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8 Tips

On How To Hook New Scrappers

by Ann-Marie Meacham

As a busy mom with two active girls under the age of 4, I would often peer hopelessly through the scrapbooks of other women who, of course, could not be as busy as me. If they were, how on earth could they devote so much time to preserving their precious memories while doing justice to their homes and families?

As a matter of fact, I had a huge secret. I had recently purchased a large stash of scrapbook supplies and left them in my closet to keep a close watch on the dust bunnies they shared their quarters with. An entire year had passed, AN ENTIRE YEAR, before I had the courage (yes, I said courage), to liberate those supplies from the confines of my closet. Even after looking through the basics I had purchased (album, paper-pack, paper cutter, pens, idea book), I could not bring myself to complete my first layout for another three months. I simply could not imagine how to begin.

In retrospect, I can't help but think how less anxious I would have felt if the sales staff at the scrapbook store I purchased my supplies at would have taken me aside to explain the more simpler side of the scrapbooking process.

How many of your potential customers feel the same way I did? How many of them leave your store before purchasing a single item, because they cannot fathom where to start? As a retailer, you must constantly ask yourself how to lure new customers to your store. I'm sure many consumers (especially busy moms who are new to scrapbooking) face the same fear and trepidation as I did when I began to scrap. So, how do retailers hop on the simple scrapbooking wagon and effectively lure new customers who are short on time? The following eight tips will help you hook new scrappers.

Make your store kid friendly – If, as a mom, I feel that I can bring my children into a store with me and that they will be comfortable, I will frequent that store. Consider implementing a space for children with a television and VCR, some toys, and a chair or two. (Think large retail kids clothing store.) Make it so they don't want to leave and Moms will spend more time and more money as well.

Offer Mom and Me classes – Yes, I know. I've heard it before. Busy moms scrapbook to, albeit temporarily, escape their domestic duties. So, why on earth would they want to scrapbook with their kids. I'll tell you why: so they can share their much-loved hobby with their children (aka the "next generation of scrappers") and perhaps garner a moment or two of peace when the kids want to scrapbook at home, too. Not only are you enlisting future consumers, you're also providing an opportunity for moms and kids to do something meaningful together. Everyone's happy!

Ensure that your store is open during convenient hours – A simple yet effective way to ensure maximum sales. If you are currently open from Monday through Friday from 10-6, you may be effectively excluding your largest customer base, Moms with young children. These consumers often shop during the evening or weekends when other caregivers are available to lend a hand. Consider even extending your hours one day a month to cater to these consumers. Their appreciation will go a long way toward higher sales.

Offer classes on organization and time-saving techniques – Personally, I cannot get enough of these types of classes. Consider a different class on the same theme each month. For example, how to organize your home scrapping station, how to

organize for a crop, etc. Scrappers who are more organized may be more productive, and therefore, spend more money on supplies.

Remember the basics when recommending supplies – albums, adhesive, pens, paper, stickers, paper trimmer, and an idea book. Consider encouraging new scrappers to purchase paper- and pen-packs, and any basic item, in bulk so that they have everything they need on hand when they finally get the chance to scrap, usually after the kids are asleep and the stores are closed. Further, perhaps pre-package a basket with “starter” supplies and keep a few on hand for new consumers. Those scrappers who are short on time will appreciate the simplicity of getting started.

Card making is a hot trend, but often time consuming - Consider stocking card-packs that include stickers and/or die cuts so that customers can customize their “homemade” card, but can do so in less time. Perhaps explain that making cards in bulk, instead of one at a time, will allow them to always have a card on hand when the need arises. Homemade cards are also more economical in the long run.

Encourage the purchase of other time-saving products, such as color blocking templates, personal die cutting systems, and thematic page kits. Customers will love the ability to quickly create layouts. Also, offer product demonstrations for these products during crops or on weekends, whenever your store is busy.

Consider holding crops with on-site day care – For a small babysitting fee, Moms can crop while their kids play nearby. Moms will stay longer knowing that their kids are well cared for and nearby. The children will have fun while Mom works on her book. Scrapbooking, I’ve learned, is such a worthwhile

use of my precious time. I love the feeling of a completed page and I simply glow when my daughters spend time looking through their books. Think of what a better place the world be if we were all able to pass down our irreplaceable memories to our children in such beautiful layouts. Okay, I admit it. I got a little carried away there. But seriously, scrapbooking is a fabulous hobby that I so enjoy. Hopefully, retailers can continue to help new scrappers get started and feel some of the joy we all feel when our children proudly display their scrapbooks.



Ann-Marie Meacham is a freelance commercial writer for The Write Idea, and a co-owner of Paper Mill USA, a wholesale cardstock company located in Campbell, California.

Reviewing The 8 Steps -

- 1. Make your store kid friendly**
- 2. Offer Mom and Me classes**
- 3. Ensure that your store is open during convenient hours**
- 4. Offer classes on organization and time-saving techniques**
- 5. Remember the basics when recommending supplies**
- 6. Stock card-packs complete with materials to customize “homemade cards”**
- 7. Encourage the purchase of other time-saving products**
- 8. Consider holding crops with on-site day care**