



July 2017

Consumer Behavior Specialists

**Branding - Marketing - Commercial Interior Design - Merchandising
and Display**

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Design Psychology: Biomimicry

Morphing Nature and Design

Last month, we discussed biomimicry, the act of turning to nature to find inspiration for solving human problems. Recently, we came across a perfect example of this phenomenon. Engineers at the Australian National University's Research School of Engineering used what they learned from studying the wings of blue morpho butterflies to develop a technique for manipulating the scattering, reflection and absorption of different colors of light. The engineers found that the same type of nanostructures on the butterflies' wings that scatter light to create their stunning blue color can also be used to control light to increase the efficiency of solar panels. This little trick from nature may help engineers to economically power entire homes with solar technology!

Learn more [here](#).

Food for Thought

Last month, our President, Lyn Falk, and Brand Strategist, Laura Leszczynski, attended the National Shopper Brain Conference in Chicago, where they

learned fascinating research about how we as consumers: become aware of information, process that new information, and make decisions in a retail environment.



Do you know with which part of the brain people make the most purchasing decisions? What about the number of words a person remembers reading after visiting a grocery store? [Check out our blog](#) to find the answers - and learn more about our findings from the conference.



Main Street Update

Main Street Millennials

Main Streets should make it a priority to extend their messaging to millennials in order to attract and retain them. Millennials are

the largest generation in the history of the United States, and are just hitting their peak years for spending and forming strong brand loyalties. [According to Forbes](#), this generation is predisposed to shop local and give back to their communities, which makes them a perfect Main Street target market.

Additionally, a [recent study](#) by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and American Express found that 97 percent of millennials appreciate the value of historic preservation. According to the study, 52 percent of millennials "view historic preservation as important through the lens of engaging in authentic experiences, preserving a sense of community, and creatively re-using structures." Furthermore, millennials prefer spending money at businesses that support historic buildings and neighborhoods and will take action to support this cause, making them great candidates for helping main streets thrive.

So, how can main streets harness all of this millennial power? A [recent article](#) by Small Biz Survival offers four suggestions for how smaller rural towns can retail millennials.

1. Listen to the millennials in your community and find out what makes your community important to them.
2. Understand the recreation opportunities offered by your community. Find out what kind of recreation activities your

millennials enjoy and are looking for, and make more of them possible.

3. Connect with millennials by establishing a relationship with nearby educational institutions.

4. Find ways to improve your businesses' work culture so that young people are more likely to want to work in your town.

The article makes a key point: millennials differ based on the type of area they're living in. In order to reach the young people in your area in the most effective way possible, be sure to have a strong understanding of your millennial audience.

Forbes Main Street Awards

For the first time, *Forbes Magazine* is holding a contest to recognize a thriving Main Street in each of the following categories with a feature in their December issue:

- Best Social Media Campaign
- Best Paid Marketing
- Best Brick-and-Mortar Adoption of E-Commerce
- Best Community Engagement



The awards will aim to "champion the positive impact of small businesses that are leading the way forward by taking big steps for both their businesses and their communities." This is an excellent opportunity for Main Streets to get recognition for their hard work and contributions. Applications are due by August 17, 2017. Good luck!

Learn more [here](#).

Apply [here](#).

Christmas in July

Believe it or not, the year is already more than half over, which means that the holiday season - the busiest time for most retailers - is less than six months away. Save yourself from the pain of being overly stressed during this hectic time by starting your preparations in advance and breaking tasks up into smaller chunks. The end of the summer is a great time to start gathering inspiration for your holiday displays. For example, we recently sent our Display Director and Artist, Kim, to the International Gift and Home Furnishings Market in

