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Are You Seeing Red from Christmas Leftovers!

by Linda McKendry

If you are in the GIFT business to any degree, I have a SECRET that I've used with my clients over the years who are small merchants. They need all the sales and profits they can get. I talk them OUT OF DISCOUNTING items left over from Christmas unless they specifically show off Christmas details. Examples: Santa and Nativity Scenes. The rest?



Don't DISCOUNT, DISPLAY! Here is a list of motifs that are more seasonal than celebrational. They can be featured and cross merchandised around the store to look brand new and NOT for CHRISTMAS!

- Snow: snowmen, snow flakes, winter scenes, trees *without* decorations.
- Angels: of any description are year round items for gifts and collections.
- Pointsettias: Flowers are flowers! The colors of these plants fit in with many cross merchandised displays that don't say Christmas.



- Berries & Birds: Red berries and cardinals are often featured at Christmas because they are red, not because they are specifically related to Santa or the Nativity. So they have year round appeal.
- Bells: without Santas or nativity scenes can also just become regular gifts and collectibles.
- Sleighs: Just playful and whimsical, tuck them in with the plush, teddy bears, dolls and toys.
- Pinecones & Evergreen: Twigs, boughs, and items from nature are good year round. Change up the color of the ribbons to fit in with a different themed feature display.
- RED....gold, silver, any SOLID colored item that doesn't have a specific Christmas motif or symbol on it is going to make your VALENTINE's DAY visual merchandise presentations full of additional variety, along with all the heart shapes and heart decorated items.
- LEFTOVERS.... from Christmas often find their way into New Year displays for the Spring and Summer seasons and celebrations without having to be discounted!



Benefits:

1. Your profits stay up and help your cash flow.
2. You don't have to purchase as much to replace stock sold at discount.
3. You have ample current stock to keep shelves full.
4. Merchandising Methods I teach are at work to keep all items looking fresh and new as you change the displays and move them around the store!

Let me put it this way. You can see the same person every day, but because they wear something different, maybe change their hair and makeup from time to time, they never look boring. You don't take them for granted. And when you compliment her on an outfit, how do you feel if she just smiles and says, "Thank you!" Instead of, "This old thing? I've had it for years!"

I'm telling you, the owner, who has moved the same item twenty times, to not be negative about it. It's not a 'dog' as they say, it's a 'puppy looking for a new home' and the right owner is coming along soon.

When a regular customer will come into your store and says, "Oh, wow? Look at this! When did you get this in?" You DO NOT say "I've had that for months!" you DO SAY... "I just put it there!" Let the shopper enjoy all the magic of the moment finding something that is delighting them and don't put any damper on their excitement and enthusiasm. Yes, to you it may be a "leftover", even from Christmas, but to them it's a NEW DAY item!

Get busy with the casseroles! (aka putting leftovers into delicious meals!)