

Custom Neon Sign Expert Reveals Why 76% of Consumer Store Entries Signal Massive Retail Opportunity

Expert Reveals the Truth: How Custom LED Neon Signs Drive 17% More Foot Traffic and Transform Brick-and-Mortar Retail Survival in a Digital-First World.



Saint Petersburg, Florida Dec 30, 2025 (IssueWire.com) - New data shows three-quarters of consumers enter stores based purely on signage visibility, yet most retailers underestimate this silent salesperson's revenue impact. Austin Colasanti, owner of Neon Designs, explains how custom LED neon signs have become the unexpected hero in brick-and-mortar survival strategies.

Austin Colasanti, owner of Neon Designs LLC, has spent years watching retailers struggle with the same problem: they're invisible in plain sight. Austin explained, "business owners obsess over social media algorithms and SEO, but they're literally leaving money on the sidewalk. That storefront? It's either working 24/7 as your best salesperson, or it's a blank wall that customers walk right past."

The numbers back him up. A FedEx Office study found that 76% of consumers have entered a store they'd never visited before solely based on its signage. That's not just foot traffic; that's pure conversion potential walking through the door before a single Instagram post goes live or a Google ad gets clicked.

The Signage Gap Costing Retailers Real Revenue

Most retailers treat signage as an afterthought, Austin noticed. "What I've noticed is that businesses will spend \$5,000 on a month of digital ads but balk at a one-time investment in signage that works for years. The reality is, anyone who's ever struggled with flat sales needs to look at their storefront the way a customer does."

Poor signage doesn't just fail to attract, it actively repels business. Studies show that 77% of people struggle to locate businesses without proper signage, and 64% find dim or unclear signage so frustrating that they avoid stores entirely. Meanwhile, effective signage can increase foot traffic by up to 17% and boost sales by 10-25%.

Jordan Feil, Director of Marketing at Navori Labs, confirms this trend: "Digital signage's popularity keeps growing because businesses are finally tracking what actually drives in-store behavior. The data shows signage campaigns capture 400% more views than static displays, and when you add dynamic elements, engagement skyrockets."

Why Custom Neon Signs Are Winning the Visibility War

Austin pointed to a fundamental shift in consumer psychology. "Customers are overwhelmed with digital noise. Their phones are bombarded with ads. But a well-designed neon sign? It cuts through everything. It's physical, it's vibrant, and it creates an emotional reaction that pixels on a screen can't replicate."

The effectiveness stems from how our brains process visual information. Humans process images 60,000 times faster than text, and bright, colorful signage triggers immediate emotional responses. LED neon signs specifically offer advantages that traditional signage can't match:

- **Energy efficiency:** LED neon uses up to 80% less electricity than traditional neon while delivering brighter, more consistent illumination
- **Durability:** Modern LED neon signs last 50,000+ hours with minimal maintenance, compared to fragile glass neon tubes requiring frequent repairs
- **Customization:** Businesses can replicate exact brand colors, logos, and fonts with precision that paint and printed signs can't achieve

"Most of us make split-second decisions about where to shop," Austin explained. "A bright, professional sign signals 'we're open, we're professional, and we're worth your time.' A faded poster or blank window says the opposite."

The 5-Step Framework for Signage That Actually Converts

Based on years of expertise in custom sign design, Austin developed a practical approach for businesses wanting to maximize their signage ROI:

1. Audit Your Current Visibility

Stand across the street from your business at different times of day. Can you read your signage from 50 feet away? Is it visible at night? If not, you're losing the 68% of consumers who make purchase decisions based on sign information.

2. Design for Your Specific Customer Flow

"Where people naturally look, that's where your sign belongs," Austin advised. Eye-level placement (15°-30° viewing angle) substantially increases recognition time. For retail, that means entrance zones, end-caps, and checkout areas. For restaurants, window displays facing pedestrian traffic work best.

3. Prioritize Clarity Over Creativity

"The biggest mistake I see? Signs that try to say too much," Austin warned. Effective signs communicate one main message in under five seconds. The "Rule of Three" limiting signs to three key elements improves recall by 52% compared to cluttered designs.

4. Invest in Quality Materials

Cheap signs cost more long-term. LED neon signs cost 30-50% less to operate than traditional neon and last years longer. One boutique in Manhattan saw a 38% increase in walk-in traffic after upgrading its storefront signage, generating \$91,250 in additional annual revenue, a 315% ROI in two years.

5. Track Your Results

"Here's where it gets interesting," Austin said. "Businesses that measure foot traffic before and after upgrading their signage see the real story." Use simple metrics: daily walk-in counts, average transaction value, and customer surveys asking "How did you hear about us?" The data often surprises owners who underestimated the impact of their signage.

The Broader Implications for Brick-and-Mortar Survival

The signage revolution isn't just about looking pretty; it's about survival. With e-commerce capturing more market share, physical stores must leverage their one advantage: physical presence. "Anyone who's ever wondered why online brands are opening physical stores gets it," Austin noted. "You can't create an experience through a screen alone."

Research from the Sign Research Foundation confirms this: 60% of enterprises not currently using digital signage plan to invest within two years. The global LED neon market, valued at \$1.91 billion in 2025, is projected to reach \$3.94 billion by 2035, a 7.5% annual growth rate driven by retail adoption.

"[Custom neon signs](#) have evolved from vintage novelties to strategic business assets," Austin explains. "They're becoming popular in home interiors and weddings, but their real power is in commercial spaces where they transform brand visibility and drive customer engagement."

What the Data Means for Different Retail Sectors

The impact varies by industry, but the principle remains consistent:

- **Quick-service restaurants:** Dynamic menu boards increase average order value by 29.5%
- **Fashion retail:** Strategic signage placement guides customers past high-margin items, increasing dwell time by 20%
- **Fitness centers:** Custom neon signs create Instagram-worthy moments that drive social media mentions and membership referrals
- **Beauty salons:** LED neon signs projecting brand colors increase perceived professionalism and justify premium pricing

"Most businesses are shocked when they see the numbers," Austin shared. "A coffee shop that upgraded to custom signage saw morning traffic increase 15% in the first month. It's not magic, it's psychology. People trust bright, professional spaces."

The Bottom Line for Business Owners

Austin's advice is straightforward: "Stop treating signage like decoration. It's a revenue driver, plain and simple. The businesses that thrive in the next decade will be the ones that understand every square foot of their storefront is either making money or costing money."

The research supports this urgency. With 76% of consumers making entry decisions based on signage, and 68% making actual purchase decisions from sign content, the math is clear. A one-time investment in quality custom neon signage, typically \$3,000 to \$15,000 depending on size and complexity, delivers returns for years while digital ad spend disappears the moment you stop paying.

"The reality is, we've all experienced walking past a store because it looked closed or uninviting," Austin concluded. "Your signage is your first impression, your 24/7 salesperson, and your most cost-effective marketing tool. Why would you cheap out on that?"

For retailers fighting for every customer, the message is illuminated in bright, glowing letters: invest in your visibility, or risk remaining invisible.

Resources:

<https://newsroom.fedex.com/newsroom/global-english/fedex-office-survey-standout-signs-contribute-to-sales/>

<https://ccr-mag.com/how-signage-influences-customer-behaviour-and-foot-traffic/>

<https://www.crowntv-us.com/blog/13-ways-to-increase-foot-traffic-retail-signage/>



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