



Lyn Falk

Holiday Décor – Be on Trend!

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It's holiday time again. Funny how it happens around the same time every year. And yes, by the time you read this, you're already decorating for the 2018 holidays. But take a few minutes to think about holiday looks, and how you can keep "holiday décor" fresh and festive every year. Give thought to which employees were most enthusiastic when you started decorating for 2018 – could they be enlisted to help with the job in future years? And do you want to add a few additional touches during the next five or six shopping weeks, just to let customers see that your store's atmosphere is changing, responsive and vital?

Planning and putting up décor can either be a fun endeavor, or an aggravation that pokes at you until you get it completed. For those of you who are creative, it's a much-anticipated activity, and for those of you who can't tie a bow on a wrapped box to save your life, it's something you wish would just go away.

Have a Plan

Regardless of your talent in this area or your perspective, the best way to tackle décor is to have a plan. Below are five steps that can make your life easier when it comes to creating a festive store environment during the holiday season.

1. Select a theme. To make things more fun – create a theme that reflects today's fashion

trends. Keep your eyes open at the shoe shows to see what displays the vendors are using. They can be creative resources.

Think beyond the usual green garland, ornaments, and holiday trees. For instance, if you sell a lot of outdoor shoes, then displays that reflect today's popular snow sports such as snowboarding, curling, or skate dancing would be well received, or if you sell women's fashion shoes, then how about wrapping candy canes in Pantone's latest color palette?

2. Select the areas you will decorate.

Storefront windows? Vestibule? Front of store? Walls, windows, ceilings, fixtures, tables? Layer with 2-3 and 3-D props. For instance, apply fun vinyl graphics of wrapped gifts, or musical notes around window borders, then place actual wrapped boxes or musical instruments in the windows. Similarly, hang banners with images above tables with matching 3-D props.

3. Determine a budget for the décor. Can you re-purpose any existing props, or will they all be new? What did you spend last year?

Do you need to increase it this year? Are you investing in a look you will use for a few years (try not to use the same décor for more than 3 years, though), or will you dispose of it (better yet, donate it) after this year?

4. Create a calendar. This is important, so you have deadlines. Put the following dates on it:

- day to plan décor theme (ideally, in September)
- day(s) to order/purchase the materials (ideally, in October)
- installation date(s) (early November)
- take-down date (early January)

5. Select your team. Who will do all the items noted in #4? If you don't have staff available, look to your local high school or college art



White birch with ornaments can signal both "holiday" and "outdoors."



Colorful glass ornaments, beautiful and sleek, can decorate trees or garlands, or hang in windows.

teachers. They may be interested, or will have students to recommend.

Décor Trends

This year, holiday décor is taking on a few unique twists. Here are five popular trends:

1. Organic and Natural Materials. Branches, pinecones, botanicals, and berries are all hot right now – especially in a variety of colors. These elements are paired with unfinished wood, logs, and “live edged” boards.

2. Glass. Clear and colored baubles, ornaments and “rain drops” are growing in popularity, creating a more sophisticated, fresh look. Colored, iridescent, and available in a variety of sizes, these contemporary pieces can be used to decorate trees or wreaths, or just hang suspended in multiples to create a crystal/ice theme. Glass terrariums also continue to be on-trend. Hang them in macramé holders and fill with natural greens and a few sprigs of red berries. Suspend from ceilings in windows or over reception counters for a fun spin on the typical terrarium.

3. Metallics. Gold, brass, silver, nickel – polished

or matte – mix and match! Spray painted garland and branches, along with metallic ornaments and wrapping paper with metallic glitter – all make for an attention-getting, festive look.

4. Soft Greens. The big color at the Atlanta Gift Show this year was a soft green – particularly, frosted mint greens and dusty sage greens. It’s seen in evergreens and other plant materials, most likely growing out of the still popular succulent trend. Mint paired with white makes for a fresh, crisp look, and dusty sage with browns and creams makes for a softer, natural look.

5. Lighting. LED string lights are still the rage, as are battery-operated candle flames. Twinkling lights are fine for window displays and work well to attract attention, but avoid overusing them inside your store as they can become a distraction. They are fine to attract attention to a single retail display, but don’t get carried away!

Brand Your Décor

Want to incorporate your brand color into your décor? It’s easy to do if you can find the following elements in your

store’s colors: ornaments, candles, table runners, ribbon, and wrapping paper. If necessary, spray paint twigs or the edges of wreaths.

Focal Points

It’s important to create a center of interest, an area or a display prop that attracts attention when someone first enters your store. Strategically locating your focal points and coordinating display elements is key to creating a well-balanced holiday interior. Start with a larger piece, then move to the smaller support pieces. For instance, a large tree made out of wrapped gift boxes could be the main focal point, then large urns with smaller towers of wrapped gift boxes become secondary support pieces, and finally, bowls filled with tiny gift boxes can be placed on tables or shelves. But remember, it’s important not to put something on every wall or on every table/shelf. Be selective as to where you want your customers’ eyes to land.

Let’s refresh: To keep the idea of putting up holiday décor from becoming a last-minute headache: make a plan, select a theme, determine areas to decorate, create a calendar, determine a budget, and select your team. Look at recycling old props to keep costs down, or invest in on-trend décor that will last three years. Define your focal points and support areas.

Consistency and simplicity are the keys to creating décor that people will notice and enjoy. Too many elements and the décor can become cumbersome and overwhelming to the viewer.

Make the day of installation a fun one – bring in (spiked?) eggnog, turn up the holiday tunes, and make the store freshly beautiful! ■

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