

the rocks
markets
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Trader Manual: **PRESENTATION GUIDELINES**



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At The Rocks Markets, we believe that every stall tells a story. Your presentation is more than just a display—it's your brand's first conversation with potential customers. This guide will help you create an inviting, professional, and memorable market experience.

Our Presentation Philosophy

Great market stalls are about creating magic in a small space. We're not just selling products; we're creating moments of connection, discovery, and delight. Our guidelines are designed to help you shine while maintaining the market's unique character and community spirit.

Framing Your Products: The Art of Purposeful Presentation

Think of your stall's boundaries as a natural picture frame for your brand story. Just as great art is enhanced by its frame, your products come to life when thoughtfully positioned within your market space. The pop-up marquee or backrack isn't a limitation—it's your canvas. By working with these boundaries, you create a focused visual narrative that draws customers in. Use the structure's edges to create depth, using height variations, strategic layering, and deliberate spacing. Your goal is to guide the customer's eye naturally through your display, making each product feel intentional and inviting. When you embrace the stall's natural parameters, you transform a simple selling space into an immersive brand experience that speaks volumes about your craftsmanship and attention to detail. Boundaries aren't restrictions—they're opportunities to showcase your creativity, professionalism, and unique brand identity.





Market GUIDELINES

- Your stall presentation and product display must always be of a high standard. Think about the visual experience for customers and put your brand's best foot forward.
- Keep your stall clean and tidy. All display fixtures and signs (except for the provided branded stall sign) must be inside your stall and in good condition. Anyone working with you should also be neatly presented.
- Be professional, courteous, and respectful to everyone in The Rocks, including fellow traders, customers, shopkeepers, and contractors.
- Engage and welcome customers—tell them about you, your brand, and your story.
- Keep everything within your allocated stall area, including lighting, product displays, and staff.
- Any strong-smelling goods must be contained to minimize detection outside your stall area. If you are a beauty or wellness stall wishing to light a candle or burn essential oils, you must obtain written approval before each trading period. Burning incense is not permitted.
- Light fixtures must be directed within your stall and should not shine into neighbouring stalls or public spaces.
- Fashion stalls may place one mannequin at the stall's edge (next to a marquee leg); all other displays must remain within your stall boundaries.

What we **PROVIDE**



Stall Structure

Depending on your booking, we will provide one of the following stall structures:

- 2.4m x 2.4m marquee
- 3m x 3m marquee
- 1.8m x 1.8m marquee
- An area inside our communal canopy area, 2.4m x 1.8m

Stall Signs

Each stall will receive a printed sign with your trading name. To order your sign, visit the “Apply for” tab in the booking system and fill out the stall sign request form.

Stall Furniture

If you want to use your own furniture, you must get written approval before trading. Contact the team before investing in stall furniture to ensure it meets requirements.

Tables

We provide one trestle table per stall. You can request a small or large table when making your booking request.

The Rocks Markets’ trestle tables come in two sizes:

- Large 2.4 metres long x 0.8 metres wide x 0.9 metres high
- Small 1.8 metres long x 0.8 metres wide x 0.9 metres high. (This size has adjustable legs.)

Back Racks

Available only in Row 1 and Row 2 of the George Street canopy area. Dimensions: 2.4m (W) x 0.3m (D) x 1.8m (H). They can be used for product display or signage.

What you need to **PROVIDE**



Awnings

To ensure the market aesthetics Traders need to purchase awnings through The Rocks Market. The awning come as a complete kit with arms and fabric.

- 2.4m awning kit: \$135.00
- 3m awning kit: \$150.00

Other awning styles are not permitted.

To purchase, email

therocksmarkets@property.nsw.gov.au.

Table Covers

All tables must be covered on all visible sides. Covers must be:

- Clean (and pressed if needed)
- Neat and in good condition
- No shorter than 5cm from the ground
- Tables or carts designed to be exposed may not require a cover, check with the Markets team before trading.

Merchandise Protection

The Rocks Market provides overhead coverage and are not responsible for protecting your merchandise from the effects of the environment. Because we are an all-weather market, this means that you must always be prepared with protective covering for your stall.

We prefer for you to use clear plastic sheeting to fit the sides of your stall, but plain white or plain black walls are also permitted. If you wish to use any other colours, you will need written approval prior to trading.

Custom Stall Set Ups

Custom setups are welcome but must be approved before trading.

What you need to **KNOW**



Market Equipment Care

- Do not use adhesives, Blue Tac. Use cable ties, blunt hooks, rope, or magnets instead.
- Care must be taken not to puncture market equipment.
- Traders must cover the cost of cleaning, repairs, or replacement if damage occurs.
- Remove all attachments when packing up.

Hanging Items

- The total weight of all hung items must not exceed **15 kg**.
- Waterfall and other hanging devices need to be located inside your stall.

Cleaning

- Leave your stall clean and tidy.
- Take all rubbish with you—public bins are for personal use only.

Signage

- Signage must complement the market's character and your brand.
- We discourage plastic laminated signage and recommend well-designed commercial signs.
- All stall signage must be approved before use.
- Food traders may have menu boards or specials boards, but these must stay within the stall.
- Prohibited signage:
 - Third-party advertising
 - Sale, clearance, or markdown signs
 - Free-standing signs (e.g., A-frames, feather banners, pull-up banners)
 - Signs restricting legal activities (e.g., "No Photography")
 - Old, dirty, chipped, ripped, or cracked signs

Packaging & Sustainability

The NSW Government's Plastic Reduction and Circular Economy Act 2021 bans certain single-use plastics. The Rocks Market is committed to sustainability. We encourage traders to use innovative and eco-friendly packaging and signage solutions.

