

Get'em to STOP, LOOK & BUY!

Attention-getting displays that face traffic and hold interest will get customers' wallets out **By Tony Comorat** Visual Merchandising Consultant

Sales-producing displays rarely occur accidentally. They usually are a result of a realistic logical attitude about the purpose of the display.

The golf professional interested in operating a profitable shop will give careful attention to planning and executing the details of an effective visual merchandising program; a program that will include window displays, interior displays, niches, ledges and feature spots that are all directed toward getting the customer to buy in his shop.

An important point to remember is that a display's purpose is to attract the eyes of customers. Therefore, it must *face traffic* that approaches the window or space from a given direction. This is not as difficult as it may sound. Turning, tilting or standing the elements so they face the traffic can be accomplished by careful observation of the space before you make the layout. Stand outside the window, or in front of the space if it is an interior, while making your plan and determine the flow of traffic or its pattern. Then, arrange the elements in your display to face the traffic.

As effective display must make the viewer (1) stop, (2) look, and (3) buy.

1. Displays must *stop* customers, literally, in their tracks. The eye catcher of the display, whether it be color, size, or the symbol of an idea must be different and compelling enough to capture the customer's attention and distract him from whatever he was doing before coming upon the display.

2. Then he must be able to *look* at it, not merely glance or stare at it. The display must be interesting enough to hold his attention at least long enough for him to assimilate and be impressed with the message in the display.

3. Ideally, if the first two points have been achieved, then he should be aroused or stimulated enough with what he has seen to *take action*. Action that will result not only in sales at the moment, but cause him to think of your shop, your reputation, your service or your fine merchandise to satisfy his needs in the future.

Effective displays must be planned, thought out and executed to sell an idea. This takes time, hard work, good taste and careful scheduling.

In the planning stage, consider the displays adjacent to the space you will be using for your display. The colors used in your display should be in harmony with those in the adjoining displays. Colors should also be pertinent to the season.

Using a theme or a background that is not compatible with adjacent displays will make the display appear out of place, therefore, less effective. Even before you plan a display for an area where there will be other displays, determine what the others are to contain during the time while the display will be on view.

Most emphatic and dramatic impact is achieved when plans include every available display space and the installation of all displays

overnight, if possible. There is much value in the surprise that results from a change that is thorough and complete. Full impact of any visual merchandise presentation is diminished if the installation is allowed to drag on over a period of time in which parts of the display are revealed in a slow sequence. Make every effort to take full advantage of the element of surprise and shock.

When planning, use a monthly calendar with large daily squares for making notations, and make notes that will guide you in making your arrangements. Once the date is set for a display, mark that date on the calendar, then determine how much time you have for preparation. Apportion the time so that a sequence is set which will assure that details requiring the most time are started first and will be ready when the time comes for installing the display.

There are several factors which should receive careful attention when planning displays: (1) timeliness, (2) drama, (3) color, (4) human interest, (5) freshness.

1. *Timeliness*. Of all the requirements that are essential for profitable display, timeliness can be rated as most important. Displays must be timed to the season, holiday, or event that is considered dominant in importance to the viewer at the moment. Generally, two to three weeks before an upcoming event, tournament, holiday or special occasion, is considered ample time to install pertinent displays.

Such gift giving events as Father's

Continued on page 52

Stop, Look and Buy

Continued from page 50

Day, Mother's Day, Valentine's Day, Memorial Day, June weddings and graduations are excellent opportunities to get those extra sales that mean so much profit-wise. (See GOLFDOM March '68). A "feel" for best timing locally is most important and can be developed if you try to keep attuned to your customers' buying habits.

2. *Drama.* Dramatic displays can be accomplished in many ways: unusual or imaginative use of over-size symbols such as hearts, flowers and ornaments; photo blow-ups of popular personalities in the club; spots in the clubhouse or the locker room all can be especially dramatic backgrounds or eye-catchers. Imaginative arrangements of varied colored wooden clothes hangers hung one from the other from ceiling to floor make attractive backgrounds or panels for a display. Hundreds of colored golf tees tied onto strings and hung from the ceiling with hundreds of others used to cover the floor will add a dramatic touch to a display of men's slacks and shirts with a sign reading, "Perfect off the tee."

