

100 DISPLAY IDEAS

Displays are an integral part of retail sales. Generally the most successful displays have a theme. Themes set a direction for the displays and help them look cohesive. In case you think of themes as gimmicks, rest assured there are plenty of them that are not. But, who knows? You may find an occasion when a gimmick is just what you need to increase traffic in your store.

Display themes are as diverse as your imagination allows them to be. In addition, you can implement each idea many different ways, customizing it to suit the needs of your business. For each theme you select, think of ways you can use it in different parts of your shop. For example, when you install a display in the window, follow through with more of the same look or style inside the store. Also, your frame design counter and checkout area are prime spots to get additional mileage from your displays and to send a consistent message to your customers. Large department stores and smaller national chain stores are generally good at using themes, carrying them throughout the store, and changing them on a regular basis. Take a look at what those retailers are doing, both in terms of their themes and the extent they are used in various parts of their stores.

Following is a list of 100 display themes. Hopefully these themes will get your creative thoughts flowing. Included in the list of themes you will find suggestions for things to frame, props that may enhance the theme, and signs to clarify it. In planning your displays, remember the products you sell should be the focal point. The ancillary items you add in should enhance what you sell, not distract from your products.

1. 4th of July

What to Frame: Declaration of Independence, A Skyline Photo with Fireworks, a Poster of Uncle Sam, or any red, white, and blue art / **Props:** Red, White, and Blue Flags and Bunting, or any other red white and blue accessories / **Sign:** "Happy 4th of July from all of us."

2. Abstract

What to Frame: Abstract paintings, posters, and prints / **Props:** An abstract sculpture or contemporary vases. / **Sign:** "Abstract art allows your mind to imagine."

3. Advertisements

What to Frame: Vintage magazine, newspaper, or catalog pages /



Idea #2
Abstract Art—Show artwork of this genre framed with unusual mat proportions. Use props such as the vases seen here to create a vignette.

Props: Whatever relates to the ads you select / **Sign:** "Bring back fond memories with nostalgic ads."

4. African Art

What to Frame: African themed paintings or prints, masks, and mud cloths / **Props:** Animal skin patterned rugs, a tribal drum, and beads / **Sign:** "At home with African Art."

5. American Indian

What to Frame: American Indian themed paintings or prints, beadwork, and arrowheads / **Props:** Indian pottery, moccasins, and blankets / **Sign:** "Enjoy the art and heritage of the American Indian right in your own home."

6. Animal Farm

What to Frame: Prints of cows, chickens, and pigs / **Props:** Bale of



Idea #4—Create interesting displays by grouping pieces together like your customers may do in their living rooms. Here, all of the pieces are monochromatic, in brown tones. This brings cohesiveness to this group, which includes African artifacts and contemporary art.

hay, cow pattern fabric, and animal figurines / **Sign:** "Old McDonald had a farm. This kind of menagerie is a lot less work!"

7. Animation Art

What to Frame: Original animation cels, Disney animation prints / **Props:** Related stuffed animals or figures / **Sign:** "If your life is getting a bit too serious, buy art that makes you laugh."

8. Architecture

What to Frame: Antique architectural book plates, or contemporary architectural photos. / **Props:** Architectural artifacts / **Sign:** "Architectural art makes a statement in any home."

9. Art of the Frame

What to Frame: Display empty frames, focusing on stacked combinations, unique ornamentation, or finishes / **Props:** A few simple household items, such as a vase, pillow, and plant / **Sign:** "Our frames will enhance your art, but they also make a statement on their own."

10. Asian Art

What to Frame: Scrolls, currency, and a kimono / **Props:** Asian coins, figurines, and fortune cookies / **Sign:** "Confucius say, 'Wise people decorate with Asian art.'"

