

Front Entrance Suggestions

by AnnaLee Waite

As a retailer, one of your most important jobs is to attract the attention of prospects and get them in your front door.

I have come up with a number of suggestions that will help you grab the attention of drive-by prospects and those customers walking past your shop.

Prospective customers are drawn to retail establishments that pique their curiosity and make them want to enter the front door to investigate what they will find inside.

Catch the attention of prospective customers by using planters with bright red, orange or yellow flowers (mums are great at this time of year). If you are located in a cooler climate use artificial/dried flowers that won't freeze or artificial topiary. Large pots at the front door can also hold pumpkins or Christmas fir trees. Use moss to cover the dirt at the top of the pot and place pine cones around the pumpkins/trees. You can also add flags and banners to these flower pots to get the attention of your prospective client. Twinkly lights are inexpensive and easy to install - everyone loves lights - especially as we move into the holiday season. Wrap lights around gourds, pumpkins or fir trees. Rolling saucers allow you to move pots inside at night or place bricks inside the pots and cover with dirt so your pots don't walk away at night.

A great looking doormat is a nice way to welcome customers to your shop. A colorful wreath with lots of bright colors makes prospects curious about what they will find inside your front door. Buy a wreath form or recycle one. Spray paint your wreath and add whatever you have in your shop - ribbons, buttons or bright fabric!

I am a big recycler so look around your garage or attic. Also see what you have growing in your back yard that you might be able to decorate with. I live in a warm climate so right now I am cutting magnolia leaves and ferns



to decorate with. Figure out a way to beautify your front shop entrance without spending money. Use eye-catching bright leaves in a display or pine cones (these can easily be spray painted or glittered). Pine branches smell nice - cost you nothing - and look great as a part of an arrangement.

Another way to grab attention is to use large format pictures on your front windows or doors. Take pictures of your smiling staff or of your customers stitching. We are all attracted to human faces so include people. If you have a sale going on these large format photos are a perfect way to let people know they should stop in for special savings. Stores like CVS, Walgreens, and Sam's Club allow you to upload images via their web sites and print photos as large as 20" X 30" for less than \$20 (most all photo labs offer on-line coupons). I also check my Sunday newspaper and all the enclosed flyers for discount coupons which allow for major savings.

Shabby Chic is very popular so dig out your old suit cases from the attic and stack them up as the base of a display at your front door.

The junkier the better. Once you have set up the stack, add an old bird cage, mirror or a old metal bucket - and - you guessed it - add twinkly lights on top!!

In the next issue of Needlework Retailer...

Look for details on how to win over your prospect once they enter your store.



AnnaLee Waite is a Houston based needlework designer with 15 years experience in property and retail management.

Prior to founding her design studio she specialized in opening retail stores for Linens n' Things and apartment properties for Lincoln Property Company. She is a designated CPM (Certified Property Manager) whose goal is to impart knowledge and offer support to independent shop owners in order to help them increase traffic and sales thus improving profits.

AnnaLee is teaching "Create Some Mojo in your Shop" at the 2015 Nashville Needlework Show 2/27/15 - 3/1/15.

Visit AnnaLee Waite Designs - Suite #208 - Nashville 2015!