Show It Off: Library Merchandising on a Shoestring

WVLA - September 30, 2009

Kathy Schalk-Greene
Mount Laurel Library, NJ
planning_library_futures@comcast.net
WVLA, September 30, 2009

Show It Off:
Library Merchandising on a Shoestring

Kathy Schalk-Greene
Mount Laurel Library, NJ
planning_library_futures@comcast.net
WVLA, September 30, 2009

Merchandising Impact: Circulation Zooms

Mount Laurel Library Circulation

Fast Facts: Mount Laurel Library, NJ

- Population: 42,000
- Building: 33,000 square feet
- Collection: 129,000 items (2008)
- Circulation: 840,000 (2008)
- Budget: $2,544,000 (2008)
- $421,000 materials (2008)
- Staff: 29 full time equivalents
- Open: 70 hours per week
- Location: 14 miles east of Philadelphia, PA

www.sjrlc.org/tradingspaces

Merchandising Encourages Use of materials through attractive display

How are You Merchandising Now?
Show It Off: Library Merchandising on a Shoestring
WVLA - September 30, 2009

Retail Fixtures
- Designed for visual display
- Adaptable
- People are familiar with shopping

"Cake" or Tiered Tables

Merchandising Fixtures
- Book Gondola
  - Slanted shelves
- CD Browser
  - Stacked shelves

Slat Wall
- Display holders & shelves
- Signs
- Adaptable

Successful Library Merchandising
- Full displays
- Colorful, attractive
- Variety of spines and covers
- Balanced visually
- Easy to maintain

Merchandising How-Tos
Before

Tidy First
- Spine out, in order
- Distribute evenly
Fit It All In

Dylan doesn’t fit
Use end cap

Cover Out

- Mix of spine & cover out
- Diversity of viewpoints

Mix of viewpoints

End Cap “How-Tos”: Fill In

Two books deep
Slide it over

All Displays Aren’t the Same

Books can be stacked
(large in back, small in front)

Don’t Always Follow “The Rules”

- Oversize on top
- Group series together
Show It Off: Library Merchandising on a Shoestring

WVLA - September 30, 2009

Kathy Schalk-Greene
planning_library_futures@comcast.net
www.sjrlc.org/tradingspaces

Easy for Staff to Maintain

• Power wall
• Cover out on top
• Several deep for browsing
• Bottom shelf used to refill

Question for the Group:

• What could you use to merchandise if you had no money for fixtures?

Develop Your Merchandising Eye

1

2

3
“Zone Merchandising…

divides [a space] into distinct areas
and uses them as
message centers
to reach customers.”

Tom Feltenstein,
Six principles for winning the sales growth challenge
Franchising World, 12/1/06

Zones for Permanent Display

• Power paths are prime real estate
Show It Off: Library Merchandising on a Shoestring
WVLA - September 30, 2009

Defining Zones

- New Books
- Music
- Movies

Q: What makes this a zone?

Redefine New Books Zone

- Develop critical mass
- Expand what’s “new”
- Show off covers

Does this excite you?

New Books!

- People can “shop the shelves”
- Highlight new and popular books
- Define “new” as a longer period

Marketplace: All are Welcome

- Adult Fiction
- Adult Nonfiction
- Biography
- Children’s
- Juvenile
- Large Print
- Mysteries
- Young Adult

Q: What’s High Demand at Your Library?
Q: What's High Demand at Your Library?
- New Books
- Lifestyle Topics
- Home & Garden
- Parenting
- College/Careers
- Popular Formats

Permanent Merchandising
- Display popular topics and items
- Located in high traffic areas
- Showcase a critical mass or whole collections
- Present clear, attractive displays
- Design to be easy to maintain

Libraries Have Many Audiences

Environments for User Needs

Quiet Spaces
Quiet Reading Spaces

- Construct shelving "rooms"
- Use slanted shelves for display
- Magazines
- Newspapers
- Zone for quiet

Sit and Read

- Reading nooks
- Scattered throughout library
- Natural light a plus

Use Different Seating Styles

Environments for User Needs

- Family Room

Mess Equals Success
Welcome, Comfort, Excitement

- Comfy chairs/sofas
- Use color
- Paint, rugs
- Toys = fun

Add the Unexpected

- Sales increased 60% after moving display outside

Temporary Merchandising

- Uses existing or special fixtures
- Showcases older items in collection
- Presents clear display
- Communicates a single message
- Designed to be easily changed

Add Shelf End Displays

Signs

- One font
- Large print
- List subjects
Show It Off: Library Merchandising on a Shoestring

WVLA - September 30, 2009

Kathy Schalk-Greene
10 Mount Laurel Library, NJ
planning_library_futures@comcast.net
www.sjrlc.org/tradingspaces

Oprah Picks: Easy to Refill

- List on back of sign

Shelf End “How-Tos”

- Draw people toward the stacks
- Highlight older material
- Rotating temporary displays
- Single message per display

Cubes & Tables

- Substitute for slat wall
- Intersperse with regular shelves
- Showcase colorful items

Slanted Shelves

- Subtitle
- Highlight newer material
- Intersperse with regular shelves
- Showcase colorful items

www.trelease-on-reading.com

Welcome to Jim Trelease’s Home Page where the goal is to help children make books into friends, not enemies!
Show It Off: Library Merchandising on a Shoestring
WVLA - September 30, 2009

Kathy Schalk-Greene
planning_library_futures@comcast.net
www.sjrlc.org/tradingspaces

Shelf Tops
- Table cloth covers shelf

Stacking

Popular Books Stacked on Top

Book Holders on Shelves

Displays Create Atmosphere
- Add excitement
- Time consuming
- Low impact on circulation
- Be selective

Sometimes Circ Doesn’t Matter
Show It Off: Library Merchandising on a Shoestring
WVLA - September 30, 2009

Customers Say:

I think this is the coolest library ever!

I just love the displays of the books

Stanley, Idaho Population: 290

Simple Things to Start Today

Use Your Front Door to Enter

Kathy Schalk-Greene
planning_library_futures@comcast.net

Mount Laurel Library, NJ
www.sjrlc.org/tradingspaces
Show It Off: Library Merchandising on a Shoestring
WVLA - September 30, 2009

Do a sign audit

Do a walk-through
What could make my library more comfortable and convenient for customers?
What would I like to change?
What's on my wish list?

De-Clutter Your Library

Take a Retail Field Trip
Take a field trip to Target, Staples, book and grocery stores
Adapt good retail ideas and attitudes

Ask Everybody

Weeding is Merchandising
Show It Off: Library Merchandising on a Shoestring
WVLA - September 30, 2009

Create WOW
- Color
- Paint
- Accessories
- Area Rugs
- Furniture

Work on Power Paths
- Create WOW on Power Paths

Willingness: As valuable as money

Make an Impact: Take a Leap
- “You can’t leap the chasm taking baby steps. Baby steps will kill you.”
  --Dave Genesy

Make an Impact: Piece by Piece
- If you can’t do it all at once, take it one piece at a time, do that really well, and then keep going …

Other Resources for Library Staff
- Why We Buy by Paco Underhill
- How Buildings Learn by Stewart Brand
- Merchandising Made Simple by Jenny LaPerriere and Trish Christiansen
- Merchandising Strategies DVD
  www.lvn.org (Library Video Network)