

# Big or small, secondary signs deliver sales

*Don't let your clients miss out on this opportunity*

By Dan Mika

**A**side from the main identification sign for a business, those signs known as secondary signs can tell passersby a great deal about the products and services of a business. Fantastic returns on investment can be provided by signs like these that really work well.

One way to make the possible benefits of a new sign clearer to potential customers is to show them the “percent of increase” or “dollars earned” that other businesses have experienced from their signs.

For example, a contractor told me that his simple job site signs generated \$20,000 in new

business in a short time. The management of an apartment complex found that leases from walk-in traffic rose from only 5% to a whopping 70% after a revamp of their main identification signs. In another case, an auto dealership I interviewed told me they saw a 30% increase in sales for a particular model after adding a large, simple window sign.

One sign that changed my behavior was an optician's A-frame sign. I never noticed their tall pole sign—but I did notice the A-frame. I stopped in and eventually became a regular customer. I, and hundreds of others, have spent lots of money there as a result of this small hard-working sign.

Passersby are often in the dark about what's going on inside a business. Secondary signs can make these secrets public knowledge. Products, services and sales can be revealed to thousands of potential customers.

I once kept hearing radio ads for a kitchen and bath showroom that boasted “40 units on display.” Whenever I passed the business with its narrow storefront, I thought, there's just no way. Finally, I stopped in and discovered the store was a lot deeper than I had assumed. I suggested lettering the front windows to reflect this hidden feature, saying *40 Kitchens and Baths on Display—Visit our 7000 sq. ft. Showroom!* I wish I could have gotten



**Sales are up 10 %** at this school, thanks to these window graphics. The display had an immediate impact on sales, and paid for itself in six months.

“Each of our 12-by-8-ft. windows tells a story as people drive by,” says co-owner Jim Manly. “All of our target markets are depicted. The overall size of 12 by 40 ft. is like having a billboard. We still have enough open space on other windows to meet the code requirements. Over 36,000 cars pass by each day.

“The perforated film was perfect for us. People can look out from our second story vantage point at any time. In the evening, passersby can see the movement of the dancers inside.”

Graphics by Sign Innovations, Charlotte, North Carolina



**Up 40 %** Help your customers be aware of, and sell to, local needs. In winter, this might mean pushing snow blowers or generators. “We put this simple *Air Conditioners* banner up during a hot spell, our air conditioner sales went up 40 percent,” said the store manager.



**15% increase** This sign, which includes a Watchfire Signs digital panel [www.watchfiresigns.com], resulted in a 15% overall increase in business for this jeweler. Their engagement ring business increased 20%.

“Even though the economy has been down for the four years since the sign was installed, our business is up,” says the manager. “While the investment was substantial, the sign has paid for itself many times over. It’s a sophisticated way to get people’s attention. The salesperson stopped in and left a packet of information. We ended up replacing a sign that was about 25 percent smaller and had changeable letters.”

The sign was designed and produced by Cooper Signs, Niagara Falls, New York.

a percentage of the increased profits.

What the photos and captions in this article show are the value of signs. It comes down to a cost/ benefit ratio. The cost of a sign is a one-time expense, but if it’s effective, the financial benefits continue to increase over time.

Signs are the only on site advertising media that can be acted upon immediately. All other media requires travel to the business. By effectively advertising to passing traffic, behavior can be instantly changed. Impressions can be ingrained into the viewer’s mind that could lead to future action.

As the captions explain, these business-people discover—much to their delight—that secondary signs make very effective advertising. •SC



Sign analyst Dan Mika is interested in ways signs can be more effective. Contact him at [d.mika@hotmail.com](mailto:d.mika@hotmail.com) to tell him your success story.



**Immediate increase** The business manager of this podiatrist’s office said, “We immediately saw an increase in business” once this a-frame sign went up. Many businesses need only attract *one* new customer to more than pay for the sign. Getting into the sight lines of vehicles is what it’s all about, and a-frames are great for that. Sign by the author.



**40% increase** The manager of this specialty foods business, located next to a busy plaza copy shop, said they had a 40 percent increase in lunch customers as a direct result of this small A-frame sign. Smart businesspeople market to the neighbor’s customers.



**“People swarm in”** The owner of this furniture store says that “people swarm in here whenever we put a new splash up. Per dollar spent, this 5-by-56-ft. banner is 20 to 50 times more effective than newspaper advertising.”

Graphics by Pierre Tardif, Pierre Tardif Signpainter, Val-Belair, Quebec, Canada [www.pierretardif.com]