3. *Color.* This is one of the most inexpensive elements which can be used in accomplishing selected moods or drama in displays. It can be achieved with paint, fabrics, papers, vinyls, decorative materials or light. Whatever the desired atmosphere or mood (calm, tranquil, exciting, luxurious, or startling), color can lend an important hand in attaining the desired results. Blues and greens are usually used to achieve quiet, calm, tranquil settings; reds, yellows for warmth, and excitement; purples, grays, gold for luxurious effects.

4. *Human interest.* The idea is directed toward the viewer. Anything in the display that encourages the viewer to associate or relate with the display will contribute to its success. E.g., locker room setting, using regular locker and bench with wearables hung and draped in the locker and over the bench will serve as a natural reminder to most golfers that its time to change into something new. The setting can be created by using tables and chairs from the lounge or dining room and

set up with proper drinks, etc. A suitable sign could proclaim, "Fashions to relax in."

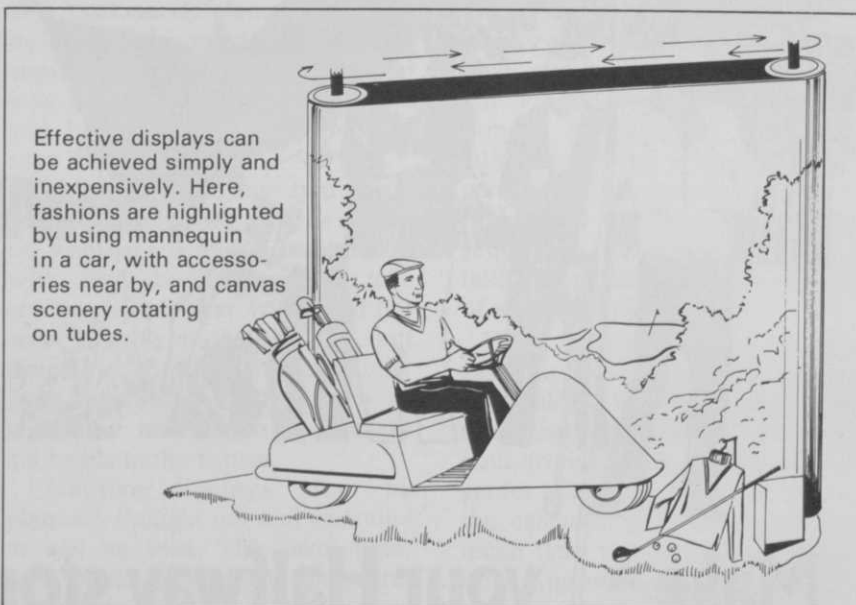
5. *Freshness.* This can best be described as that quality which makes the display appear sparkling, new, current, and desirable. Dust, unclean glass, fixtures, outdated or dog-eared signs, out-of-season properties make it impossible to achieve the fresh look. Be careful when arranging displays to check every detail and remove or discard anything that detracts in the slightest from the fresh appearance of the display. Faded fabrics, grass mats or decorative materials can destroy hours of effort and detract from the real value of the merchandise on display.

the single original idea or purpose of the display and a determination to stay with it.

The size, shape and location of the area, along with all the other factors—color, lights, signs, etc.—must be used judiciously. Every element must be in balance for total effectiveness.

Background, color, finish, location, floor covering and lights—these elements must now be considered as the compatible composition that will provide the perfect setting for the message you wish to deliver.

Consideration must be based on the elements in the display—their shape, color and size—so that when you have completed preparation of



One of the most serious errors made by the non-professional in setting up a display is "narrow" or "limited" vision; seeing only segments or parts of a display rather than the whole picture. The display should be composed of units that are related to the single purpose of the display and so arranged or laid out that they direct the viewer's attention to that one purpose or idea. Otherwise, the results will be a display that does not "hang together." This may occur from the use of non-harmonious colors, non-compatible elements, materials or textures, or the random and unplanned arrangements of the elements in the display.

Successful and attractive composition is not difficult. It requires only that you keep in mind

the space, your display will appear "at home" in it. If your display has to fight for attention against drab flooring, dim lights, window reflections or inappropriate background, it will be much less effective.

If the shape of the space is not right, change its appearance with color. If the flooring is poor, cover it. If improvement of the setting is beyond the budget, obliterate it with material or paint and concentrate on dramatic lighting of the prepared display.

When all these guide lines have been utilized, you will have a visual center of interest for your display rather than a mechanical center. This can capture more viewer attention, make for easier viewing and make for a display that sells. □