

LYN M. FALK ON STORE DESIGN

CATCH THE EYES

Using focal points strategically in your store leads customers to exactly where you want them.

In the Sep-Oct issue of PETS+, I shared how customers use their left brain to interpret the interior/layout of a store and their right brain to respond to emotionally engaging displays. It's also important to note this again: Research has shown that over 85% of our purchase decisions are made with our right brain!

An emotionally engaging display is often considered a "focal point." What makes up a focal point? It's a well-defined visual statement that stands out from its surroundings and attracts attention. It stops the eyes, and then moves the feet.

Strategically placing focal points will lure and lead customers effortlessly throughout your store. They should be placed every 15 to 20 feet, either along the right side to create a circle around the perimeter or on a zig-zag course. You'll

quickly discover how the feet do indeed follow the eyes.

When putting your focal point displays together, it's important to keep those in front at a lower level so you don't block views into the store. Nesting tables showcasing seasonal merchandise or pedestal displays with current promotional items would be good choices. Farther in, focal points should be a bit taller so they can be seen from where someone is standing at the first focal point. Examples would be an elevated platform with a display vignette or taller pedestals. Even farther in, focal points could be decorated columns or countertop displays.

The top one-third of walls around the store can also be used as focal points with lifestyle photos, shelf displays, flat-screen monitors and/or department signage. Just be sure to separate focal points with



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some negative space so the eye can focus on each. Focal points toward the back should be at the highest elevation so they can be seen from the entrance or middle of the store. This could be something suspended from the ceiling or hanging off the upper part of the back wall. These elevated displays will surely lure customers to that area.

All the focal point displays should be visually engaging displays of merchandise, oversized props, branded décor and/or fun messaging. And all of them should be illuminated three times brighter than their surroundings. To achieve this level of brightness, use a powerful bulb in overhead track lighting that delivers at least 1000 lumens.

Finally, be sure to change out less permanent displays at least seasonally, and displays that are up front and along traffic aisles more frequently. It's important to keep your store looking current and relevant. Since these are to be emotionally engaging displays, they need to keep engaging your regular customers over and over, which means designs and merchandise need to remain fresh.

Have fun assembling these focal points and watch the feet follow the eyes!



This whimsical sign above the self-wash at Mighty Pet in Menominee, MI, draws customers to its location.



Flat-screen monitors need not be plain TVs! Check out this fire hydrant display at Mighty Pet that serves as a focal point that informs.

FOCAL POINTS SERVE TO:

- + inform or tell a story
- + break up large areas of merchandise
- + inspire the customer
- + define a department
- + celebrate a product line
- + engage the customer

EXAMPLES OF KEY FOCAL POINTS:

- + table displays
- + pedestal displays
- + elevated display vignettes
- + unique architectural elements (ie: water fountains, fireplaces, decorated columns)
- + pieces of art (2D or 3D)
- + mannequins
- + signage
- + brightly illuminated objects
- + rotating (moving) displays