



International Journal of Home Science

ISSN: 2395-7476
IJHS 2017; 3(3): 42-45
© 2017 IJHS
www.homesciencejournal.com
Received: 19-07-2017
Accepted: 20-08-2017

Beena Santosh
Assitant Professor
Textile and Apparel Design
Institute of Fashion Technology,
Faculty of Family and
Community Sciences, the
Maharaja Sayajirao University
of Baroda, Vadodara, Gujarat,
India

Dr. Madhu Sharan
Associate Professor
Clothing and Textiles Dept,
Faculty of Family and
Community Sciences, the
Maharaja Sayajirao University
of Baroda, Vadodara, Gujarat,
India

Correspondence
Beena Santosh
Assitant Professor
Textile and Apparel Design
Institute of Fashion Technology,
Faculty of Family and
Community Sciences, the
Maharaja Sayajirao University
of Baroda, Vadodara, Gujarat,
India

Visual merchandising: An effective tool for fashion retailing

Beena Santosh and Dr. Madhu Sharan

Abstract

Fashion is imperative part of our lives. Persistent change is what defines fashion. This change has been accelerated by the changing scenario of retailing. Over the years there have been dramatic developments in the field of Fashion retailing. Now the trend has become to bring the customer close to the merchandise. Fashion stores are dressed to call customers, and visual merchandising plays a major role in that. In present times, consumers are not influenced anymore from the salespersons but they are influenced by the showcases, a product of the merchandiser. Store image and shopping environment for fashion stores is a significant determinant to spend time in the store and to spend more money than planned. On the other hand, retail store elements such as colour, lighting and V.M. have an immediate effect on the buying decision making process. The elements such as flat screen videos, lighting, colour and composition create a unique atmosphere and excite the sense of consumers.

In today's competitive retail environment, fashion retailers struggle in order to increase their sales and to carry their brands to the wider masses. The best way to achieve this purpose is to consider the significance of visual merchandising. The exterior of the buildings and their both exterior and interior designs can help to be recognized of the fashion brand.

In today's fashion retailing business, Visual Merchandising plays an important role to bring shoppers inside the store and make them purchase clothes. In this article author has showcased an overview of visual merchandising and built a relation in between visual merchandising and retailing. This will help in judicious use of the element and components of visual merchandising for effective retailing.

Keywords: fashion retailing, visual merchandising, customer, components of visual merchandising

Introduction

"It's not what you sell that matters, but what matters is how you sell"

In this modern Era the present competitive situation in all the businesses are characterized by a huge cut throat competition and almost at any time the companies and retailers are ready to pay for differentiated merchandising. Fashion retailers could not depend on products, price, promotion, and place to win the competition among the fashion retailers. Similarity of merchandise is coercing the retailer to focus on visual merchandising to improve the desirability of products,

Once customers walk in, it is but imperative to ensure that they enjoy their first encounter with the store. After all, repeat visits will only happen if a customer's first visit is a memorable one. The logical arrangement of counters, with clear passageways allows for easy access to merchandise. Rather than getting lost in the big space that most large stores are, the customer feels more in control. Here comes the role of Visual Merchandising. Visual merchandising has come a long way from stock piling a table in front to live models posing in windows. Individual creativity, innovation, improvement in technology and artistic flair has played a major role in merchandise display. Visual merchandising can encompass all aspects of total visual impact of the store and its merchandise (Garvey 2010).

Alexendra Roach (2010) in his book „The Golden rules of Visual Merchandising“ defines “Visual Merchandising as promotion of goods through attractive and engaging product display design to encourage the sale of a product or service. VM doesn't just refer to a special promotion display; it refers to the presentation of an entire store. Display or visual merchandising is „showing“ merchandise and concepts at their very best, with the purpose of making sale. Today's creative and talented retailers are using this upcoming art to breathe in

new life into their store products. Passion for design and creativity are essential to be a good visual merchandiser. A perfect design process and the ability to create ideas that are different are required. Awareness of happenings in fashion world is needed so as to keep up-to-date with the dynamics of the market constantly. Visual Merchandising is the art of presentation whereby Visual merchandisers conceptualize designs and implements windows and in-store displays for retail stores.

2. Need for Visual Merchandising.

Today's fashion market is highly competitive and the constant need to 'refresh' product ranges means that there is an inevitable move by many retailers to extend the number of 'seasons', that is, the frequency with which the entire merchandise within a store is changed. With the emergence of small collections of merchandise fashion retailers are encouraging consumers to visit their stores more frequently with the idea of 'Here Today, Gone Tomorrow'. Creating an attractive product display can draw the customer in, promote a slow-moving item, announce a sale or welcome a season.