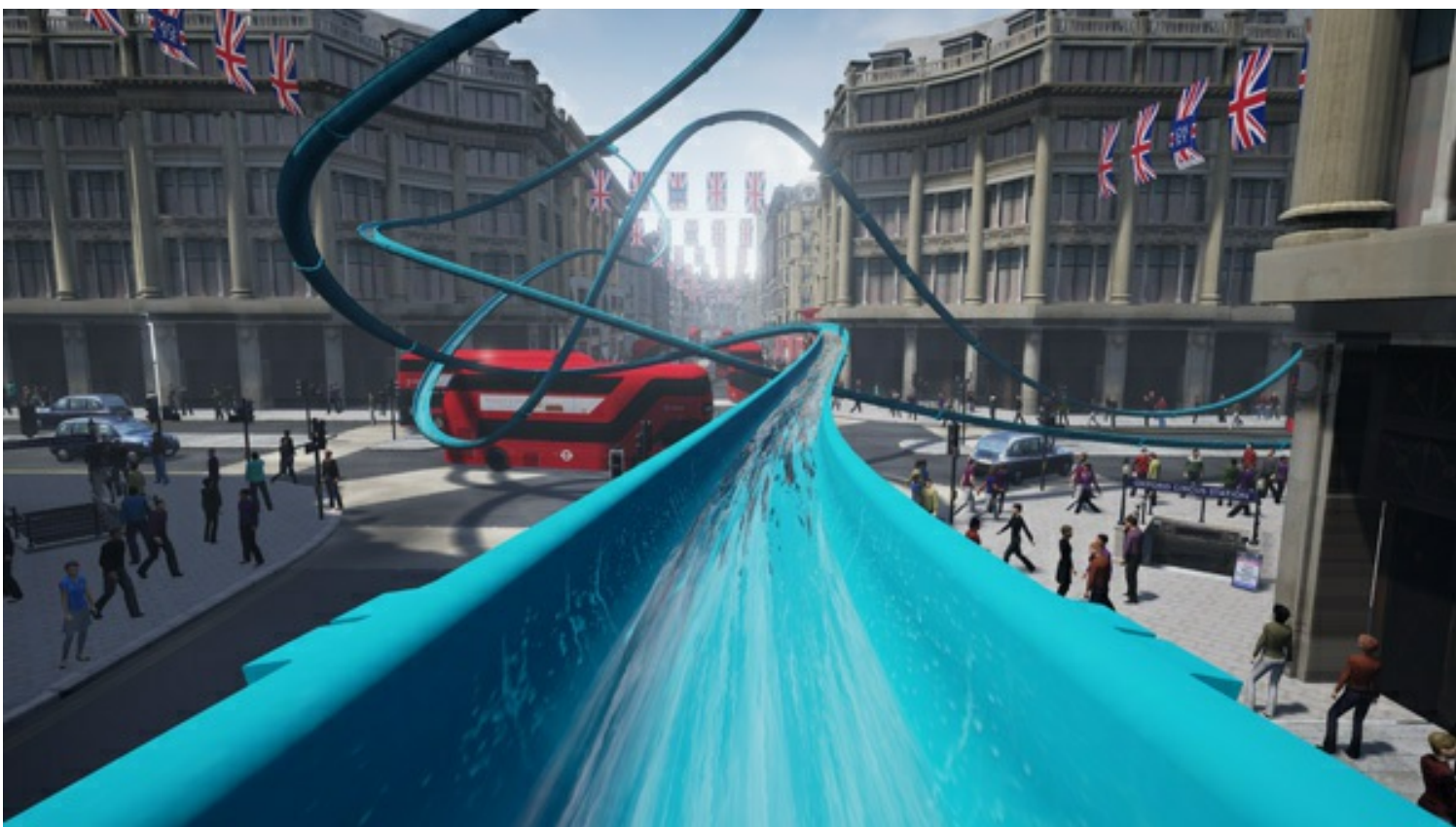


Atlanta to gather intel on which trends in holiday design and display will be most popular this year.

We're launching a series of monthly blogs that will help you stay on track while making the holiday season more manageable (and simultaneously more enjoyable). [Click here](#) to read the first blog in the series to learn about what kind of preparations you should be making in the month of August. Don't worry - we know you're still enjoying your

summer, so we'll make this month an easy one. Our blog will help you gather inspiration for decking your halls later this year (including our favorite looks from the Atlanta Gift Show) and set goals that will allow you to determine what needs to get accomplished throughout the planning process.

Note: holiday brainstorming can be done from the beach.



Window Displays that Make a Splash

TopShop fit the entire city of London inside their window display by creating a virtual reality waterslide. Visitors climbed into an inner tube, slipped on a VR headset, and traveled on a crazy water slide down the streets of London. This cutting-edge display allowed consumers to experience the popular virtual reality trend and was seasonally relevant by highlighting the start of summer with an

interactive experience. Additionally, TopShop provided an area in the store for customers to share their VR experience on social media. What a great way to get noticed!

[Click here](#) to read more.

Image source: www.retail-focus.co.uk

Client Highlight

Sauk City Staple



We love creating window displays for our long-term client, [Sauk City Pharmacy](#). This highly trusted independent business is the longest-standing of its kind in the Sauk-Prairie, WI area. For quite a few years, we've been helping the pharmacy create window displays with seasonal themes and bold, colorful props that showcase their brand and draw customers into their business. As lovers of supporting all things local, we've valued helping 34-year owner Kevin Blessing keep his pharmacy thriving. Kevin, who has even contributed some of the window display ideas himself, says that we've achieved his goal of attracting new customers to the store. For four picture windows, five times per year, the two and a half hour (each way) drive is completely worth it because customers always tell us how much they enjoy the displays. Visit this dependable Main Street staple next time you're in the area - and don't forget to check out the windows!



New Product We Love



A Breath of Fresh Air

Green City Solutions has developed City tree, a free-standing plant filter that has the same cleansing effect as 275 regular trees but at only five percent of the cost and one percent of the space. Aside from

being environmentally friendly, the City Tree is a multi-functional structure that can analyze environmental data, display advertisements, and provide seating, wifi, and electronic charging stations. Its creators, Green City Solutions, did an excellent job fitting nature into the tech-oriented city landscape that people depend on today.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

Image source: www.greencitysolutions.de

Just In Case

We're doing a favor for a few of our clients and neighbors by helping them find homes for some excess fixtures. If you're interested in purchasing lighted display cases (top left), jewelry cases (top right) or illuminated 24" by 36" light boxes (bottom left and right) at a discounted rate, [email us](#).





The coolest thing one of our team members did this month? A long weekend at Comic-Con in San Diego!



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