

Prose from the Pres . . .

A Message from Your NARTS President

Is Your Store Image a True Reflect of Your Vision?

Image is important, especially in retail. Just because we sell used things does not mean we should let our stores look any less than professional. The image that your store projects is critical to your success. Never forget that your store's design and overall appearance convey your achievements and self-respect to the world every day. The time and effort you spend thinking about the message your store sends is time well spent.

The first thing to look at is how well your merchandise fits into your layout. It doesn't matter if you organize everything by size, by color, by category, or by item story . . . an easy-to-navigate store is one where customers will want to spend more time. Are your aisles easy to maneuver or do your customers get spooked by the butt-brush effect? According to Paco Underhill's book, *Why We Buy*, women especially are offended if they are brushed on their rear end by anything while looking at something. If they have to squeeze between your fixtures, then it's time to remove some fixtures. I know at this time of year, when items are coming in like crazy that is not easy, but force yourself to make your store navigable and things will sell faster, leaving room for more items.

Be aware of the polish of your store. Are things clean? Are the tops of the racks dusty? Is there a pleasant smell as people walk in the door? Are all the light bulbs replaced as soon as they burn out? Are the bathrooms pleasant and clean? Restrooms always tell a visitor a lot about a company.

Another critical thing to stay on top of, particularly when you are busy, is your displays. Make sure items that have sold are replaced by a similar item or the display is redone at least once a day. Color is very powerful in creating a mood, so make sure the colors in your displays are current with the seasons and styles seen in department stores.

Yes, this sounds like more work . . . just when you think you have too much to do already. However, paying attention to details now will encourage customers to remember your store favorably and return another time. ♻️



—Kitty Boyce
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“The image is more than an idea. It is a vortex or cluster of fused ideas and is endowed with energy.”

~Ezra Pound, *twentieth-century poet.*