

Nov 1 – 2016 TURN FALL COLORS INTO CHRISTMAS GOLD!
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Once Halloween is over, it's time to gear up for the Holiday season when most retailers expect to do most of their sales. Even though you have been planning Christmas for awhile and had to make purchases in August at the Fall Trade Shows, you are now ready to bring all those goodies out and find a good home for them.

WINDOWS: Your windows are the most important invitation to shoppers. Plan windows that have just enough Christmas-Holiday props to send the message that you are in the 'spirit' of the season, but make sure to keep plenty of space to make great displays of your products.

You are NOT selling the season, you are selling your products IN the season. Also make sure you design your windows so they have arrangements that are cross merchandised with a clear story and theme, but also easy to change up. With more people shopping at this time of year and making more frequent trips you need to be making changes each week, and in some cases each DAY.

In the mind of the shopper, when they see something changed in the window they



assume it's been sold. This equates to a momentum and your store being successful which contributes to more sales.

IN STORE: Don't feel you have to have Christmas decorations all over the place.

#1 it's time consuming and can take away from the time you need to get your shelves stocked with all the extra products.

#2 It can be overwhelming visually and distract from your products.

My advice is to find a few key spots, especially shelves up high and seen from a distance and make strong Christmas Holiday decor there along with a few of your products. Match up the colors of the decorations to the products so they are still the main thing. Purchase your props in dollar or discount stores because it's not about the decorations. They are just props that should point to color, pattern, or style of the products.

In some cases just keeping the Christmas decorations neutral, or even more winter themes with white snow flakes and icicles is just as effective and never clash visually with products.

I decorate a ladies fashion boutique each year and we use garland and pearl balls with lime green ribbon, which is her corporate color. We always have these way up



high above the outrigger fixtures, so as a glance when you walk in you see Christmas, but nothing is in the way of the garments or visually competing with them.

We have three small trees that get moved around in the window as they change week to week. They are just tucked in the most appropriate place so they aren't determining where the mannequins will be. Extra large silver balls suspended at the end of lime green sheer ribbon also allows me to insert 'Christmas' from the hooks in the ceiling where they look best.

EXTRA SENSES: This is the time of year to appeal to other senses such as sight, taste, and sound. You can offer gingerbread cookies, hot apple cider, or hot chocolate and bring in the scents people expect at Christmas. Pine or Cloves or 'cranberry'. Then the music can be all the traditional holiday music as well.

Yes, you as the shop owner and your staff may be sick of it by the end of the season, but remember it's for the shopper and their shopping experience.

EXTRA SERVICES: Gift wrapping is something you can offer if you have the space and have budgeted in your promotion and advertising. In my opinion that's what it is, especially if you are using your own Brand labels and gift bags. This is a great opportunity for you to have a signature Christmas wrap you can offer that will set you apart from your competitors.

CAUTION: Don't get burned out. Hire good help and call in friends and family to do some of the 'grunt' work of keeping it all up. Plan places in which to store back up inventory that ISN'T in the aisles. Shoppers will not want to stay in your store for long if you have so much stuff out that they feel attacked by products. Let them enjoy enough space in the aisles to leisurely browse while they are making up their minds about gifts for friends, family and colleagues.