11. A to Z

What to Frame: Make 26 frames with the same outside dimension. Arrange them in a grid structure on the wall. In alphabetical order arrange a large letter in each frame. Then, in about 25-30% of the frames, insert items that begin with that letter of the alphabet, such as diplomas for D, a mirror for M, and photos for P. / **Props:** Toy wood alphabet blocks, plastic letters, or vinyl stick-on letters to apply to the window / **Sign:** "We frame everything from A to Z."

12. Aviation

What to Frame: Vintage airplane photos, prints, and posters / **Props:** Model airplanes suspended from the ceiling / **Sign:** "Aviation art is ready to come in for a landing at your house."

13. Baseball

What to Frame: Baseball cards, a ball, a glove, a bat, ticket stubs, or a poster of your favorite team or player. / **Props:** Any baseball equipment or unframed baseball cards / **Sign:** "Let the season live on!"

14. Basketball

What to Frame: A jersey, a picture of a high school player with his letter, the front cover of the sports pages showing the champions, or a team photo / **Props:** A basketball and you can mount a hoop and net on the wall over the display / **Sign:** "Shoot. Score. Frame."

15. Beach

What to Frame: Shells, seascape art, a photo of a child playing in the sand, or a sailboat model / **Props:** Sand, shells, and a beach towel / **Sign:** "When you can't go to the beach, bring the beach home with you."

16. Black and White

What to Frame: Anything that is totally black and white / **Props:** Accessories which are all black and white / **Sign:** "Do you see everything in Black & White?"

17. Botanicals

What to Frame: Antique botanical prints (these can be flowers, ferns, palm trees, etc.) / **Props:** A small desk, a plant or flower arrangement, or draped fabric / **Sign:** "Botanicals are always in season."

18. Bulletin Boards/Message Boards/Photo Display Boards

What to Frame: Cork board, cork sheet mounted to foamboard, decorative fabric wrapped over foamboard. Don't choose a typical small frame. Use a nice stacked moulding combination. / **Props:** Photos, a calendar page, and messages (both on the bulletin board and loose around it) / **Sign:** "Organization never looked so good."

19. Canvas Transfers

What to Frame: Any print that has been transferred to canvas / **Props:** The same print just in its original paper form / **Sign:** "Your paper prints can look like original art. Ask us how."

20. Children's Art



Idea #20— When you frame children's art for your display, use the same products you would for other artwork. Here a water gilded frame and fillet were used.

What to Frame: Any art created by children / **Props:** A small child's painting easel with art displayed on it, paints, crayons, etc. / **Sign:** "Even Michelangelo had to start somewhere."

21. Christmas

What to Frame: Art, mirrors, family photos, objects, diploma, and gift certificates. / **Props:** Wrapped gift boxes with tags for Mom, Dad, Sister, Brother, Friend, etc. / **Sign:** "Give the gift that lasts a lifetime... fine custom framing. We can frame art you bring to us, or purchase a piece right off our walls."

22. Color

What to Frame: Very colorful art / **Props:** Colorful mat and moulding samples / **Sign:** "We carry frames and mats in all the colors of the rainbow and a whole lot more."

23. Clothing

What to Frame: Christening gown, gloves, shoes, or a military uniform / **Props:** Other clothing that could be framed / **Sign:** "Out of closet space? Have we got an idea for you!"

24. Collections

What to Frame: Stamps, coins, tea cups, swizzle sticks, or matchbooks / **Props:** Similar collections unframed / **Sign:** "Frame your collections and enjoy them every day."

25. Conservation/Preservation

What to Frame: Go to a flea market and purchase an easy-to-find reproduction print that was poorly framed, and is faded or stained. Order the same print from one of your catalog sources and frame it properly. / **Props:** Use a couple of other unframed prints that have faded or discolored. / **Sign:** "Do you want your art to fade? If not, we suggest conservation framing materials to help prolong its life."

26. Cultural/Heritage

What to Frame: Ethnic looking art or artifacts from different countries

/ **Props:** Accessories that relate to your theme / **Sign:** "Art is one way we can bring the world together in one place."

