

A Study On Store Concept Of Visual Merchandising In Fashion Retail

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ABSTRACT:

This paper presents a study conducted to identify the impact of *visual merchandising* elements, on *consumer buying behavior*, to identify the most appealing *visual merchandising* elements. The purpose of visual merchandising is to attract, engage and motivate the customer towards making a purchase, where it creates an impact on the consumer buying behavior. In *fashion marketing*, communications one of the most important tool is the retail environment. *Visual merchandising* is the physical representation and communication cue of the brand or retailer, through the creative grouping and presentation of the merchandise. The world of *visual merchandising* is all about fascinating tool of display which help in transformation of shoppers into stoppers, walk bys into walk ins and passers- by into passers-who- buy. Its is the art of implementing effective design ideas to increase the store traffic and the store sales .creating an attractive VM can draw the maximum amount of the *consumer* in , promote a sale of the slow moving product , announce of a sale or welcome a season .

***Key words:**

Visual merchandising, consumer , buying behavior , fashion marketing

Visual Merchandising

VISUAL MERCHANDISING is the creative hands of the company that set its environments and merchandise with creative displays that helps the store to sell its merchandise.

VISUAL MERCHANDISING two words combined to the most important part of fashion retailing .The meaning of the visual merchandising is very simple where visual is “the sense of sight” and merchandising is “marketing practice” in which the brand form of one product or service is used to sell the product . Planning is very important is VM
→“PLAN”

P = PURPOSE

L = LOCATION (planogram)

A = ATTENTION

N = NUMBERS (quantity)

Developing a good vm requires a detail study on the design basics , display basics and floor plans. “3dimentional displays” is based on these basics . Retail industry practice this strategy to have maximize sales of goods.

“Floor plans” are nothing but “*arrangement plans or plans made for the displays*”. In visual merchandising we deal with a term called “potential customer” and it is known that the displays which are made in a manner that’ll attract the potential customer. Internal and

external decorative displays of the store should be promising ,should be kept and maintained according to the time and period .

Purpose Of A Vm:

Main purpose of the VM is to “**attract , engage and motivate the customers**” towards making a purchase and to increase the sales by promoting the product which makes the “Passive Looker” into “Active Buyer”. The main cause of the VM is to promote the store image and to uplift the knowledge of the customer about the product.

Importance:

Visual Merchandising is an specific retailing strategy that increases the attractiveness of a product and also increase the sales and Brand Personality. It plays an important role in the look, feel and culture of a “BRAND”. The style of VM should employee the customer to experience the brand. It should display the products which we have in our pattern list only.

Visual merchandising success factors:

Visual Displays should be set in the hot spot of a store which is easily viewable for public. Lighting and Balance plays an important role in effective VM. Right signage must be used in right area. The way we present the product tells about the BRAND. Use the free space wisely and engage the customer.

DISPLAY BASICS:

- **RULE OF THREE**
 - 3 is a magical number were people are visually engaged when they see a group of three items. This display encourages the easy eye movement and also gathers more details. This makes our mind to pay more attention and look more carefully at display
- **THE PYRAMID PRINCIPLE**
 - It is an Triangular Display were the attractive product is placed in the center and other products above and down, thus it creates an attractive and creative focal point.
- **PRICE POINTS**
 - Key products are kept with a clear price tag or larger sign that'll draw the customer's attention. Advertisement in such way would be made where the customer will coil walk towards the display.

DESIGN BASICS:

- **BEGIN WITH TARGET CUSTOMERS**
 - Know the taste of the target customer and select the product according to it by using the feedback books and customer data. Treat the customer as the KING and Queen of the store.
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- **FIND INSPIRATION**
 - Find the inspirations which engages and encourages the customer to make an purchase. Get some inspiration through the news papers, social medias, advertisements.
- **SHOW DONT TELL**
 - Through our display people should experience the fell of a product. The display should tell a story about the brand in such a way a VM should be made.

