

# Put color in the shop and black in your ledger

*Creative use of color attracts customers and stimulates spending*

by Ernest W. Fair

**T**ake a good look at your use of color in the pro shop. Proper understanding of color as a sales tool could mean the difference between a sizeable loss or gain in potential sales.

The effective use of color in advertising, promotion and merchandising takes on even greater importance with the increasing business volume of wearing apparel, men's and women's, in pro shops.

Here are some proven and tested ways of stimulating sales through the application of basic and imaginative color schemes.

**1** Use color to bring about clear, three-dimensional viewing instead of a dull, flat effect. By displaying a green item in a green carton, or free-standing against a like background, the product can go completely unnoticed by most customers. Move it to another area where its own color contrasts with that of the background and sales will invariably improve.

**2** Complimentary colors should always be used to make an item stand out from its surroundings. Here are the more important colors that are opposite one another on the color scale: yellow-violet, yellow-green and red violet; green and red, and blue and orange.

**3** Keep in mind that warm colors always tend to be exciting and use them where this response is valuable in raising the interest of customers. Warm colors, scientists have found, increase blood pressure and the pulse rate. They arouse desire to possess many an item which would be scarcely noticed were they absent.

**4** Keep display and merchandising fixtures to low-key and pleasant natural colors so that contrast will be pos-

sible no matter what merchandise is displayed thereon or therein. White, cream, buff and similiar colors in such areas lend themselves to widest possible usage.

**5** Bright circus colors relieve monotony and create a cheerful feeling. They are particularly valuable when used in mass displays; in displays set up within large fixtures; on lengthy aisles; in heavily-stocked windows or in other areas where monotony could discourage customer interest.

**6** Get color contrast in all displays by arrangement of merchandise. Four different red items displayed beside one another, for example, stand out as a mass and not as individual items. Use two blue or green items between each of the red and all four will attract more attention.

**7** Brighter tints reflect more light. Use them in areas where lighting is below that of other parts of the store or window layout. It also pays to put this factor to use where customers have been browsing a number of other units before reaching this specific display.

**8** Provide top visibility in all display areas with finishes having high reflective factors by means of adequate contrast in hue of the basic colors used. This increases light illumination and provides the pleasant background to put the customer in a receptive mood.

**9** Pick your colors (whether on merchandise or package or in display fixtures) to adapt to the type of illumination used at the particular spot. These differences illustrate the value of the point: Light blue under mercury light has a 27 per cent reflected value compared to 32 per cent under incandescent light; yellow has 30 per cent under mercury and 23

per cent under incandescent; light buff has 30 and 40 per cent; and light green has 32 per cent under both.

**10** Comfortable seeing is always a must for effective merchandising. Keep it in mind when planning any display fixture color choices as well as in merchandise shown therein. Concentrate on an over-all contrast which is not too harsh in order to assure such pleasant viewing by the customer.

**11** Red and white are colors that stand out. Red is traditionally a signal to "stop and look." Since we are all conditioned to react to it in that manner, it can be used effectively to make a customer "stop and look" at any specific display.

**12** Yellow has very high visibility. Use it when you want an item, a display card or other merchandising effort to attract the attention of customers from a distance. Displays in remote areas of the store draw customers more effectively when this color is used than most others.

**13** Some colors cause less eye strain. Customers naturally spend more time in viewing displays or merchandise in these colors. Buff, for example, is rated at 68 per cent in the area of eye sensitivity while gray is 34 per cent.

**14** Bear in mind that a person's vision and reaction to any color decreases with the diminishing of light on that color. Illumination of color can be overdone, of course, but underlighting can be just as ineffective.

**15** Use color to hold attention to merchandise or displays. Eye fatigue results from unnecessary travel of the eye over ill-defined areas. High con-

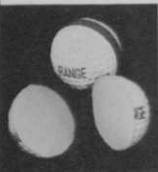
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## Color in the shop

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trast, for example, may highlight one spot, but make observation of the whole difficult.

**16** Background makes a difference in the appearance of color either pertaining to the merchandise itself or to the printed sales message on a colored card. Gray against black, for example, will have a seemingly different shade than when presented against a white background.

**17** Bright colors always appear brighter on a dark background and dark colors appear still darker on a light background. This is important to keep in mind when creating display cards as well as other forms of advertising using color itself.

**18** Also worth noting is the fact that the human eye cannot focus red and blue at the same time to form one image. This occurs because as blue rays of light enter the eye they bend sharply and are focused at a point in front of the retina. Red rays are bent less and focus at a point behind the blue.

**19** Color is enjoyed by everyone. If the use of color involves a small extra cost, balance this added value against the expense. In most instances, the worth of using color will more than off-set the sum involved.

**20** Tints, tones and shades of the same color work well together. Red, for example, harmonizes with pink, maroon and rose. Often, use of these tints, tones or shades can be more effective than settling on contrasting colors to create a merchandising effect.

**21** Hundreds of tests have shown people like blue best of all the basic colors, and, therefore, its value to create the pleasant reaction should never be overlooked. Next, in order, are red, green, violet, orange and yellow.

**22** Want excitement from the customer as a reaction to the merchandise or promotional effort? Most people see red and red-orange as supplying this emotion.

**23** Does the merchandise call for a peaceful and subdued reaction on the part of the customer to make a purchase? Blue and blue-violet are the colors which supply this.

Finally, color can very much affect other senses. The "looks-good-enough-to-eat" colors are bright red, orange, a soft yellow and clear green and tans. Appealing to the sense of smell are pink, lavender, pale yellow and pale green. Relating to the sense of touch, red is hot and blue is cold.

Check your color merchandising now. A more effective setup could push you from "in the red" to "in the black" or hypo your sales volume many times over what it is. □

## Trees do more

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colored stakes, posts, ropes and chains? Add some brightly colored vines such as bougainvillea or Carolina jasmine to the fence, and you have a fine introduction to the course.

Some golf architects do an outstanding job of blending the traps into carefully contoured greens, and, yet, it seems without a frame.

To the back of the greens, such foliage as the evergreen pear, oleanders, bottlebush, Jerusalem thorn and Palo Verde could be planted to provide a beautiful backdrop.

Some public or semi-public course owners may criticize the pear or oleander as too dense and possibly slow playing, but private course players, familiar with their distances, would not complain. If a course looks forward to large galleries, however, other methods of framing should be investigated.

There is an old saying in horse racing, "There are horses for courses." The same can apply to the landscape architect and golf courses. Owners should seek the best architect and weigh his advice.

It doesn't make any difference how green the fairways, tees and greens are, or how white the sand traps are, or how blue the ponds or lakes are, if you don't have trees and shrubbery. If you have trees, which have color, then you have a better course and one much easier to sell to the members. □