27. Equestrian

What to Frame: Hunt scenes, a bridle, a photo of a jockey with his horse / **Props:** Any type of horse-related paraphernalia. / **Sign:** "Perhaps we can't frame a horse, but we can frame just about everything else."

28. Evolving Display (Great for a busy downtown or mall location. Keep interchanging pieces to show different combinations of art and furniture.)

What to Frame: Several pieces of art / **Props:** Chairs, tables, lamps, etc. / **Sign:** "This display will change every day to show you how our framing coordinates with popular decorating styles. Stop back tomorrow to see a whole new look."

29. Family Photos



Idea #29— Give your customers new ideas for framing family photos. A frame design like this can get people to stop and look.

What to Frame: Current and vintage family photos / **Props:** Loose family photos, various old cameras, and a table to display some of the frames on / **Sign:** "Host a family reunion in your home."

30. Fashion

What to Frame: Dress pattern envelopes mounted on old dress fabric, hats, or a funky 50's one-piece swimsuit. / **Props:** Other vintage clothing items, fabric remnants, and old Woman's Day magazines with similar fashions. / **Sign:** "Be a fashion trendsetter in your own home."

31. Father's Day

What to Frame: A family photo, a wild necktie, or any art made by a family member / **Props:** Masculine accessories; things relating to men's hobbies / **Signs:** For the framed family photo or art, "Show Dad you care." For the framed tie, "The tradition lives on... with a twist!"

32. Figurative

What to Frame: Figurative works on paper or canvas. / **Props:** Figurative sculptures or a mannequin. / **Sign:** "Looking for a new roommate? Quiet male or female available to move in today. Both are real homebodies and just like to hang around!"

33. Fishing

What to Frame: Fishing lures, a small preserved fish, and a photo of fisherman with his catch / **Props:** Any fishing gear such as a fishing pole or lures, tackle box, net or old creel / **Sign:** "Gone Fishin' "

34. Folding Screens

What to Frame: Using hinges, make folding screens. They can be room divider size or a decorative tabletop design. You can frame fabric, mirrors, stained glass, cork boards, etc. / **Props:** Anything that applies to, or looks good with, the screen / **Sign:** "Unfold a new look for your home."

35. Food

What to Frame: Shadowboxes filled with different types of pasta, vintage food packages, or labels from old cans / **Props:** Other foods or food packages / **Sign:** "Don't eat it, frame it. The perfect diet idea!"

36. Football

What to Frame: A football jersey, Super Bowl ticket stubs, or a photo of your favorite team or player / **Props:** A football, a helmet, or artificial turf / **Sign:** "Hey football fans. Fill in the off-season with all of your football memorabilia."

37. Frame Designs from Sedate to Sizzling

What to Frame: Frame the same print two ways. The first piece should be nicely framed, but in a rather ordinary way. The second piece should be a showstopper. / **Props:** Any accessories that coordinate with the art, such as a vase, pillow, or figurine / **Sign:** "We will create framing to suit your personal taste and style."

38. Frames Aren't Just for Pictures

What to Frame: Display a variety of things including an object, certificate, mirror, textile, etc. / **Props:** Whatever coordinates with the framing / **Sign:** "Frames aren't just for pictures. You name it. We can probably frame it."

39. Frames for a Farmhouse or a Penthouse

What to Frame: Art framed in rustic and ornate mouldings / **Props:** Rustic and ornate home accessories / **Sign:** "Whether you live in a farmhouse or penthouse, we have a great selection of frames to suit your home perfectly."

40. Gardening

What to Frame: Floral art or photos, dried or pressed flowers, vintage seed packets, or old garden tools / **Props:** Flower arrangements, clay pots, or garden tools / **Sign:** "Bring your love of gardening indoors."

41. Golf

What to Frame: A golf ball and tee, a scorecard, a print of a famous golf hole, or a photo of a person teeing off / **Props:** golf balls, tees, scorecards, or artificial turf / **Sign:** "Celebrate your hole-in-one or just dream about getting one."

