicate the "Shop Small" message.



As we head into the most important season of the year for most retailers, here are some strategies for in-store messaging for the Shop Local movement and a few ideas for making the most of the sales, profits, and relationships that happen during this time of year.

Malcolm Gladwell's new book, *David & Goliath: Underdogs, Misfits, and the Art of Battling Giants*, releases on Tuesday and we are reminded of his advice to booksellers during ABA's Winter Institute earlier this year ... "it's important to be long-term optimists."

small is good.
promote what makes you different.

mindful merchandising.
staff training on price points.



Yikes! At a store we recently visited, there were four copies of a hardcover book that retails for \$35 on the bottom shelf, spine out no less! That's an investment of at least \$75 (at cost) that's doing little but dragging down inventory turns, wasting cash, and missing an opportunity to spotlight an amazing title.

As owners and managers, it's our task to help frontline staff become mindful of the importance of price points when



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merchandising. This mindfulness is exactly what transforms "shelving" into "merchandising" ...



We hope you'll share this email with your staff to point out some very important retail tips:



bring it up to eye level.

Whether in a focal point display or on an eye-level shelf in a section, the area at eye-level is prime space. Hardcover should claim this area ... they'll show the customer what's new, present a positive view of your store's buying expertise, and help you sell your most impressive merchandise. For low tables, add an acrylic riser or stack a smaller table to add a tier to get items at eye level.

open it up.

Who isn't impressed when you see a paper-cut pop-up book by Robert Sabuda? It's the season to sell those beautiful books as wonderful family gifts. But to sell them, you've got to show them off.



give it prominence.

If a buyer chose an expensive book for the store, it deserves to be discovered. End panels along the traffic path are prime ... as well as tops of flat cases. Here, a slatwall end panel is fully utilized and since there's room along the traffic path, there's a small table for more fabulous books we want customers to discover.

face it out. pair it up.

Don't spine out the book that has a limited time to sell! At the very least, give it space on the eye-level shelf of your bookcase. If it has a non-book companion, pair them and you'll inspire the add-on sale, thrill the customer, and help



Put ideas to use to inspire the sale:

- * **The most valuable retail real estate: the "Front of Store"**
- * **Tables & focal point displays**
- * **Sections throughout the store**
- * **Shelf-talkers**
- * **Impulse areas like the cash wrap & service areas**

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contribute to the store's success.

All year long ... and especially during the peak season ... give special books the special attention they deserve.

use price points to dictate where and how items are displayed.

**retail field trip.
fun ideas from Anthropologie.**

When we were in New Orleans for the Southeast Independent Booksellers Association trade show last week, we took a quick retail field trip to Anthropologie in the mall across from the hotel. We're always looking for ideas and inspiration and thought you might like to see what's happening on the retail front...



mix your merchandise.

What kind of store is Anthropologie? It's not a category killer (product specific), but it carries clothing, books, items for home and office, and interesting things that are carefully selected for their customers (lifestyle specific). Customers, especially younger ones, are used to stores mixing merchandise, focusing intensely on the customer's interests, dreams, desires, and values. Just look at the beautiful combination of items on this display. Notice the soulful workbench table and the short ladder used to spotlight merchandise on this feature display.





make it fresh and delightful.

While booksellers often use publisher posters to fill the space above the perimeter bookshelves, all this usually adds is visual clutter. Anthropologie has used this arch of books along with origami butterflies on the left (made of recycled pages of books) to create this interesting vignette in the far corner of the store. Notice the wall on the right, painted in a deep terra cotta. All of this encourages the customer to keep exploring. Remember, it's not how long someone stays in your store that keeps business strong, it's how much of the store the customer travels that helps you make the magical connections that lead to a purchase.



promote the reading lifestyle.

This isn't the greatest photo, but we wanted you to see this easy and creative use of recycled books in this display behind the cash wrap. Whether you do this on a far wall above some perimeter cases or behind your own cash wrap, it's a beautiful tribute to the love of books, words, ideas, and the precious time we have to curl up with a book.

take a retail field trip.

Inspiration can be found in unlikely places. Whether you're at a cafe, walking by a storefront, or busy running errands, look for ideas to take back to your business. Modify the idea to make it your own and you'll keep making changes that keep your store a lively and engaging place to shop.

use your space to connect on an aspirational level. you can't find that online.

**going to market.
Ben's Garden**

Vickie Crafton, co-owner of [Litchfield Books](#) on the South Carolina coast, has retail in her blood. We love talking with her about what's selling well in her store and how she's creatively mixing her merchandise to make sure that non-book items are not in a ghetto, but discovered throughout the store.

[Ben's Garden](#) is one of her favorite new vendors. Made in the U.S., their items are hand-crafted and include a variety of trays, paperweights, napkins, and more. She took a leap and bought two pillows with a price point of \$100 each... the same customer bought both.



literary quotes.

The book group market is huge and each month, most gather to enjoy refreshments and good conversation. The serving trays from Ben's Garden feature lovely lettering and literary quotes.

"If you obey all the rules, you miss all the fun" is a quote from Katherine Hepburn; and Helen Keller said "My friends have made the story of my life." This line offers great girlfriend gifts and items perfect for sisters, mothers, grads, and teachers.



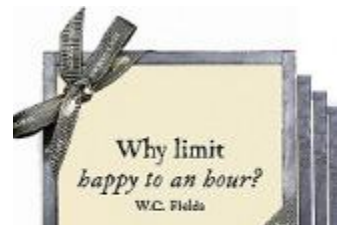
the reading lifestyle.

Here is a package of napkins, one of many fun and funny designs. What do you have in the store that will make your customers laugh? Many of these smaller indie vendors have such limited distribution

that customers will discover their items for the very first time in your store. Products like these help you stay true to your literary mission while helping you create a delightful shopping experience.

just plain fun.

You'll find great quotes from Pooh, Emily Dickinson, Winston Churchill, *W.C. Fields*, and others on coasters, napkins,



paperweights, and trays with this line that celebrates the reading lifestyle.



**your "considered" selection
will keep them coming back for more.**

leveraging "local"

With the help of the "Shop Small" mega-campaign from American Express, many people will be rethinking where they shop this season... and why.



Marketing is all about repetition.

So remember to give the "shop local" message prominence on your:

1. Entrance (sidewalk, front door, display windows)
2. Rest room
3. On shelves and in displays
4. Bookmarks
5. Newsletters (in print and electronic)
6. Website
7. Cash Wrap
8. Shopping Bags



**be bold. be genuine.
promote the indie movement.**

Have a fabulous holiday season!

Ideas, objective feedback and guidance, encouragement (always) and support ... we are here for you for any bookstore project.

Give us a call. Your first consultation is free and our rates are really quite affordable.



Call us at 904.277.2664. We'd love to work with you!

Warm regards,

Donna + Mark

Mark & Donna Paz Kaufman
[The Bookstore Training Group of Paz & Associates](#)

New Section Signs

Need to update your signage?

Create attractive section signs ... not only with your store's colors and type font that complements your logo, but also with alternative section names to catch your customers' eye.

For just \$395, you'll get up to 30 all new section signs (18" x 4") and up to 150 shelf labels for acrylic sign-holders to help customers navigate within sections. Estimates for additional quantities and/or custom sizes and designs available on request. Contact mkaufman@pazbookbiz.com

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