Principles Of Design:

Visual Displays is one of the most creative, exciting, exhilarating and fun responsibilities of the sales promotion division. Once after the selection of fixture, mannequins and other material the VM is made that enhances the retailer image. The principles of design plays an vital role in creating an effective VM. The principles of design are as follow

- **BALANCE**
 - The concept BALANCE gives the impression of the equal distribution of weight.
- **SYMMETRIC BALANCE**
 - Perfect, Formal/ Symmetrical Balance involves the placement of identical items on both sides of an imaginary line.
- **ASYMMETRICAL BALANCE**
 - Informal / asymmetrical balance is more relaxed and trimmers can use it to show off their design talents. two small items on one side might be balanced with one large item on another side.
- **EMPHASIS**
 - Every installation requires an area of interest that draws the shopper's eye. emphasis can be achieved by using variety of techniques as follow Size, contrast, unique placement and repetition.
- **PROPOTION**
 - The principle involves the comparative relationship of the different design elements to each other. It is particular important that these elements are properly scaled to their space. They must make the certain that the manniquins and other props enhancing the merchandising featured on or near them.
- **RHYTHM**
 - The movement of eye from one part to another part is known as RHYTHM. This is an extremely important design principle. It can be made using the Radation or Gradation of Lines, Colors, Size and Shape.
- **HARMONY**
 - Harmony is defined as a neat and pleasurable arrangement of a product in a display. it is achieved when all the elements of a design work well and outcome is pleasing

Signage and Graphics:

Signage and Graphics are becoming increasingly important ,these are use to attract the immediate attention of the public. With an minimum expense retailers quickly convey their fashion message to the passerby.

Role of Signages:

Signage are the simple instruction given by the retailers to the customer, to easily locate their destination. These boards are an effective medium of communication between the shopper and the customer.

A customer can easily locate the store with the help of the signage .It gives all the necessary information about the store. Signage attracts and engage the customers into the store. It helps in creating a “unique identity” and also promotes the “Brand Image” of the store.

- **SIGNAGE**
 - OUTDOOR SIGNAGE.
 - INFORMAL SIGNAGE.
 - PERSUASIVE SIGNAGE
 - ADA(Americans With Disability act) SIGNAGE.
 - MAT SIGNAGE.

Graphics:

The tone of the store was shown through the retail graphics. The graphics should attract, engage and motivate the customers to make an purchase. It should motive the customer to experience the product. It should tell a story about our brand and product.

Types Of Display:

The style of arrangements of merchandise is known as display ,which makes the “PASSIVE LOOKER” into “ACTIVE BUYER”. There are different types of displays.

DISPLAY

One Item Display
Assortment Display
Line Of Goods
Related Merchandise

One item display –

Only the main product is displayed . Only one item with different colors or shapes are displayed.

Line of goods –

Similar goods are displayed .

Related merchandise –

One main merchandise is chose and the items related to that merchandise are displayed .

Assortment –

The unrelated products are displayed ,which creates a new theme.

Types Of Display Settings:

VM are made on basis of display setting .There are different types of display setting , we should select a display setting based on the merchandise we have in our plan list.

i)Realistic display setting –

The depiction of the exact environment in the displays should be made. It should be a balanced display. It is an miniature model of the exact depiction of a room, area or other location.

ii)Environmental display setting –

Merchandise presentation that shows the assortment of various related items in a display, it gives an harmonized effect. Here the background and foreground color plays an vital role.

iii)Semi realistic display setting –

“Vignette setting” that presents only the essence and the rest is left to the active imagination of the shopper . Gives more importance to the product .

iv)Fantasy–

It can be detailed or suggestive as the time and the budget permitted. This is an extraordinarily a creative VM.

v)Abstract –

Least amount of setting is always more effective. Most difficult type of display setting where the main product is concentrated and no principle is followed.

vi)Build up display –

It is a balanced display. Here the main product and the back droop is given more importance.

