

Five Plays to Turn Fans into Customers

The tailgating and barbecue industry continues to grow, and the act of tailgating has become a tradition for fans across the country. It takes place during camping excursions, before concerts, at little league games, on beach trips and most commonly, at sporting events. *Hardware Retailing* interviewed five retailers from college towns across the country in its April 2015 issue. The retailers shared how they sell and promote their tailgate categories. These tips can be applied to all retailers, no matter the location.

Applied to Retail:

Even if a college or professional team is hundreds of miles away, most towns have community sporting events where fans spend their weekends. Find what is popular in your area and cater your selection and selling techniques to your customers.

How to Sell:

When new tailgating products are added to your inventory, train employees on their multiple uses. For example, if a customer comes in for a pop-up canopy tent, remind them it can be used for a sporting event tailgate but is also great for camping trips or a backyard family gathering.

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Host Events

Hosting an event on your property is a great way to showcase your products and draw customers to your store. Partner with vendors and local

businesses to create a truly unique event. Set up tents, grill hotdogs and hamburgers and host a bag toss contest in the parking lot.



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Get In the Action

If a professional, college or high school team in your town has a group that tailgates before games, join their celebration. Tailgate with the fans,

displaying your products and unique accessories. This interaction will grow your customer base and garner interest in your selection.



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Offer the Latest Products

Take a look at how your customers participate in tailgating. If customers cheer for a local college, carry items for their team. If camping or trips

to the beach are popular weekend activities, make sure you stock the latest portable grills, tents, chairs, coolers and towels.



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Foster Community Partnerships

Create a partnership of support with your local high school or set up a tailgate at the hometown football game. These activities will help

generate interest in your store while working to bring the community together. Think of ways your business can give back.



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Product Displays

Set up a display of a tailgating scene that is popular in your town. For example, if you are located near a beach, create a display that illustrates

a day-trip beach scene. Include chairs, towels, portable grills, coolers and all other items found at your store that customers would find useful.