Visual Merchandising helps in:

- Highlighting a merchandise to sell it
- Selling by showing and promoting
- Introducing and explaining new products
- Giving ideas on how to use it
- Encouraging the customer to enter and shop
- Establishing, promoting, and enhancing the store's visual image.
- Entertaining customers and enhancing their shopping experience.

Visual merchandising displays use creative techniques in order to save both the sales person's and the shopper's time by making shopping effortless. The visual merchandising display process is often referred to as the "silent sales person"



3.2 Mannequins

While traditional mannequins are still often featured, many stores have replaced them with, to name a few, wiremannequins, soft sculptured types, stylized forms, and motorized models. With the increasing cost of traditional mannequins, many merchants have opted for forms that represent mannequins and are created by visual merchandisers.

3.3 Props and Materials

The list of materials and props used by today's visual

merchandisers seems to be endless. Although conventional storebought props are available at various resource centers, more and more retailers are making use of things found in nature (such as tree branches, rocks, and sand) and found objects once reserved for the junk pile (such as old chairs, worn picture frames, and rusty farm tools). With fresh coats of paint and new finishes, found display objects can be used dramatically in displays. Not only do they provide for effective visual presentations, they also enable budgets to go further. Antiques and antique reproductions are also being used extensively.

3. The Components of Visual Merchandising

In order to effectively differentiate one retail facility from another, and bring the retail premises to its highest level of visual appeal, a variety of different components must be successfully coordinated. Visual merchandisers must be constantly aware of what's taking place in each of these visual segments and must be prepared to make any necessary changes.

The major components of visual merchandising include:

3.1 Store Design

There is no longer a typical store design. Merchants employ the services of architects and designers who, along with visual merchandisers, create environments that are both unique and functional. The space that was once allocated to store windows has been minimized and replaced with more selling floor space. In place of the traditional windows, large panes of glass are used to allow shoppers to see a large portion of the store. The interiors range from natural settings using stone and hand-hewn woods to elegant environments with atriums, majestic staircases, marble flooring, and other touches of grandeur. Many of the major department stores are reducing the appearance of vast selling floors with the construction of individual shops or boutiques to house their special designer collections. This approach gives the customer the feeling of shopping in smaller stores rather than the cold feeling of the large department store.



merchandisers seems to be endless. Although conventional storebought props are available at various resource centers, more and more retailers are making use of things found in nature (such as tree branches, rocks, and sand) and found objects once reserved for the junk pile (such as old chairs, worn picture frames, and rusty farm tools). With fresh coats of paint and new finishes, found display objects can be used dramatically in displays. Not only do they provide for effective visual presentations, they also enable budgets to go further. Antiques and antique reproductions are also being used extensively.



3.4 Lighting

Lighting is another elements of visual merchandising. The choice of the right lighting in fashion stores should be well considered. There are numerous products that offer many choices for shopping environment. Lighting deals with create

an ambiance and make environments visually pleasing. The right utilization of light is highly important for shopping environments. Lighting in retail environments encourage people to stay longer in that retail environment and increase the sales numbers”.



3.5 Graphics and Signage

Although traditional two-dimensional signs are still used abundantly, signage and graphics have taken on new looks. Airbrushed murals celebrating local landmarks, multilevel murals featuring a variety of montages, animated cartoon characters that move throughout the signage, backlit

transparencies, light walls, prismatic displays, and digitally produced huge photographic blowups that rival outdoor billboards are just a few of the exciting approaches now used in retail environments. Electronics continue to pervade retailers’ premises.



3.6 Point of Sale Material

POS (point of sale) Material display is also an advertising technique to promote the brands of the firms. POSM Display also plays very crucial role when a company launches a new product in the market. Even POSM Display remains short term but it creates quick response of the customer at the POS about the Specific Product. Sometimes, Companies execute

the bombastic POSM Display in the Market to advertise their short term promotional schemes to increase the sales of the products. This type is cost effective as compare to others methods of Merchandising. Posters, buntings, banners, wobblers, danglers, pamphlets, shelf talkers and strips are included in the point of Sale Material

3.7 Sound Usage

Sound is not a visual element, but it is being used to enhance visual presentation. Professionals in the field agree that shoppers can turn away from visual elements, but sound is inescapable. Sound is being used abundantly by retailers today to set moods and give shoppers news. This varies for light instrumental music to old time classics to new age trends.