42. Graduation

What to Frame: A diploma, tassel, or photo of the graduate or class / **Props:** A cap and gown / **Sign:** "You worked hard for it. Show it off."

43. Halloween

What to Frame: Old Halloween masks or costumes, and folk art pumpkins or witches / **Props:** Halloween decorations and wrapped candies / **Sign:** "Treat yourself to custom framing."

44. Hanukah/Chanukah

What to Frame: Dreidels, Mezuzah scrolls, Menorahs, or art with Jewish themes or by Jewish artists / **Props:** Dreidels, Menorahs, and Hanukah decorations / **Sign:** "Happy Hanukah from all of us."

45. Home Decorating Trends

What to Frame: Stylish framing / **Props:** Enlarged photos of up to date room settings / **Sign:** "We have frames to suit every style."

46. Impressionism

What to Frame: Monet prints / **Props:** Home accessories to coordinate with the art. / **Sign:** "Make an impression with Impressionism."

47. Kids' Art Contest

What to Frame: Coordinate with schools or churches to enter kid's artwork / **Props:** Use a kids' art easel set up to hold a sign rather than art. / **Sign:** "1st Annual Kids' Art Competition. All kids are winners when they express themselves with art."

48. Kid's Bedrooms

What to Frame: Disney art prints, paper dolls, game boards, and toys / **Props:** Photos of smiling kids / **Sign:** "Kids grow up too fast. Let them enjoy childhood in their own rooms."

49. Kitchens

What to Frame: Old kitchen utensils, cups and saucers, a handwritten recipe from Grandma, decorative plates, or vintage kitchen towels / **Props:** A drop leaf table, tablecloth, napkins, and permanent fruit items / **Sign:** "A kitchen is the heart of the home. Add heart to your kitchen with custom framing."

50. Landscapes

What to Frame: Landscape art representing each season / **Props:** Tree branches, a small artificial Christmas tree, dried flowers, pine cones, etc. / **Sign:** "Live with your favorite season all year long."

51. Latest Trends in Custom Framing

What to Frame: Anything, but go all out to make it show off your newest products and techniques / **Props:** Stylish furniture or accessories / **Sign:** "When you redecorate, allow us to help you update your existing art or we can recommend the perfect new piece to set off your decor."

52. Let There Be Light

What to Frame: Beautifully framed pieces of art with picture lights over them. / **Props:** A small table or desk to display the art over and accessories to sit on it / **Sign:** "Picture lights highlight your art and bring a warm glow into your room."

53. Local Art Fair

What to Frame: A variety of original art / **Props:** More loose, unframed art / **Sign:** "After you have visited the art fair, come see us to complete the picture."

54. Local Scenes

What to Frame: Art featuring familiar local buildings or scenes / **Props:** Books on local history and a state map with your town highlighted / **Sign:** "Celebrate those special places around town."

55. Maps

What to Frame: Antique hand-colored maps, or a brand new world map with pins marking locations where you've traveled / **Props:** A globe, a stack of folded maps, and reading glasses / **Sign:** "Dream about where you want to go, or remember all the places where you have been."

56. Mirrors

What to Frame: A variety of sizes of beveled mirrors. / **Props:** Pretty flowers and accessories to reflect in the mirrors / **Sign:** "Use mirrors to reflect the beauty of your home, enlarge the look of a small space, or

simply pull light into a dark corner."

57. More Than One Way to Frame

What to Frame: Frame the same print three or four different ways to showcase your design talents. / **Props:** Three or four of the same vase in different colors to coordinate with the frame designs, or three or four different style vases in the same color. / **Sign:** "There is always more than one way to frame a picture. Our design experts will be happy to help you choose the best framing to suit your home and lifestyle."

