

Common Areas of Challenge & Areas of Easy Change:

Unique Opportunities - Visuals

Extending the museum experience into the retail environment – Most museum displays are visually oriented. Does your store continue the visual part of the museum experience?

If at all possible, create a small display front and center that represents your museum's mission and theme or the latest temporary exhibit

Engage the customer through product display – collections of products so customers can make multiple selections at one time

Change your displays or the way you display your products on a regular basis

Signage – Use signage to challenge the visitor's curiosity. Do you want to know more about. . . ?

More Challenging Changes

Museum stores tend to think of renovations and or updating stores as long term or generational; where regular retail relates these same functions in terms that last 2 to 5 years.

“Architects are wonderful people, but occasionally miss the importance of function.”

Barbara Lenhardt, President Emeritus MSA Board of Directors

Lighting

When a customer came into the store with a child on his shoulders and almost touched the extremely hot “spot” light fixture . . . we realized the danger of the lighting fixtures at the entry of the store. Laura Martin, RRMPA

Lighting Goal: Lighting must have good color, contrast and the right balance between lighted areas; it should lead your customer through the store and emphasize product areas or specific products

Easily maintainable (How about those 20' ceiling heights!)

Energy Efficient

Above all – lighting should be safe in areas that may be accessed by you visitors

Store Color

A simple paint job can add freshness to your store; but you should keep in mind that neutral is your friend. It permits the product to “pop”.

Black walls/fixtures do not add to store ambiance nor is it easily maintained. Black also absorbs light so highlighting product becomes an issue.

Just as in home décor – you may want to highlight one area over another; that would depend upon the size and shape of your store.

Are there specific color schemes in the museum’s exhibits that can be reproduced in the store environment?

Use more vibrant colors to accent a particular display of products rather than as a part of your long term color scheme

Fixtures

When an elderly customer leaned against a wheeled fixture and it started rolling away . . . that’s when we realized ALL wheels need brakes!

Flexible – cannot be stressed enough; product mix changes, packaging changes, size and shape of products change so flexibility is essential when you are looking at long term fixtures

Durability – is almost as important as flexibility since none of our museums have the “extra” cash flow needed to replace fixtures on a regular basis

Adjustable shelving that can be re-arranged easily

Storage – under the fixture or at the bottom of the wall is essential

A well designed cash wrap is essential. Think about everything that needs to be in that space and then where it will be most accessible.

“There was not enough room to reach behind the computer tower to plug in the attachments with the length of cord available. We had to borrow a child to reach down and around to plug in the peripherals!” Barbara Lenhardt, President Emeritus, MSA Board of Directors

Strongly 2nd by Laura Martin, RRMPA – As I celebrate more birthdays, it gets harder and harder to sit cross legged on the floor and stretch to reach plugs for peripherals that need to be changed or that are just not working.

