

# Effective Counter Displays

**LESSON OBJECTIVE:** Show employees the elements that go into creating effective impulse counter displays.

**ESTIMATED COMPLETION TIME:** 5 Minutes

**HOW TO USE:** The lesson includes a PowerPoint presentation. The trainer's notes will offer explanations for each slide, but you may elaborate on each as much as you wish.

## Slide 1

Introduction

Counter displays are displays that are on or near the checkout or service counter in the store, in dump bins near the counter, or on gondola racks in the space before the counter. They are typically impulse items. In this lesson, we'll learn why this type of merchandising is so effective at getting impulse sales and what types of products work best in this area.

## Slide 2

We'll start with displays at the checkout counter. To understand what types of products work best in this area, let's first talk about why the checkout counter is a great place for impulse items.

- First, everyone passes this area, since the checkout is usually near the main entrance.
- These displays also remind customers of something they may have forgotten—either they forgot to pick it up while they were shopping or they forgot to put it on their list in the first place.
- Checkout displays also put these products within easy reach of the customer, making it very easy to grab and put in the basket.
- Checkout displays can also create urgency. Having an item near the checkout gives the perception that it may be on sale, or it is a seasonal item that everyone else is buying, so they should too.
- These displays also give customers something to look at while waiting in the checkout line.

## Slide 3

When choosing what products we put on checkout displays, we want to choose the items with the biggest impact as an impulse item.

- Consumables like candy and snacks are a great fit.
- Items should be low-priced, as customers will be more likely to add it in to their sale.
- Seasonal items like sunglasses, hand cream or umbrellas make good impulse items because the weather creates a sense of urgency as to why the customer needs the item.

## Slide 4

- Unusual items often catch customers' attention and compel them to buy. An example might be a locally made item.
- On the other hand, good items for the checkout display are also common items that most customers will recognize and use. For example, batteries or duct tape.
- Since these items will be in a high-traffic area, a lot of customers (including children) may handle items in these displays. Make sure products in the checkout display are durable enough to not be damaged by frequent handling. Examples are work gloves or extension cords.

## Slide 5

Any service counters in the store are also a good area for counter displays. The reasons an impulse display works well here is much the same as to why it works at the checkout display, but the service counter offers additional opportunities.

- Items here can be targeted to a specific project or customers. For example, at the paint counter, you can stock items specific to a paint project. At a contractor's counter, you can display items, like utility knives or carpenter's pencils, a contractor is likely to need.
- Products here also give customers something to look at while they're waiting at the counter. For example, they'll look at them while waiting for you to mix the paint.
- While they're waiting, customers may start a conversation about the product that can lead to a future sale. For example, if you have a few do-it-yourself books merchandised on the counter, customers might get ideas for a future project.



### Slide 6

Similar to how we choose items for the checkout display, we choose items for the service counter that will have the biggest impact.

- Small items are best. If the items are on the counter, they should be visible but not in the way of customers.
- Like items at the checkout, items on the service counter should be durable. They should also be items that will not likely be spilled or knocked off the counter.
- The counter is also a great way to introduce a new item to customers. It's likely the item will also generate a few questions that could result in a sale.
- Having consumables at the contractor counter is a good idea, too, if there is a separate contractor entrance and if these customers don't always need to use the front cash register.

### Slide 7

Checkout stations and service counters are a great place for impulse items. If you work these areas, keep them organized as they can easily get messy with a lot of customers coming through. Also keep them well stocked. Also, don't be afraid to suggest an add-on item to customers if it relates to something they purchased. For example, if they purchased a flashlight or something that requires a battery, ask if they need a package of batteries.

**CLOSING COMMENTS:** Getting these impulse sales at the cash register and service counters is a great way to increase average transaction size and make our store more profitable.

**ADDITIONAL TRAINING:** Take NRHA's Retail Merchandising course to learn more about counter displays and other types of merchandising. NRHA Members can access this training on [NRHA.org](http://NRHA.org).