

TOP TEN MERCHANDISING TIPS



The PFMA's **Nicole Paley** shares her tips for transforming your store.

The PFMA's data shows that the pet food market continues to grow and total value sales are up 3 percent. Dog and cat food value sales are up 3 percent and 4 percent respectively. In just two years, the PFMA grew from 60 to 70 member companies – representing 90 percent of the UK market. In an ever-expanding market, we appreciate that it is increasingly difficult to find shelf space for everything you want to display! Nicole Paley has spoken to people in the know and has some Mary Portas style tips on good merchandising strategies for pet retail.

- 1** Our first piece of advice is to take a step back. We are often so busy with the day to day running of a business that it can be hard to see what's right in front of you. With fresh eyes, look at your store to check if it is sufficiently welcoming. If you find this tricky, ask a friend who has nothing to do with your business.
- 2** Make sure everything is clean and tidy. This is so important. No one wants to buy produce that looks dusty from a dirty store. Clean shelves, the floor and the products for sale. Never have damaged goods unless they are in a sale basket.
- 3** Segment the store into categories. With growing ranges from each manufacturer, we know how hard this must be! But, dog should have a wet and dry section further segmented by life stage. Additional options could be a nutritional support section for instance.
- 4** Use clear signage and good lighting. These can help guide shoppers to key areas. Colour and light helps create focal points. Make sure all products are clearly priced too and if something is out of stock make sure customers can find out when stock is coming.
- 5** Tailor positioning to your customer base. Generally, we know that it's important to have popular items at eye level and it's especially important not to display product too high up – especially if your customers are elderly. End caps should be rotated to promote new ranges or products you are keen to highlight. Small impulse purchases such as toys and collars should be displayed near the POS.
- 6** Rotate stock. Once you have effectively displayed all your goods, don't rest on your laurels! Things change... Sales figures will show which SKUs are the most popular and this will help when positioning on shelf. Without alienating regular customers, it is important to change displays regularly to maintain interest from customers and ensure they see new innovative products.
- 7** Maximise display materials and manufacturers' literature. All these items are professionally produced by the experts and are an excellent way of highlighting new products and explaining new features and benefits.
- 8** Make sure you and your staff are friendly and give up to date advice. It's so important to acknowledge a customer when they enter your shop. They may be happy browsing or know exactly what they need and where to find it... However, make sure your staff are well briefed on the different products in store e.g. life stage diets and offer advice where it is needed.
- 9** Use your window. The window is often the first thing a customer sees and a great way of drawing customers into your store. Display seasonal items and highlight promotions.
- 10** Maximise any calendar event and theme your displays. In addition to window displays, don't forget to highlight any calendar event in store. Christmas is an event we are reminded of earlier and earlier each year! Other themes to consider are preparing for Halloween, Summer time, outdoor fun, puppy and kitten essentials, small furrries etc... to encourage additional sales throughout the year. Make the most of events such as National Pet Month (01 April – 04 May 2015), the annual spotlight on good pet care provides a great excuse to hold an event and encourage pet lovers through your doors.



Pets are increasingly considered one of the family and the range of products available is expanding rapidly. Keep up to date on new innovations and read on the latest craze to make sure you have it in store! Good luck... 🐾