



Cincinnati Division 7, MCR, NMRA Company Storekeeper's Guide



THINGS FOUND IN THE COMPANY STORE

ITEMS TO SELL

A. Pricing

1. Either sell a few and make a lot on each one, or sell a lot and make a bit on each one - either way you make the same amount - but the 'make a bit' model lets more people buy the stuff, plus keeping prices low enough for hobbyists to afford is great for good will
2. Don't lose money! - Watch your cost to buy each item and set your sell price at least that high!
3. Lugging obsolete merchandise 'costs money' as well
 - a. If you have 'ancient' stock that just won't move, maybe it's time for a sale
 - b. If you simply want to get rid of those 13-year-old windbreakers, it's time to lower the price to the place where they'll sell, and take your losses
 - c. "Big Businesses" speak of 'carrying charges' - The cost of storing a commodity over a period of time - it includes incidental costs, insurance coverage, and the physical cost of storage. As an amateur 'store,' you're probably not paying for warehouse space or insurance - but when you've lugged a storage tub full of old stuff back and forth for 13 years, you know what a 'carrying charge' is!

B. Clothing

1. Colors for shirts, caps and other wearables - sometimes decided as a 'Division Standard Color'
2. Logo (or emblem)
 - a. Usually a Division Standard - currently a stylized front view of Cincinnati Union Station
 - b. Alternate logo for special events, e.g. Cincinnati Express logo from 2018 convention
3. Shirts
 - a. Golf shirts with a selected logo - pocket on wearer's left chest, logo on opposite side
 - b. Ladies' shirts - No pocket
4. Hats - golf caps, "One Size Fits Most", current logo on front
5. Jewelry - added for 2018 convention, currently stocked from retail purchases on Etsy & c, need to find 'bulk' source for better prices!

C. Train Cars

1. What Scale to Sell – Division 7 only sponsors HO cars (years ago had a very slow-moving N car)
2. Train Cars for Division 7
 - a. Several 'Generations' of train cars - the Co. Store usually has 2 or 3 varieties of Division 7 cars 'in stock' - these remain in stock as long as no one buys them - Lingering stock is promoted at our train shows as 'limited availability' or 'Last few!'
 - b. Sales through eBay have moved some of our slow-movers as well
3. Train Cars from Other Divisions
 - a. Swapped for some of ours - some are swapped 1-for-1, others are supplemented with cash from one side or the other
 - b. Outright purchase – usually at a discount price

D. Model Kits - from MCR or other unknown sources

E. Miscellaneous

1. Portable Surveyor's Rod (6' tape measure that pops out of its shell)
2. Utility knives
3. Coal Load Removal Magnet (1 left)

ITEMS TO ENHANCE SALES

A. You've got to haul all of this stuff around with you!

1. There are some things that, although nifty, take up space in the tubs and let your 'luggage' expand to additional tubs - I'm up to 5 tubs (plus additional goodies for Train Shows)
2. Revise your list of 'must carry' items
 - a. Simplify - I had some marvelous Halloween tablecloths - I used either a white or orange 'cloth' (the orange was a plastic picnic cloth), draped with a very nice woven Halloween 'spider web' - very nice effect! - however, once I displayed merchandise on top of the spider web, it was harder to see - the next year, I found some spider web placemats that looked reasonably classy, but didn't have to be carefully folded up and packed away - I still use the white tablecloths, but I'm now using the placemats - quicker to set up and take down!
 - b. Combine - anything that can do 2 things at once - only example I can think of right now is our Company Store sign that has a crossbar at the right height to hang clothes hangers to display shirts
 - c. Eliminate - I wanted to try some of those Halloween projectors - the ones that shine ghosts or other things on a wall - they require almost total darkness to see them - they're not all that bright in total darkness! - I'm leaving them home next time!

B. Things Useful at Normal Monthly Meetings

1. 6-Panel Folding Pegboard – with pegboard hooks, punched metal 'shelves'
2. Seasonal Decorations - St. Patty's Day, Valentine's Day, Christmas

C. Things Useful at Train Shows - includes all items from "Normal Monthly Meetings"

1. Division Company Store Sign and Support
2. Scrolling Marquis Lights - supported on 2 extra-long bar clamps (mine), make sure programming has held! – just in case, bring laptop computer with the programming software loaded!
3. Special Seasonal Table Covers – Halloween, Christmas, St. Patty's day

D. Things Useful Everywhere, but watch weight! – Charge-Card signs, Car Kit Photos, url for Web Site

ITEMS YOU DON'T NEED TO HAUL AROUND WITH YOU

- A. All the store's sales receipts since I took over
- B. Extra blank sales receipts - be sure you carry enough for normal and exceptional sales, but you don't need a 2-year supply with you at all times
- C. Extra sales register for 'non-store' sales