



FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

Refits are still not a possibility for many retailers. However, with the Christmas season fast approaching it's a good time to consider what you could do to freshen up the look of your store and present your products in new and exciting ways. A few well-chosen, versatile fixtures and fittings could be all that is needed.



Left and opposite Mei & Picchi's new modular slider system is quick and easy to assemble and allows for multiple reconfigurations of wall-mounted displays.

Above left and right Keep your sightlines clear, says Sandra Eden from the GDM Group, in both window and floor displays.

Continuing the trend towards systems that can be added to and adapted as your needs change, Mei & Picchi's new slider system is right on the money. A modular merchandising system, it allows you to reconfigure your wall-mounted displays easily and quickly – and the effect is stunning in its simplicity.

Mario Schwal, managing director for Mei & Picchi, says one of the greatest things with Slider is that – if budget dictates – you could start off with two or three tracks and a couple of accessories and then add tracks, either horizontally or vertically to suit your merchandise, later on. Once the tracks are installed, he says, the accessories easily lift on and off and can be reconfigured at any time.

Schwal adds that the sliding panels can even be made of cardboard, but he points out that mdf board is also very inexpensive and would last longer. And, if you can't afford signage to begin with, he says mdf covered with blackboard paint is a very effective option, and very much 'do it yourself', thus keeping costs down.

Along similar lines, Zapwall's click-on Euro cabinets are great if you already have slatwall in your store and you're looking for innovative ways to use it. Lockable, and with the option to have them illuminated, they are ideal for small and high-value items such as cameras and mobile

phones. Teamed with Zapwall's shelving, you can create an eye-catching display to keep your customers interested and browsing for longer. Geoff Russell, sales director for Zapwall, says the beauty of slatwall is that it is so easy to use and, best of all, it will stand the test of time – making it very cost effective.

Grounded

When it comes to floor displays, Kate Douglas of Surestyle says plinths are a great way to define space and create groupings within your store. Douglas promotes plinths as being ideal for larger products: keeping tight groupings while also providing a way to control how your customers move through your store. She adds that a combination of display and nesting tables will create flat surfaces for tiered displays which will get your products up higher to a better viewing level. Add a hanging poster – using one of their inexpensive poster clips – and you have a great stage on which to display your merchandise.

And if it's extra storage you need, display boxes on wheels will both provide display space and room for empty boxes or extra stock – freeing up your store room when it's needed most. The more storage you can get on the shop floor, the less time you will spend 'out the back' which is really



it's their adaptability which makes them so popular. Able to be configured into almost any shape they are particularly popular with giftware retailers. As a central display they allow shoppers a 360° view of the merchandise or, up against a wall, they can be back-lit for extra effect.

Continuing the versatility theme, Mei & Picchi's Mobile 3-way unit is ideal if it's clothing and fashion accessories you need to display. An easily assembled system, based on 30mm diameter tubing and 3-way joints, it won't test your patience to put it together. Mobile units are self-supporting and this particular unit can be flipped and accessorised for use three ways as hanging space, a table or shelving.

Hire it

If you can't decide what your needs will be long-term and you're looking for a solution to get you through Christmas, hiring could be the answer. Lindsey says their hire service was designed for this very purpose. Display cases of varying shapes and sizes are available for daily or weekly rental. She suggests this is a great way to cost-effectively try different set-ups within your store to see what works for the best use of space.

important at a peak selling time, Douglas says. And, best of all, the wheels mean the units can be moved around easily by just one staff member.

See through

If it's maximum visibility you want, you can't go past glass cabinetry. Great for displaying items that need a certain amount of protection, but still need to be fully visible, these are perfect. Deciding on the best option, however, can be difficult if your stock mix changes regularly.

David Lindsey, director of Showcases Direct, says their glass cubes are great sellers and he believes

New and interesting fittings for in-store signage – such as the flag sign mounting system developed by PSP Limited – will make it easy for you to communicate with your customers. Comprising just two parts – flags and joiners – it is a breeze to assemble. Signs can be attached with double-sided tape, silicon, glue, screws or rivets. And, by adding a mount component to both ends, it can also be used to hang light-boxes and other three dimensional structures.

There's no doubt there are some great options out there, but remember to consider your customers when selecting fixtures and fittings, says Brian Finlayson, southern regional manager for the New Zealand Retailers Association. Think carefully about how high your fixtures and fittings should be and avoid trying to fit too much in, he advises. "You want to be able to display as much of your merchandise as possible at eye level and to make it easy and comfortable for your customers to move around."

Sandra Eden of the GDM Group agrees. Keep sightlines clear, she says, and make sure you do not have a high fixture blocking the centre of your store. Failing to do this, she warns, could mean customers will

Above left A great example of the Mei & Picchi slider system.

Above right Retail Engine's augmented reality window for the launch of Telstra Window 7.

Left Plinths are always versatile display tools. Stack them, group them, roll them onto the shop floor or back them against a wall. Shown here are plinths by Surestyle.

then turn around and not get to the back of your store.

This is not what you want at a time when you need to do everything you can to maximise sales. ■

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