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## ONDISPLAY

by Joanna Figueroa

merchandising goods with dynamic displays



### Make great displays a top priority

Given the slower economy these days, I can only imagine many of you are looking to “tighten your belt,” and display sounds like a natural place to trim. Don’t be tempted, however — I actually couldn’t agree less.

It is during slower times that you need to work twice as hard to design creative displays that are fresh and new, not just use refashioned, tired props. Creative displays do not have to be expensive or elaborate, but they need to catch your customer’s eye. If this wasn’t true, you could just order fabric, put it on the shelves, sit back and let the sales roll in. Instead, the opposite is true — good displays that will sell your product are well worth the time. If you prioritize this area of your marketing plan, “they will come.” I have seen it time and time again.

If you remember from past articles, I encourage you to use the spaces that are most unexpected and visually exciting to your customers — the air, the floor, the sides and fronts of fabric shelves that stand empty. Next, take a look around to see what items you have plenty of, but don’t use, or don’t think of as display items at all. Perhaps scraps of fabric, empty cardboard bolts, static displays of books or notions. Are there ways to create a display using stacked cardboard bolts tied together with fabric? Could they be used as risers to add height? How about utilizing scraps to make spring give-a-way bundles?

Every store has some slower times during the day when employees have some “down” time. Have a display project ready for those moments. Scraps of fabric gathered with a covered button in the middle could be made into a Mother’s Day

display bouquet. Fill a bowl with candies wrapped in a cute pinked charm square. In fact, cutting scraps into charm squares and letting each customer choose a few on their way out the door, is a sure way to create customer loyalty with minimal cost. You can become known as the store that gives away fabric every day of the year! Perhaps you could let customers bring cut charm squares of their own to “trade” for new ones. Create an entire display around this kind of an idea. Who knows where it might lead!

Other creative ways to freshen up things this spring might include those popular fabric banners with letters on each banner announcing the holiday or a theme. The display itself is cute, and people will be inspired to purchase fabric and make their own simple banners at home.


Or how about a hat party? Most discount chain stores carry inexpensive hats this time of the year. Create a display with fabric decorated hats.

If nothing else, garden and patio items are some of the best display items to use in the store. Flower pots, patterned rain boots, gloves and seed packs create great vignettes that go very well with a variety of spring and floral fabrics.

Regardless of what low-cost methods you choose to use this spring, remember that display is one of the best methods you have to entice and entertain your customer and boost everyone’s spirits.

*Joanna Figueroa is the owner and designer of Fig Tree Quilts and Fresh Vintage booklets. She designs fabric for Moda and lives in San Leandro, Calif. Visit [www.figtreesquilts.com](http://www.figtreesquilts.com)*

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