

# **BUSINESS:** Winter Preparations ~ Tales from Calladoodles

by Clare Callanan of [www.calladoodles.com](http://www.calladoodles.com)

As evidenced by UK Handmade's growing directory of bricks and mortar shops selling handmade items, more and more small creative businesses, focused on selling handmade local goods, are springing up around the UK. One such venture is Calladoodles, a beautiful handmade boutique based in Carshalton, Surrey. UK Handmade caught up with shop owner, Clare Callanan, to find out how she is working with visual merchandising expert Zoë Hannam to prepare Calladoodles for Autumn/Winter 2011.



As we prepare the shop for Autumn/Winter 2011, I have been spending some time to pause and reflect on Autumn/Winter 2010, when I was introduced to Zoë Hannam at a local networking event. Since that timely





meeting in August 2010, Zoë has been working with Calladoodles on our Visual Identity and facilitating us through the various processes of buying and merchandising.

In order to maximise sales and enhance the Calladoodles brand, Zoe has created a strong visual 'story' combining handmade gifts from Calladoodles' concessions, alongside stock from carefully sourced suppliers.

Our re-launch was on the 31st of October and Zoë is guiding us through the processes of the following steps for her Autumn/Winter 2011 displays, from window to store. This year with the shop and window framework in place, I am finding this job both exciting and fun.

Zoë explains that your visual identity starts with you and is translated from your workspace through to your communications and website. Presentation of Front of

House is paramount, this forms the foundation of your emerging brand and how your potential clients are going to perceive you and buy into your products/services. Therefore, the moment your customer STEPS into your shop take them on a journey, create a clear flowing pathway from the entrance through the space and guide them using signage or bold displays highlighting products/services your customer is looking for.

**THE FIRST STEP** is to understand why your customer shops in your store or buys into your product/service and the categories they tend to focus on.

**THE SECOND STEP** is to identify your customer/client 'Decision Tree', how they shop into any category, for example, when shopping for handmade gifts is standard/quality or price the main driver, at what stage do they consider factors such as design and colour.

**THE THIRD STEP** is to segment your product range accordingly, for example, if your customer buys gifts primarily lead by trends, ensure merchandise is displayed first and foremost by on-trend product. For maximum impact create a power wall of related items with the full range of products, speeding up your customer's decision making process; colour, price and any other factors can follow.

**About Zoë Hannam:**

*'Visual identity or silent selling is the most underused form of retail advertising within the Independent Retail Sector'*

Working with a blend of art and science, together with her experience in retail, Zoë Hannam advises and mentors shop owners, artisans and craftspeople on how to maximise the visual appeal of products in order to promote sales. On trend and always tempered with commercial thinking, she believes that regeneration can be sustained

through entrepreneurship within the independent retail sector.

Connecting suppliers with outlets zoë-H offers small retailers a solution on how to maximise the return of the square footage of their retail premises, using a unique technique for merchandising to create clean retail spaces in order to enhance sales and increase profit margins.

Website : [www.zoe-H.com](http://www.zoe-H.com)



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