58. Mother's Day

What to Frame: Photos of the kids, a family portrait, a drawing of Mom by a young child, or a handwritten story about Mom. / **Props:** A female mannequin surrounded by kids' toys / **Sign:** "Show your Mom how much you love her with a gift that will last a lifetime."

59. Movies

What to Frame: Movie posters and a flat screen TV / **Props:** A framed flat screen TV playing ongoing videos, and a bowl of popcorn / **Sign:** "We can frame your favorite movie stars or the TV you watch them on."

60. Museum Show

What to Frame: The museum poster or art prints by the featured artist / **Props:** Related accessories / **Sign:** "Perhaps you can't afford the original, but our framing can make your prints look like you took them right off the museum walls."

61. Music

What to Frame: Musical instruments, old albums, and sheet music / **Props:** Old radios, sheet music, and a hidden CD player, playing appropriate music / **Sign:** "Frame the songs that celebrate your first date, your wedding, or other special events in your life."

62. Nautical

What to Frame: Sailboat prints or photos, a certificate from a sailing course, or a small model boat / **Props:** A buoy, rope, or a model boat / **Sign:** "Use your imagination to sail off to exotic places."

63. Needlework

What to Frame: Any type of hand-stitched needlework / **Props:** A needlepoint in progress in a hoop / **Sign:** "Improper framing can damage the needlework you spent hours creating. We will frame it with quality materials so it will be around to become a family heirloom."

64. New Moulding

What to Frame: Anything framed in the newest moulding collection / **Props:** A full set of the newest moulding samples / **Sign:** "NEW! Introducing the latest fashions in framing."

65. New Products

What to Frame: Something framed with the newest moulding, mats, and glazing / **Props:** Samples of all your newest products / **Sign:** "We can provide you with the latest colors and styles of frames and mats for the most up-to-date framing around."

66. New Year's

What to Frame: A bold piece of contemporary art / **Props:** A champagne bottle, glasses, and confetti / **Sign:** "This year make a resolution you can keep. How about new art for your home?"

67. Olympics

What to Frame: Olympic pins, posters, newspaper clippings, and ticket stubs / **Props:** Sporting equipment / **Sign:** "Celebrate the passion and determination of our Olympic athletes."

68. On Top of the World

What to Frame: Aerial photos. (Borrow from a local aerial photographer in exchange for the publicity in your window.) / **Props:** None. (You don't always need them.) / **Sign:** "A birds-eye view of your neighborhood is just a phone call away."

69. Opposites Attract

What to Frame: Modern art framed traditionally, or traditional art framed in a modern style. / **Props:** Home accessories relating to your art / **Sign:** "Opposites really do attract. Traditional and Contemporary art and frame styles can be mixed together beautifully."

70. Paintings

What to Frame: Oils or acrylics on canvas / **Props:** An artist's easel, palette, and paints / **Sign:** "The frame is the reward for the artist. — Edgar Degas, artist"

71. Pets

What to Frame: Pet photos / **Props:** Dog and cat sculptures and figurines, and pet toys / **Sign:** "Your pets are members of your family. Frame their portraits to display alongside everyone else."

72. Photography

What to Frame: Photographs / **Props:** Loose, unframed photos and old cameras / **Props:** "A picture is worth 1,000 words."

73. Picasso

What to Frame: Picasso prints / **Props:** None (Periodically it is nice to have a minimal look) / **Sign:** "Picasso... Some art never goes out of style."

74. Quilts

What to Frame: A small quilt or series of quilt squares / **Props:** A full quilt draped over the arm of a small chair / **Sign:** "Old quilts are more than pieces of fabric. They are a patchwork of memories and family history."

75. Raid the Attic

What to Frame: Anything that may have been stored for years in the attic, including old family photos, kids' clothes, military memorabilia, antique jewelry, or vintage holiday cards / **Props:** A trunk overflowing with other things that may have been found in the attic / **Sign:** "Are you looking for a new way to personalize your home decor? If so, raid the attic and frame the memories."

