



Columbus Square Herald

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www.mycolumbussquare.com

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Northland community shredding day and food drive benefits local charity

Protect yourself from identity theft and support Mid-Ohio Foodbank when you attend Northland Community Council's shredding day event, Saturday, Dec. 6 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Columbus Square Shopping Center, on Cleveland Avenue, one block north of State Route 161.

Bring up to five boxes or bags of personal papers, computer disks or other materials with no-longer needed confidential information to be shredded via Fireproof Records Center's mobile shredding unit at no charge. While you're there, please donate three non-perishable food items to help feed hungry people in central Ohio this holiday season. Visit www.myncc.org to learn more.



Encouraging sales in spite of difficult economic predictions

George Hadler,
President, The Hadler Companies

Like most people, I am glad the election is over. Our new president is going to have his hands full trying to reign in all of the chaos this country is experiencing. The credit and banking crisis is not going to be resolved overnight, but I am confident it will eventually be behind us.

While gas prices are moderating, most people are still looking for every opportunity to save money. The economy is headed into stormy waters, and money is tight.

Most economists predict 2009 is going to be a really tough year for retailers. That's good news and bad news, depending on how you look at it. The bad news is, most families are spending less money on non-essential goods and services. The good news is, recessions have a tendency to weed out poorly run businesses, and you may find less direct competitors for your business as time goes on. Pent-up demand for delayed purchases is inevitable. Just because people put off buying things doesn't mean the desire goes away.

Columbus Square is doing particularly well despite all of these issues. We are in the heart of a huge population, so for most Northland residents, Columbus Square is just a few minutes away. Ohio Thrift and Dollar General are seemingly generating more customers than ever before. The center itself is more inviting and appealing today, and it is becoming known as the only community-minded center in the Northland Area.

So what does it take to be a survivor in this economy? Focus on the things you've done well, and follow what the successful merchants are doing. Now is the perfect time to start promoting special sales pricing. Everybody loves a bargain, and that may mean the difference between having customers come into your store to buy versus leaving your store without a purchase.

Many merchants, including all of the leading department stores, are having 15 percent off coupon-day sales, buy your second item for half price, and steeper discounts on clearance

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items. It's easy to place a sign in the window with an offer to entice people driving by to stop in and see if they can get a bargain. Even if they don't buy, they will at least know you exist, and hopefully come back another time.

Now, it's always hard to cut your profit margin. If you work on a 30 percent margin, and cut it to 15 percent, then theoretically you would have to sell twice the merchandise to make the same amount of money. But, 15 percent of something is better than 15 percent of nothing. Most people have a hard time passing up a bargain.

If you're not advertising in the local newspapers, this is an excellent time to get started. From many years of experience, I can tell you advertising programs don't work over night. Customers often need to see your ad 10 to 20 times or more before they finally decide to stop in and see what you have to offer. Taco Bell is a good example; they introduce a new menu item, then run so many ads you can't ignore them. Eventually, those ads work, and the customer makes a connection and they stop in the next day for a meal.

Many merchants scale back advertising during slow sales periods. However, if you advertise now, your ad will stand out more due to less competition. And if you stay consistent with your advertising, it may really begin to work about the same time the economy recovers.

Now is the perfect time to look into developing your own web site, if you haven't already. More and more retail sales are going through the Internet. Shoppers don't want to waste time, so they browse the Internet to see what retail stores carry the goods or services they need. Your first web site doesn't have to be fancy it just needs to inform customers what you have to offer, your store hours, and your location. Honestly, it can be that simple. You can and should continue to improve it over time, but don't be afraid to start small.

This also is a great time to sharpen your retail and business skills. Instead of killing time waiting for customers to come in, borrow some books on topics to help you succeed with your business. Knowledge is power and you can't have too much knowledge.

I'll part with a joke I have shared with my staff. Two men were being chased by a bear in the woods. One guy asks the other, "how are we going to out run the bear?" The second guy picks up his pace and responds, "I don't have to outrun the bear, I just have to outrun you!"

The moral of the story is today, you have to be better than ever to succeed. We hope these ideas will prove helpful to you and provide you with ways to succeed despite our economic challenges.



DePuy Paving, is doing the final paving repairs for this year. These paving repairs on the west and south side should be finished by Nov. 14. The repaired areas also will be restriped.

New snow removal company should improve service

The Rocky Fork Company of New Albany has been contracted for snow removal. The company has been in business since 1991.

Snow removal on sidewalks is the tenant's responsibility. Snow removal criteria for the parking lot is as follows:

- The contractor must always be vigilant and prepared to mobilize to maintain clear surfaces at Columbus Square
- If it snows one inch or more between midnight and 5 a.m., drive lanes and entrances are plowed and salted before stores open
- Special attention will be given to the parking field in front of:
 - 24-hour supermarkets
 - Stores opening very early
 - Stores with shopping carts
 - Handicap parking spaces

Delivery areas at the rear of shopping center also should be plowed and salted, but done last.

If it snows during daytime hours or icy conditions develop:

- Contractor plows drive lanes and entrances, then salts
- Contractor returns at night to plow and salt entire center
- Contractor salts drive lanes and entrances

Call property management at 614-457-6650 with questions or concerns.

The Official Contractor for Columbus Square



New Construction • (614) 457-8322 • Remodeling

Columbus Square is owned and managed by:



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