Windows

Windows are the basic requirement in the list of the store after the store plans . Majority of the store windows are made up fibre plastic that gives a clean and nice display just the same as glass.

Store Fronts: (Window)

Angled store front –

Angled backwards to the entrance and group of products should be placed parallel to the pavement.

Arcade store front-

The door is set back from the windows and a part of the display is facing the pavement .

Corner front-

The window here wraps around the corner of the building , so it is easily viewable by the passer-by.

Circular store front –

Similar to straight front but it is in the circular line.

Parallel to side walk –

Run parallel to side walk way and the back is closed to separate it from the store area.

Mall Store Front:

Shopping centers replacing the main street in many towns and cities mostly have straight fronts usually with a CENTRAL OPENING and windows to either side or an entrance to one side and window to the right or at the left side of the opening

OPEN façade-

Interior must be more attractive because no backdrops are used. The internal and the external of the store is viewable. Here only the casual mannequins are use and it is an old form of VM.

GLASS façade –

It is used for small items . It is a miniature window display. Lengthwise direction must be used and it should be placed in the eye level.

CLOSED façade-

Only one angle is visible. Back side is closed. In this type of display we can create a number of new style and different environment.

Store Interiors:

In store VM is used to attract the customers attention and also plays an vital role in decision making and buying process.

Focal Points –

It is an key factor in creating an attractive retail displays. It should be placed in the highly visible area so that it attracts the customer immediately .the displays in hotspot should be very attractive.

Island Displays-

It is an in-store display only made during the special occasions. The ISLAND displays should be made in a form , that it should present a special story about the brand.

Risers And Platforms -

It is an elevation made for easy visibility of merchandise to the customers.

The Runway-

These are the divisions made in vm to create it as a separate display.

The Catwalks-

These are platforms used during the ramp to show the new innovative garments.

Cases And Display Cases-

These cases are used to display the small ,specific ,costly and precious items.

Demonstration Cubes –

These are also similar to the display cases but it is mostly used in museums.

Ledges –

It is a fixture which is used to keep the merchandise and it should be at least 5 feet in height.

Fascia-

It is an horizontal board or panel ,attached to a wall or a partition which is closer to the ceiling.

T- Walls-

It is like an extra wall attached to a normal wall to get an attractive interior.

Attention Drawing Devices:

Without these devices the displays would not attractive ,it would be boring.

Color:

color is said to be the king of the display that's always made and it is said that color always deals with the emotions and is the only thing that is the most effective way of producing the window display.

Monochromatic –

shades of one particular color will be used in the display

separate-

It is an mixed component of contrastic color.

Stand Alone –

only one color will be highlighted .

VIBGYOR-

VIOLET
INDIGO
BLUE
GREEN
YELLOW
ORANGE
RED

Using this VIBGYOR concept the merchandise is arranged to give an different and attractive look. This concept is also used in vertical and horizontal color blocking .

Level Grouping:

Level grouping also plays a major role in displaying settings, it means grouping the products based on

- Division
- Department
- category
- Sub category
- Brand

Lighting:

Lighting is one of the most important thing a store should have to view the merchandise more effectively in an attractive way

i)Ambient lighting:

Used for maximum overall visibility .eg: tube lights.

ii) Accent lighting:

Enhances or highlights a particular product feature .eg: focus lights.

iii) Task lighting :

Specific surface or area to provide illumination for visual focus.eg: timing lights.

iv) Decorative lighting :

Adding beauty to the store.eg: serial lights.

Lighting on a open back:

Lighting on a closed back window should be strong, bright enough to attract , few sharp spots should be used , focusing the lights away from the glass and directly down on to the merchandise.

Greater scope of attraction when filters are used eg: blue , green , red

LIGHTING ON A CLOSED BACK WINDOW:

It is an enclosed window display and it has an great scope for magical lighting effects, can use certain filters and lighting to create an texture.