76. Restoration

What to Frame: Damaged photos or paintings and repaired photos or paintings / **Props:** None needed / **Sign:** "We offer restoration services to repair your family treasures."



Idea #77—With the scrapbooking hobby continuing to grow, you can get in on the action. Show customers that their work will also look great on the wall. Rather than just framing photos, these one-of-a-kind creations become art.

77. Scrapbooking

What to Frame: Framed scrapbook pages (In case you aren't aware, scrapbooking is HUGE! Get your share of the action.) / **Props:** Scrapbook pages, papers, decorations, and loose photos / **Sign:** "Some scrapbook pages are works of art that shouldn't be confined to a book."

78. Shabby Chic

What to Frame: A vintage print or painting of a rose in a distressed white or off-white frame. / **Props:** A chair with toile upholstery or pillows with rose print fabric and fringe / **Sign:** "It's Chic to be Shabby... Shabby Chic that is."

79. Shadowboxes

What to Frame: Any objects / **Props:** More objects to give ideas of things to frame / **Sign:** "The objects of our affection."

80. Skiing

What to Frame: Ski posters, lift tickets, or a photo of yourself skiing. / **Props:** Skis, ski boots, ski poles / **Sign:** "After your ski adventure, frame a piece of the action."

81. Southwest

What to Frame: Southwest style art, textiles, or carvings / **Props:** Southwest style pottery and blanket / **Sign:** "The Southwest style accents add warmth and character to your home."

82. Spring

What to Frame: A picture of a spring landscape, garden scene, or bouquet / **Props:** A floral arrangement / **Sign:** "Bring the fresh look of spring inside your home."

83. Spring Cleaning

What to Frame: Purchase a pair or set of four old framed prints. Reframe half of them. Display the new and old side-by-side. / **Props:** A dated vase with silk flowers for the old frames and a sophisticated sculptural piece for the reframed art. / **Sign:** "Breathe new life into outdated artwork. A new mat or moulding can be used to refresh existing art or we can supply you with a new piece of art for your existing frame."

84. Soccer

What to Frame: A soccer team photo, a soccer award / **Props:** Soccer balls / **Sign:** "Score big points with your soccer player."

85. Souvenirs

What to Frame: Postcards, shells, pine cones, Broadway tickets or playbills, snapshots, matchbook covers, swizzle sticks / **Props:** A suitcase, passport, travel itinerary / **Sign:** "The vacation never has to end. Frame it!"

86. St. Patrick's Day

What to Frame: Anything green / **Props:** St. Patrick's Day decorations or anything green / **Sign:** "If we see green, you save green. 10% off framed or unframed art that includes green in the color scheme."

87. Summer

What to Frame: Retro or Pop Art / **Props:** None / **Sign:** "Fight off the HEAT this summer with COOL art."

88. Sunflowers

What to Frame: Prints or photos of sunflowers / **Props:** Fresh or silk sunflowers in a vase / **Sign:** "On a cloudy day, sunflowers will brighten your day."

89. Thanksgiving

What to Frame: Fall scenes, Norman Rockwell family prints, a turkey wildlife print / **Props:** Fall leaves / **Sign:** "We give thanks for our won-

derful customers. Have a safe and happy holiday."

90. Toys & Games

What to Frame: A Monopoly game, dominos, balls and jacks, a doll / **Props:** Other games and toys / **Sign:** "Framing can bring out the little kid in you."

91. Trash to Treasure

What to Frame: Anything that looks like it may have been found in the trash such as a framed print that looks like it broke when it fell off the wall. Frame a second copy of the same print or something very similar to show the transformation. / **Props:** A trash can with other things that could be saved from the dumpster. / **Sign:** "From trash to treasure."

92. Travel

What to Frame: Travel posters, memorabilia from different countries, foreign currency / **Props:** Souvenirs from different countries / **Sign:** "Travel the world. Frame the memories."

