

# Marketing & Merchandising



## Get Blow-Out Sales with Inflatables

Eye-popping customer reactions are what make inflatables such good selling tools. Landmark Creations International in Burnsville, Minn., manufactures custom inflatables from 6 to 100 feet tall.

Fred Faust, owner of Metcalf Discount Liquor in Leawood, Kan., said his store's Landmark inflatable has been well worth the money. A local ordinance lets him use the "bottle" balloon just three weeks per year: It goes up on Dec. 15 for two weeks and again for another week's major wine sale.

"We get a lot of traffic from it," Faust said. "It really catches your attention. It lights up at night and it's about 35 feet tall, so when you're going down Metcalf you can see it at least two or three blocks away."



## Juicer Churns Up Profits

The Braun Electric Juicer promotional campaign for Flor de Caña LiMoN gets retail customers juiced up about buying this Nicaraguan lemon-flavored rum.

The event, which runs through Dec. 31, provides a colorful display with information about the juicer. A "take-one" pad lets customers order the LiMoN Braun Electric Juicer for \$20 and a proof of purchase. The promotion is sponsored by Flor de Caña Rum and Shaw-Ross International Importers.



## Package Store Heats Up Cigarette Sales

CC's Package Store, located 8 miles north of Temple, Texas, lit a fire under its tobacco sales and the overall store profits with help from McLane Co. Inc.

The tobacco distributor's plan sent CC's profits up by \$1,800 to \$2,000 a month in the tobacco area. Increases in total store profits from the better customer traffic is even more gratifying to store owner C.C. Dickson.

"We're way ahead of last year," he said in early August. "We're over \$100,000 ahead."

Previously, CC's mostly sold cigarettes by the pack—averaging 100 to 150 packs at \$2.50 each, or 10 to 15 cartons per week.



Then two McLane's executives pitched a novel approach in November 1997: Put smokes into the liquor store.

Joe Digesare, McLane's director of business development, and Ronnie Bryan, McLane's Southwest sales manager, suggested a bold tobacco sales plan:

- more cigarette space (from 12 to 24 feet)
- an emphasis on carton sales
- more signage and more ads on cigarette prices
- the addition of other tobacco products, such as cigars and snuff

Dickson still gets a happy sound to his voice when he talks about the sales improvements at CC's, which opened in 1986. "In the month of May, we sold 1,641 cartons," he said.

## Puffing Up Profits

- 34 percent of adults in the United States smoke.
- 72 percent of those smokers plan their purchases.
- Smokers are price-conscious shoppers.
- Although liquor retailers traditionally have sold packs, 90 percent of all cigarettes purchased at cigarette outlets in 1997 were carton sales.



Source: McLane Co. Inc.