

SIGNS FOR SUCCESS: What kind of signage does your small business need?

When considering the signage needs of your store, restaurant or other small business, put yourself in the shoes of your prospects. As you imagine or—better yet—walk or drive through the “stop, enter and shop” experience, you’ll identify the signs your business needs to succeed from the eyes of your most important critics—your customers!



From the outside of your small business working in, consider

- **Outdoor signage:** Unless you’re located in a mall, you’ll need signage that catches the eye of pedestrians and motorists alike. Special consideration should be given to size, placement and illumination of your exterior signs so that motorists have enough time to recognize you, slow down and turn in.

Often positioned near the curb or otherwise in front of your location, common options here include digital signs, metal signs, monument signs and pylon signs, as well as post-and-panel signs.

- **Storefront signs:** Another form of exterior signage, storefront and building-side signs draw people from the sidewalk, mall concourse or parking lot to and through your front door. As with other outdoor signs, an attractive design, sufficient size and lighting are important.

In this application, think dimensional lettering, illuminated signs, LED displays and outdoor directories. Routed wooden signs are an option, as are simple A-frame sidewalk signs promoting today’s menu specials or sales. Branded awnings are yet another effective storefront choice for many small businesses. Of course, banners, flags and pennants are a proven way to promote specials and events.

- **Interior signage:** Once you’ve drawn customers through your doors, you’ll need three different types of signage. Directional signs will guide shoppers to various departments, counters or areas—including checkout! Informational signs (including tags) will educate customers on the key features and prices of your products or services. Of course, promotional signage including point-of-purchase (POP) displays will spur sales of selected items.

Fortunately, there is no shortage of effective visual communication options! Interior retail signage solutions include wall and window graphics, banners and hanging signs as well as the latest in ceiling and floor graphics. Digital signs are a bright idea for many, and restaurants in particular will want to take advantage of illuminated displays and menus.

Finished? Not quite yet. Consider two other types of small business signs that are often critical to success:

- **ADA signage:** Generally speaking, if a sign identifies a permanent room or space of a facility, informs the public about functional spaces or alerts users about accessible features, it must comply with Americans with Disabilities Act regulations. These standards address non-glare backgrounds, easy-to-read typefaces, use of Braille lettering and other factors. Of course, these signage rules apply to businesses and restaurants of all sizes. .

While required by law, the ADA signs you post at restrooms, stairwells, entrances and exits need not be plain. With custom designs incorporating your corporate typeface, colors and graphics, your signs can complement your building’s décor and enhance your branding efforts.

- **Vehicle wraps:** If your business makes service calls or deliveries, don’t overlook the advantages of vehicle wraps and other forms of mobile advertising to promote your company.

A cost-effective way to rack up consumer impressions, your options here include everything from simple vehicle magnetic graphics, vinyl letters and car-top signs to full and partial car wraps, truck billboard systems and much more. With them, your cars, vans, trailers and even boats are all perfect platforms to put your marketing in motion!

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