

CHECKLIST FOR RETAILERS 50 LOW- TO NO-COST TIPS

1. Clean up in front of your store
2. Create an inviting entry – use flower pots in summer/greens in winter, or a clever sign
3. No flyers in the window blocking your store
4. No handwritten signs *EVER*
5. Keep storefront windows squeaky clean
6. Keep the counter neatly arranged – no clutter or junk
7. Keep merchandise displays attractive & fresh
8. Change display frequently
9. Always be positive with customers, no negative comments
10. SMILE & greet your customers when they come through the door
11. Collect emails from customers, and then learn how to communicate effectively with your customers
12. Learn about the products & services your customers are most interested in and then keep them informed about those products & services
13. Prepare Save the Date cards for upcoming events & sales
14. Give first priority to your customers in the store, not who you're talking to on the phone
15. Train your staff to do the same
16. Check on odor control – does it smell good? (or at least not bad)
17. What about the other senses? Are there sounds, sights, etc, to make for a memorable shopping experience?
18. Keep your restrooms immaculate – encourage customers to feel welcome
19. Keep your web site updated
20. Wrap each package with a beautiful ribbon or use a gold foil sticker
21. Make purchase a 'gift' customer should feel good about
22. Document customer activity, so you know your customers wants and needs
23. Service – help customers meet their goals – refer them to other places
24. Network with other merchants, cross promote
25. Participate in events
26. Give-aways should never be of poor quality, use something that represents your store appropriately
27. Participate – 'show who you are' quality and engaged
28. Hold a drawing that can help you collect e-mails
29. Keep regular hours – you or staff needs to be ready & available to help during the hours you promise to be open
30. Have 'after' hours events – draw special interest groups
31. Extend hours for when your customers can come to you
32. Establish discount nights for special groups
33. Rely more on great customer service and not on the lowest price – independent business will never beat the chains on price, but can offer better service
34. Know the other businesses in your district and work with them
35. Market your uniqueness – chain stores don't have a local story or a personality to sell, local businesses do
36. Track customer area codes and determine where your costumers are coming from
37. 70% of sales are made after 6pm, be open when people shop
38. 80% of all purchases are made by women, cater to them
39. Help customers in the store before answering the phone – remember who took the trouble to make it to your store
40. Remove any sign that is not welcoming – instead of a closed sign, use a "we are OPEN at such and such a time" sign
41. Encourage people to come in and use your restrooms – the more people in your store, the more potential sales
42. Get out of your store – join Rotary and attend chamber meetings, networking is the most important thing you can do
43. Create a Facebook page – if you are not marketing your business through social networking you will be left behind
44. Meet with & learn from successful business owners
45. Meet with your local SBDC office & review your business plan
46. Ask your customers if there are things they would buy that you aren't currently selling
47. Explore e-commerce
48. Ask someone to give you a frank opinion about your store
49. Choose your favorite charity (or let your customers vote for a favorite charity) and donate a portion of sales to the charity, or allow the charity to fundraise at your location – your regular customers will reward your generosity
50. Use these tips to build your customer relationships & realize better sales with more loyal customers (Thanks to our preservation & revitalization partners who provided many of these great tips!)

