

COUPLE FRIENDLY

Catering to Couples



Sex toys are becoming more mainstream in today's culture. Thanks to popular media such as Fifty Shades of Grey, sex toys appearing on popular TV series such as Bob's Burgers and Grace and Frankie and adult stores advertising themselves as "couple friendly", more and more people are opening up to the idea of adding adult products to their sexual repertoire. What does it mean for your store to be couple friendly and how can you as an adult retailer widen your demographic and increase sales by catering to this audience? A good starting point is to realize and acknowledge that there is not one single type of couple.

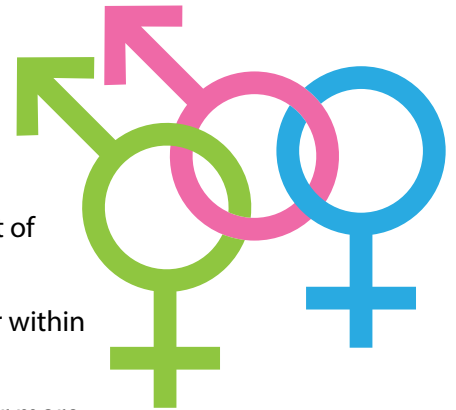
Healthy relationships come in all different shapes and sizes. When a customer enters your store, it is important not to make assumptions about the type of relationships they might be involved in. In society there is still judgment placed on individuals in relationships that are not the conventional two person committed relationship. There are several types of relationships that your customers may be involved in. Below are the four most common relationship styles that you are likely to encounter in your retail space.

MONOGAMY is the most normalized type of relationship in western society and is defined as being in an exclusive relationship with one sexual and/or romantic partner.

POLYAMORY which literally means "many lovers", is a relationship with multiple sexually or romantically committed relationships at the same time with the consent of all those involved.

OPEN RELATIONSHIPS are relationships that permit more than one sexual partner within an established set of boundaries that are agreed upon by all parties.

POLYFIDELITY, sometimes referred to as "group-marriage", is composed of three or more individuals who live together and share responsibilities (financial, housework, etc.) in the same way that a relationship with two committed individuals function.



“Can I help you find anything for you and your partner?”

Because it is impossible to know someone's relationship status from a first glance, it is helpful to use language in your store that is affirming and inclusive. Instead of asking a female customer if she is interested in something for herself or her boyfriend/husband, say "Can I help you find anything for you and your partner?" or "Are you looking for toys that can be used with someone you want to spend time with?" Using inclusive language will

reduce the chances of coming across as judgmental or alienating and will also allow your customers to feel valued and more comfortable telling you about their current relationship style. With this you can gain the ability to affirm, connect, support and help them find toys that are suitable for them regardless of their relationship status.



One way your store can set itself apart from other adult retailers in your community is to have sexual health resources on hand to lead customers to if they have questions or concerns that you may not be able to answer. Having a list of local sex positive medical professionals and relationship counselors that specialize in different types of relationship styles will give your customers a resource and community they can go to to connect with others and ask questions.

Through merchandising, a store can also be couple friendly. Merchandising your store in a way that has displays for different types of play and how to engage safely will show your customers the whole package for what they want to engage in. For example, setting up an anal display with different types of anal toys, strap-ons, lubes, condoms and educational resources about how to have safe anal play will help couples find everything they need for their next sexual adventure.

By being aware of different relationship styles, your store can merchandise to be inclusive of everyone. Being conscious of your language and not assuming someone's relationship status can help customers feel more comfortable. By catering to different relationship styles, you can work towards building a sex positive and inclusive store that will make people comfortable to shop in, helping create repeat and sustainable business for the future.

