

CROSS MERCHANDISING

FOR INCREASED SALES

A strategic and integrated approach to promotions can save time while increasing sales and in-store collaboration. Create dynamic shopping experiences, no matter the size of your store. Center on a theme, and promote the thread that ties the featured products together. When done right, cross-merchandising can drive more sales and higher profits. It's a simple marketing technique that top retailers use and a strategy that can successfully leverage vendors.

HOW TO CROSS MERCHANDISE SUCCESSFULLY

Correlation:

Group together products that are related in some way. This is called product correlation and is the backbone.

Relevance:

Create your product display around a central theme. Keep it simple! Cluttering with unrelated products and no central theme will only reduce its effectiveness.

Performance:

After setting up a cross-merchandising display, pay close attention to your sales in the days or weeks to follow. If it's not performing well, make changes.

Think like a customer.

Ask yourself — does this display make me want to buy the product? Will it make meals easier to prepare? Does it scream impulse?

PLANNING

Successful collaborative work depends on multiple departments communicating and planning together as a team. Team work reduces “territorial” merchandising resulting in a holistic approach to whole-store promotions.

Get the right people involved, and set clear expectations. This new team should institute quarterly promotional meetings to plan thematic cross-merchandised displays, and as a group agree to execute several promotions per season covering purchasing, recipe development, sale pricing, merchandising, signage, and sampling. As part of its planning, the team should also work with vendors for product deals and availability.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Start small, and have measurable goals in mind. Rather than a year's worth of plans, focus on a single holiday or occasion (Memorial Day, July 4th, Fall Foliage).
- Have an agenda for meetings and appoint a note-taker who will circulate notes afterwards.
- Brainstorm a list of products from all departments that could be included in the promotion. Be sure to include items available via distributor promotional programs, broker specials, and deals your buyers can obtain from local suppliers.
- [Google search for national month of...](#) and showcase deli, meat/seafood, produce, and cheese that coincides with the theme or cause being celebrated that month.
- Tap into your store's marketing and merchandising resources to ensure promotions are supported with sampling & demos, newsletter articles, and POS materials, recipes, displays, and advertising. Use Vermont [Harvest of the Month](#) recipes to incorporate local Vermont ingredients.
- Identify appropriate high-traffic, visible areas for cross-promotional displays. Repeat thematic elements throughout the store: posters, shelf-talkers, smaller displays to supplement main display area, table tents, signs at checkout, etc.
- Make sure each meeting concludes with a clear action plan with next steps, deadlines, and responsible parties.

CROSS MERCHANDISING EXAMPLES

- ✓ Aged Gouda in pre-cut \$4 portions sells well when merchandised with apples and pears & can remain un-refrigerated longer than cheddar
- ✓ In summer, treat shoppers to a melon display in produce that offers little melon samples alongside wrapped half-melon portions at a *special price*. In the deli feature a new "*Multi-Melon Salsa*" with a sample bowl surrounded by chips and snappy signage.
- ✓ Heat of Summer: The deli could cost out and perfect at least two recipes that feature corn, peaches, and tomatoes: peach smoothies, "Multi-Melon Salsa," corn chowder, corn salsa, green bean salad with fresh tomatoes vinaigrette. By including the pastry or bakery team you might also bring about a fresh peach tart or scone or fresh corn muffins. The seafood department could promote the deli's melon salsa as a relish to a featured fresh fish special.
- ✓ Create a July 4th all store celebration that ties in all departments: meats for grilling, fresh strawberries and watermelon, marinated corn salad, bags of

chips, soda, or your favorite craft beer. Use special signage for products that cannot be built into the display but represent the theme.

✓ To wrap some excitement around your focused products, have a contest where customers turn in or produce their favorite peach-based recipes; customers could enter to win a peach smoothie or even a peck of fresh peaches.

✓ Ensure success in the deli by collaborating with the marketing team to have its special items featured in the store sale flyer – with ample margin. Remember that the deli is one of the few areas of your store where your work can create signature flavors and products. Promote your cross-merchandised specials on your social media pages.

✓ Other ideas might originate from communicating with local organic farmers about what they are likely to have in the greatest abundance during the growing season. By maintaining active relationships with local growers, you should be able to know in April what you will have in mid-June.

✓ Incorporate props such as a cooler for promoting summer foods & adventures-- build your display around it. Add snazzy picnic props to a display with all the makings for boating. Add a butcher block cutting board in your grab & go case-- it tells the story of freshness.

✓ Grab & go deli-made guacamole in an iced display surrounded by chips and avocados.

✓ OFFER SAMPLES at your displays.

✓ USE SIGNAGE TO PROMOTE ACROSS THE STORE.

