



### Critical to your business or organization, regular reviews are a “must”

When was the last time you took a good – and objective – look at your signage, graphics and displays? After all, it’s surprisingly easy to become accustomed to one’s surroundings ... and unaware of any shortcomings. It’s so common, in fact, that retailers have actually coined a special term for this phenomenon: “store blindness.”

### Why audit? Because signage that’s out-of-date or in poor repair blemishes your brand

Almost by definition, signage, graphics and displays are easily visible, readily noticeable and highly representative of your operation, office and/or brand.

So, if any are broken, incorrect, missing or otherwise lacking in quality, your customers, visitors, vendors and even employees are likely to question everything that goes on behind the scenes – including your commitment to excellence! It doesn’t take much; even a few burned-out lightbulbs can lead people to this conclusion.

Even worse, as people are generally reluctant to call out the faults of others, any deficiency you overlook in regard to your signage, graphics and displays is likely to remain unreported.

### Conducting an audit: Seven tips to make the most of your effort

- 1. MAKE IT METHODOLOGICAL:** A haphazard or piecemeal approach won’t likely achieve the results you seek. Instead, with time set aside and notepad in hand, select a starting point and route (e.g., exterior to interior) and approach (e.g., clockwise, and from top to bottom). If applicable, also schedule day and evening sessions. *Storing trade show displays offsite?* Don’t forget these key promotional elements!
- 2. BE COMPREHENSIVE:** If your audit begins outdoors, for example, think beyond your building to street side signage, grounds, parking lot and also your cars and trucks if employing vehicle graphics. Note, too, any signage in disrepair or related issues that may be the responsibility of your landlord. One common example? Overgrown trees or shrubbery that may be obscuring your signage.
- 3. REMAIN CRITICAL:** Are your signs, graphics and displays showing wear, age or discoloration? Make a note of any that need to be repaired or replaced. *Is there an outlier – a sign that’s somehow survived your latest rebranding effort (or two!) that now distinguishes itself in a negative way with an incorrect logo or outdated corporate colors?*
- 4. STAY CURRENT:** *Are your wayfinding signs accurate, or has a recent remodeling or facility repurposing rendered them obsolete? Do they adhere to the latest regulations?* You’ll also want to check any directories to assure that they no longer list employees or tenants that are no longer in your office or building, and that they reflect the latest hires or promotions that may have occurred.
- 5. BE OBJECTIVE:** While looking for what’s effective, what’s outdated and what’s in need of repair, also be on the lookout for what’s missing! Is there unused “real estate” in terms of a wall or window that might be a prime candidate for graphics that enhance your décor, signage that guides your visitors or perhaps messages that promote your products, services or company? The newest opportunities in floor and ceiling graphics are often overlooked because many are simply unaware of them.

6. **SET A DATE:** Given the necessity to promote new products (summer fashions!) or services (pre-winter auto service specials!), retailers may wish to conduct audits almost monthly, whereas others could opt to do it quarterly, annually or even every other year. Of course, the introduction of refreshed branding, a move to new facility or the remodeling of an existing one are prime occasions for a methodological examination and review.
7. **ENLIST HELP:** Don't conduct an audit on your own. Seek the assistance of a manager from another branch who's encountered the same challenges as you, or the eyes of graphic designer or similarly talented employee if you're fortunate to have one on staff. *Better yet?* Request that an expert in signage, graphics and displays accompany you. Oftentimes, they're not only trained in design, but also up-to-date on the latest company and architectural signage, custom displays, illuminated options and more.



**For more information – or expert assistance – contact Image360**

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