



WHAT I'M READING ...well actually, this month it's what I'm writing... "Every Store has a Story"

I have several good business oriented books to review but I thought I would do something different this month. I spent a rainy weekend catching up on putting my stores' history into a scrapbook which includes my reflections of the past year or so. This is a reference tool as well as a way to chronicle the life of my stores.

Whenever I look at one of my scrapbooks, I am reminded of where we came from, how we got where we are and the journey along the way. I am grateful for the words I penned and the wisdom they provide as I look back and look ahead. Are my scrapbooks perfect? No, but it's my best effort. Can you do this? Yes, just don't be a perfectionist or you will never start much less finish.

In fact, the very thought of this can be overwhelming but with a little organization, you can get set up to make it less daunting. Once you get started, you will not want to stop and may scrapbook into the wee hours of the night and find it as therapeutic as I do. As I see it, your business is like your baby and those of you who are parents have scrapbooked your child's years in some way so you won't forget anything. We need to do the same for our businesses, so we don't forget where we came from, the people who helped us in the beginning, stayed with us through the tough times and continue to be a big part of our stores. It reminds us of things we did well and things that we did not do so well. It is our store's story and that must be chronicled.

So to get organized:

1. Have a camera at every one of your stores, keep it charged if it is digital or keep film if it is not. Take pictures every time you see an important moment or event. Take photos of: your best displays, before and after renovations or store makeovers, sales and ladies nights' out. Photograph your employees and customers. Make prints of them immediately. Have a photo box, date and label the pictures and put them into the box. Upload the digital images to your website, facebook page or email service to keep fresh photos available for use.
2. Clip your best ads of your shop, press releases that were published and any stories printed in the media about your shop. Have a separate box for these.
3. Buy a scrapbook album when they are on sale and any other materials you would like to use once you decide to get started. Good sharp scissors are nice to have as are cut out stencils for cropping pictures. Colorful paper stock cut into shapes, a box of markers and various stickers make creativity a little easier.
4. Put all of this together at home where you can pull it out and work on it when you are ready. Now you are organized and ready to go.

As I said, I just spent a very rainy weekend working on mine. I was about 18 months behind but it is well under way now because I have developed and used this system over time. All that is left is the chronicling which I will do after I finish this article. I will reflect over the last 18 months and write about the highs and lows, victories and losses, things I could have prevented, things I had no control over. I will think about my hopes and plans for the future and strategies to make them happen. So I guess I better get started...so should you lest we forget our stores' stories. ♻️



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