93. Tropical

What to Frame: Beach scenes, pictures of palm trees, shells / **Props:** Sand, a beach chair, a beach towel / **Sign:** "If you can't go to the beach, bring the beach home with you."

94. Upside-Down Display

What to Frame: Anything you want to but it has to hang upside-down. / **Props:** Whatever goes with the framing but it also should be displayed upside-down. / **Sign:** "We go out of our way to appeal to your individual sense of style."

95. Valentine's Day

What to Frame: Antique Valentine cards, Jim Dine art with hearts, photos of couples / **Props:** Heart decorations, chocolate candy, velvet fabric / **Sign:** "Flowers last a few days. Fine framing lasts a lifetime."

96. Vintage Posters

What to Frame: Vintage Posters / **Props:** Anything relating to the subject of the poster / **Sign:** "What goes around, comes around. Vintage posters are more popular than ever."

97. Weddings

What to Frame: A wedding portrait, dried flowers, or an invitation / **Props:** A floral arrangement, a bride's veil, or confetti / **Sign:** "The ceremony is over before you know it, but the memories can live on forever."

98. Wine

What to Frame: Any of the popular wine art that is available, a wine bottle from a special occasion, labels from wine bottles, or a collection of corks / **Props:** Wine bottles, glasses, and plastic grapes / **Sign:** "Wine can look as good on the wall as it does in the glass."

99. Winter

What to Frame: Winter landscapes / **Props:** Artificial snow / **Sign:** "Do you hate the cold? Stay inside to enjoy the beauty of a winter day."

100. Written Words

What to Frame: A diploma, marriage certificate, or a poem done in calligraphy / **Props:** Parchment paper, fountain pens, and ink wells / **Sign:** "It is said a picture is worth 1,000 words, but there are times when a picture can not replace written words."

As you can see, display themes run the gamut from serious to humorous, contemporary to traditional, or simply to educate people about your business. Start planning your themes in advance to make them as effective as possible. Try

using a calendar specifically for your marketing and merchandising needs, since the two often work in unison.

When you choose themes, look at the calendar for natural fits, such as holidays or seasonal events. Then plug in other miscellaneous topics in between. Your goal should be for all display themes to appeal to your target customers, but to show diverse styles within that range. For example, switch from feminine to masculine, colorful to neutral, contemporary to traditional. This will help broaden the perception people have of your business.

Planning ahead also will give you more time to think through the best way to execute the theme. When you have the time to think, the results typically show it. Take advantage of your store windows as an area to highlight your latest and greatest framing. Don't just grab something off the wall that has been hanging around for months or years.

Remember, props shouldn't distract from the items you are really in business to promote. You may not want to sell your props during the display, but if you have a way to sell them off afterwards, you can reinvest into additional props for a future display.

Signs are an important part of your displays. Make sure they look professional. Use your computer to generate many of them. When necessary, call your local sign retailer to have special signs made up.

As you go about your daily routine, you may pass by another type of business that has a great display. If you like it, make notes about what makes it work. If you think of a new theme, write it down so you won't forget it. Keep your displays simple enough that they are easy to manage, so you will follow through with them. If they become too much work, they get overwhelming and you may lose interest or the time needed to make them happen.

On your calendar, be sure to include all the tasks involved, such as choosing/ordering art, creating frame designs, ordering framing materials, doing the framing, finding props, creating signs, etc. Give yourself as many days or weeks as you need to feel comfortable getting it all done. On the day when the displays will be changed, bring in additional help to make sure the person working on the displays can stay focused on them.

Great displays do help increase business. If you want to increase your annual sales, raise your average ticket, broaden your customer base, or appeal to a higher caliber of customer, improving your displays can help you reach those goals. ■

Greg Perkins, CPF has spent 29 years in the framing industry. He developed a successful retail framing business, specializing in creative frame design. Greg is now responsible for Larson-Juhl's trade show booths and frame designs.