VM CONCEPTS:

i)Nostalgia:

Reminder of the “good old” days or event through a display

Eg : Retro was always popular .

ii)Motion:

The motion mannequins and motion products can be used for attraction.

iii)Surprise and shock:

Unexpected always commands attention , keep it un offensive.

PROPS:

Endless variety available as purchased or found objects ,Made special by how they are used, not how much they cost .Imagination can give life to even the most ordinary of props. Two types of props: functional and decorative

i) Choice And Placement Of Props:

Choose just one theme for the props in each window. Remember the merchandise must be the focal point of the window or the display ,too many props tend to distract both attention and the communication. Props can be simple as well as elaborate. A prop can be anything.

Prop should be in such a way that they can be easily removed or added from the window

Props like motor scooters, antiques, fine art etc often can be loaded from the vendors for recognition in the store window.

ii) Handling The Mannequin:

A mannequin may well be the most valuable asset in the store. Mannequin is said to be the “silent salesperson” of the store, it speaks the clearest fashion message on behalf of the store. A mannequin will stand tirelessly for hours and days in the same place, in the same position and with same attitude, always smiling, fresh and pleasant. It does not gain or lose weight or inches; it does not get colds or headaches; it does not ask for time off or extra pay for any increase in the cost – of living!

However, mannequins do require “love” and attention. They should be carefully handled not manhandled. A mannequin is usually constructed to take a certain amount of wear and tear, but it can chip, crack or be disfigured. Significantly, locations of mannequins should be interchanged once in a while so as not to bring visual fatigue to customers

iii) Tips To Handle Mannequins:

Always change the mannequin garments in the changing or in the trial room, display with the right props and accessories. Ensure the display garment is next to or near to the display point

Arrange garments size wise and color wise on fixtures nearby. Ensure the availability of the merchandise displayed on the mannequin(s).

iv) Types Of Mannequins:

iv.i)Realistic:

These mannequins are for clothing that is best in the display with faces painted using hi fashion make-up or other real details like eyelashes etc.

iv.ii)Semi – realistic:

The mannequins do not have as much as detailing as realistic mannequins but they do have all the basic human features

iv.iii)Abstract :

Mannequins that represent the human body only in broad strokes are considered as abstract .They resemble human only vaguely and look more like robots

iv.iv)Partial forms or Dress forms:

These mannequin type bodices for fitted dress

iv.v)Alternatives:

Hang rods or fiberglass forms are often used to display merchandise . They do not distract a viewer from the merchandise.

v) Lighting A Mannequin:

In – store mannequins should be lit with an intensity that is there to five times greater than the ambient lighting in the store. This can be done using incandescent flood – light and spotlights. The mannequins face should be lit from, most desirably, three angles – or at least two angles to avoid shadows.

vi) Positioning Of Mannequins And Props:

Positioning of mannequins, with the props coming together to form a triangular shape is more effective than positioning them in a straight line.

This arrangement forms a triangle at the base of the displayed items. An upright triangle can be used effectively to set up a group of mannequins. This triangle is the highest point vis-à-vis the group of mannequins at the center.

ALL I DO CAN SELL (AIDCS):

A display is created to increase sales.

A –attention

I – interest

D -desire

C -convince

S –sale

Attention:

Placing the display on a podium; arranging a contrasting backdrop; highlighting the display with accent lighting

Interest:

Creating a display ‘story’ with relevant props that not only complements each other but also relevant to the target customers

Desire:

Just like a good advertisement sells dreams, good visual merchandising sells personality or image

Convince:

Correct and concise ticketing, highlighting the salient features of the product and the price point.

Sell:

By following the four main principles of display, in the following order;

- Attract
- Create interest
- Create desire
- Convince

“Lifetime” of the customer depends on the efficiency of the market and customer having the good opinion about the store , where effectiveness of the visual merchandising speaks everything!

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