VISUAL Merchandising

Colour Blocking: Transforming Your Stall into a Visual Symphony

When in doubt, colour block—and for good reason. This isn't just a design trick; it's a powerful visual communication strategy that speaks directly to the human eye. Colour blocking is the art of grouping items by colour, creating a sense of harmony, intentionality, and visual impact that can transform a simple product display into a magnetic, storytelling experience.

Why does colour blocking work? Our brains are hardwired to seek patterns and order. By organizing your products into deliberate colour zones, you create:

- Instant visual clarity
- A sense of curated professionalism
- An emotional connection with your customers
- A memorable brand experience

Imagine your stall as a living colour palette. Whether you're selling handcrafted goods, fashion, or food, colour blocking can elevate your presentation from ordinary to extraordinary. Group similar tones together—soft pastels, vibrant jewel tones, or elegant neutrals. Create visual “chapters” within your display that guide the customer's eye and create a narrative through colour.

Pro tip: Don't just think about individual colours, consider how they interact. A carefully curated colour story can communicate your brand's mood, quality, and ethos faster than any words ever could.

The Rule of Three

Create visual interest through grouping. Arrange products in clusters of three—it's a design principle that naturally draws the eye. Think of it as visual storytelling: each group can tell a mini narrative about your brand, with varying heights, textures, and complementary items.

Height and Layering

Transform a flat display into a dynamic landscape:

- Use risers, stands, or boxes to create depth
- Vary product heights to create visual movement
- Ensure the tallest items are at the back, shortest at the front
- Create a natural “flow” that guides customers' eyes through your display

The Power of Negative Space

Don't fear empty space—embrace it. Negative space:

- Prevents visual clutter
- Highlights your key products
- Creates a sense of luxury and intentionality
- Allows each item to breathe and be appreciated

Texture and Contrast

Mix textures to create intrigue:

- Combine smooth and rough surfaces
- Use contrasting materials (soft fabrics with hard ceramics)
- Create tactile interest that invites closer inspection

Seasonal and Thematic Styling

Tell a story beyond your products:

- Create mini narratives with your display
- Use subtle props that hint at seasons or themes
- Rotate your styling to keep regular customers engaged

Lighting Matters

Even in a market setting, lighting can transform your stall:

- Use subtle, focused lighting to highlight key products
- Create shadows and depth
- Avoid harsh, direct light that can wash out your items
- Make sure your lighting is not shining into patrons' eyes

The 45-Degree Rule

Angle some of your products slightly—about 45 degrees—to create:

- A more dynamic display
- Easier product viewing
- A sense of intentional curation

Visual Hierarchy

Guide your customers' attention:

- Place your most compelling or high-margin items at eye level
- Use the “beacon” technique: one standout piece that draws initial attention
- Create a visual journey from one product to another

Pro Tip: Tell a Story

Your display is more than a collection of items—it's a narrative. Each arrangement should whisper (or shout) the unique story of your brand, inviting customers to lean in and discover more.

Remember: Great visual merchandising doesn't happen by accident. It's a deliberate, thoughtful process of creating desire, telling a story, and making your customers feel something special.



Key presentation principles

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1

Visual Storytelling

Your stall is your brand's stage. Every element—from your table cover to your product arrangement—should:

- Reflect your unique identity
- Create an inviting atmosphere
- Tell your brand's story at a glance

2

Boundaries and Professionalism

Think of your stall as a carefully curated showcase:

- Stay within your allocated space
- Keep displays neat and intentional
- Ensure everything visible is part of your presentation

3

Customer Experience

Your stall should welcome customers like they're entering a small, magical world:

- Engage with warmth and authenticity
- Share your brand's story
- Make customers feel special



Practical presentation GUIDELINES

Stall Setup

- Use the provided marquee or backrack as your visual framework
- Keep displays clean, tidy, and purposeful
- Hide storage items, boxes, and equipment from view

Signage and Branding

- Use professional, well-designed signs
- Avoid cluttered or dated signage
- Obtain market approval for custom signs

Visual Chaos Repels Customers

- Messy, cluttered displays create visual confusion
- Customers feel overwhelmed, not invited
- Your brand gets lost in the disorder

Professionalism Matters

- Traders who respect boundaries look more professional
- Customers associate neat displays with quality products
- Cohesive market appearance builds trust

The power of INTENTIONAL DISPLAY

Curate, Don't Clutter

- Every item should have a purpose
- Create visual hierarchy
- Use strategic spacing to highlight products
- Remember, if its visible it's for sale

Small Space, Big Impact Strategies

- Use vertical displays
- Rotate product selections
- Invest in smart, compact merchandising solutions
- Focus on presentation quality over quantity

A Trader's MINDSET SHIFT

Think of your stall as a carefully curated gallery, not a clearance sale. Your goal is to create an inviting, focused experience that tells your brand's story clearly and compellingly.

Last WORDS

Excellent stall presentation and visual merchandising make all the difference – customers are enticed by a beautiful setting, and that translates to better sales for you!



To keep everything looking spick and span from time to time we may ask you to remove, repair, adjust or replace items on your stall.

Your stall set up is your unique opportunity to show your customers who you are at a glance so pay attention to it. Your set up need to be eye catching both inside side and out. Don't have anything on showing to break the illusion. No storage bags, boxes or equipment stuffed beside or behind the stalls, it creates the wrong impression, and we will ask you to move them.

It's also important that food stalls maintain scrupulous hygiene, at all times. It not just about adhering to the food regulations, you are on show from the moment the first customer arrives.

Styling should complement the product and choosing props that are relevant to your brand is key. The presentation of your stand always is paramount to maintain nature of our Market and to support our trader community in creating a market we can all be proud of.

By following these guidelines, you contribute to a beautiful and cohesive market experience that benefits all traders. Let's work together to make The Rocks Markets a place we're all proud of!

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