MERCHANDISING TECHNIQUES



Johnson's exterior sign, located right at the entrance of his parking lot, makes use of the NAPA Store Identification Program to identify Johnson's Automotive Supply as a NAPA Auto Parts Store.



Notice the ample parking spaces available and easy access to Johnson's Automotive — an important merchandising technique.

NAPA has long been recognized as the leader in the automotive aftermarket. Dave Johnson, owner of Johnson's Automotive Supply in Ballston Spa, New York (serviced by the Albany D.C.) knew that as a NAPA Jobber he had NAPA's number one position in the industry as an advantage. But he also knew that in light of today's competition, more had to be done to insure his place as the leader in his local area.

So Johnson began to study the effects of proper merchandising techniques as he made plans for a new store. He studied proper placement of exterior and interior signage, easy access and ample parking, proper fixture layout for good traffic flow and displays encouraging impulse buying. And he discovered after opening his new store that implementing these techniques did, in fact, help to increase his profits in a very short time!

Johnson started his merchandising process by taking a careful look at the plans for a new store. When looking at the plans he asked himself some questions. Is the store's appearance attractive enough to lure a customer in? Is the store's exterior signage prominent enough for a customer to spot it as he's driving down the street? Is there plenty of parking space?

Based on the answers to those questions and others, Johnson established three goals when designing his store: to keep the building simple in design, to maximize the building's workable space and to utilize the store's exterior as a beacon to customers.

As he continued to plan his store, both inside and out, and consider his goals Johnson asked himself about his signage. Will it draw customers to the store by immediately letting them know it's a NAPA Auto Parts store? To address this question, Johnson put up a very large blue and gold, neon lit NAPA sign with the store's name on it at the entrance to the parking lot. Johnson's sign is easily seen, both day and night, as you approach the store from any direction and it lets everyone know that this is the location of a NAPA Auto Parts Store (one of the greatest advantages of using the NAPA store identification program).

He then considered his parking area. Will it provide ample parking space and easy access for customers? A general rule of thumb to follow is that for every $5,000 in monthly volume there should be three parking spaces (not including those used by employees and delivery vehicles).

Johnson knew that an easy-to-enter and well-lit parking lot, as well as a well-marked store, is important. The outside of a store says a great deal about its business and gives it a distinctinve personality.

Johnson asked himself questions when planning the inside of his store, too. Will it be clean, neat and well-lit? Will the entrance and exit be clearly marked? Am I sure that the aisles will be wide enough and allow easy access to perimeter walls and displays?

Take a look at the interior photos of John-



Take note of Johnson's placement of related products displays through the use of the Echlin cabinet, fuel additives and transmission fluid.