

FRONT-END OVERHAUL



Creating Room in All the Right Places (Part 2)

by Gabe Trahan

Old fixtures are diamonds in the rough, or in this case, on the wall. We all have them. Anyone who has purchased fixtures knows that the fixtures themselves are reasonably priced — it's the shelves that can drain your budget. For that reason, many turn to inexpensive slatwall panels for their choice of wall fixtures. Though slatwall can be a thrifty way of adding fixtures to a wall, it can be limiting.

Merchandising with slatwall limits you to slatwall hooks and small floating shelving. Here's how you can repurpose some shelving, help your front end look better, and save some big bucks.

What you see in Photo 2 is the marriage of an older wall fixture (Photo 1) with sleek-looking slatwall. Here is what you do: Strip down the older fixture, recycling the pegboard and inside metal connectors. Keeping the base shelf segments is an option. In the photos above, we did not use the base shelf units. What you will repurpose from the older fixtures are the uprights and the shelves.

Step 1: Position and plumb an upright vertically and attach it to the wall.

Step 2: Using a shelf for spacing, position and plumb a second upright and temporarily attach it to the wall.

Step 3: Check your spacing by attaching a shelf into the two uprights. If the shelf goes in with no problem, measure the inside distance between the two uprights (for example: 47-5/8 inches).

Step 4: Mark on the wall the placement of the temporarily attached upright and remove it from the wall.

Step 5: Cut two pieces of slatwall 47-5/8 inches, and



Photo 1

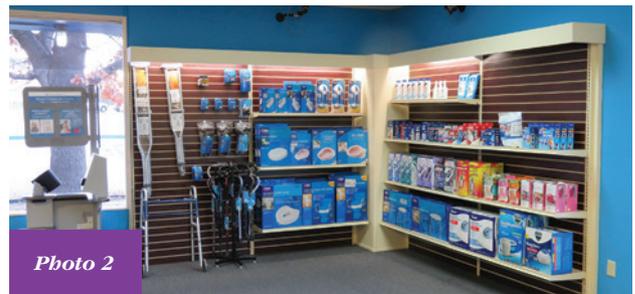


Photo 2

fasten them on the wall, cutting the top slatwall to the length of the top of the upright.

Step 6: Lightly attach a second upright to the wall. You should now have slatwall position between two uprights.

Step 7: Check your shelving for ease of installation, then permanently install a second upright.

Step 8: Continue the pattern until your new wall fixture is complete.

Finding and hoping studs line up with uprights and slatwall can be frustrating (been there, done that). Install inexpensive wood strapping along the wall first, and then fasten both uprights and slatwall to the strapping. Strapping itself consists of 1-inch by 3-inch pieces of lumber. It comes in many different lengths and is inexpensive. If you are looking for something a bit more rugged, then purchase pine or hardwood strapping. Good luck and send me your before and after photos. ■

Gabe Trahan is NCPA's senior director of store operations and marketing. Trahan uses 40 years of front-end merchandising experience to help NCPA members increase store traffic and improve profits. Visit www.ncpanet.org/feo and follow him on Twitter @NCPAGabe for additional tips.

Photography: Irena Weidmann of P&S Rexall Pharmacy in Corsicana, Texas.