4. Impact of Visual Merchandising on Customer Choices

Consumer behaviour studies have confirmed that the lure of a beautifully done up show window and a tastefully decorated facade, more often than not, prove irresistible as they walk in to check out what is on offer. It also ensures exclusivity since no two stores should look alike. Besides, when the mood and theme of such displays change at regular intervals, it makes certain that the store remains top of mind. Loyal customers have often been known to anxiously wait for the next display. 'Stickiness' in retail formats is also ensured by the imaginative use of colors, lighting, space furniture and visual elements with regard to in-store displays. Once customers walk in, it is but imperative to ensure that they enjoy their first encounter with the store. After all, repeat visits will only happen if a customer's first visit is a memorable one. The logical arrangement of counters, with clear passageways allows for easy access to merchandise. Rather than getting lost in the maze that most large stores are, the customer feels more in control. Space is allocated to various product categories taking into account the number of products stocked and shelves/counter space requirement. Studies indicate that a retailer has roughly seven seconds to capture the attention of a passing customer. The following elements combine to form a distinctive image that not only reaches out and grabs the customer's attention, but also makes a positive impression within those precious seconds. The image makers are: an identifiable store name, a powerful visual trademark, an unmistakable storefront, an inviting entrance and a consistent and compelling store look.

5. Conclusion

Fast moving fashion or fast fashion describe a scenario where fashion retailers implement a range of strategies in order to adequately meet market demand by ensuring that they have the right product, in the right place, in the right time. Fast fashion brand as well as local retail fashion brands offer many kinds of fashion products such as clothes, bags, shoes, and accessories, drive to global fashion trends. Fast fashion clothing always follows up and creating season trend, new product to the store with amazing speed, and window display transformation is usually two times a week. Shopping has transformed from necessity to an adventure. It is more of an experience and opportunity for celebration.

Retailers want their stores to attract consumers by assisting them to find the merchandise they desire and to motivate them to make planned, unplanned and impulse purchases, and to ultimately provide them with enjoyable shopping experiences. If the visual merchandising displays do not have this desired effect on consumers, the question whether it has any value for retailers to spend time and money on these visual displays arises. Without communicating, it won't be completed to sell a product. This refers to have an image of any brand. Right image is very important for brands. Visual merchandising is accepted as the art of presentation. It puts the merchandiser in focus and informs the customers. It also creates a desire to the products or brands.

Visual merchandising displays is used to great effect in retail outlets to carry out different functions such as to assist sales, to aid the retail strategies, to converse with consumers and to assist in communicating the apparel retailers' brand image. Retailers realize that the way in which they use visual merchandising displays has the power to create images about the products in the mind of the consumers – images that will affect future support and perceptions of the product and brand.

6. References

1. Bhatti K, Latif S. The Impact of Visual Merchandising on Consumer Impulse Buying Behavior, *Eurasian Journal of Business and Management*.
2. Diamond J, Diamond E. *Contemporary Visual Merchandising and Environmental Design*, Fourth Edition, Prentice Hall. Copyright © by Pearson Education, Inc, 2007.
3. Bhasin HK. The Unified Global Feel of Indian Retail – Visual Merchandising the Indian Way, *IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)*-ISSN: 2278-487X, p-ISSN: 2319-7668, 26-31.
4. Dr. Lanjewar J. Visual Merchandising and Consumer Behaviour, *Sai Om Journal of Commerce & Management*, 2014; 1(11): ISSN-2347-7571.
5. Cant H, Hefer Y. Visual merchandising displays effect – or not – on consumers: The predicament faced by apparel retailers, *Journal of Business and Retail Management Research JBRMR*. 2014; 8(2).
6. Jamnani A, Daddikar P. Influence Of Visual Merchandising On Customer Buying Decision- A Case Study Of Inmark Retail Store, *Asia Pacific Journal of Research*. 2015; 1(30). ISSN: 2320-5504, E-ISSN-2347-4793.
7. Khandai S. Visual Merchandising As An Antecedent To Impulse Buying: An Indian Perspective, *International Journal of Business and Management Studies*, CD-ROM. ISSN: 2158-1479. 2012; 1(1):267-277.
8. Prof. Ram M, Dr. Ojha S. Impact of Visual Merchandising on Consumers' purchase decision in Apparel Retail, *International Journal of Business and Administration Research Review*. 2014; 2(6):49. ISSN - 2348-0653.
9. Sodhi R, Kant R. Visual Merchandising a Changing Scenario, *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing & Management Review*. 2012; 1(2). ISSN 2319-2836.
10. Soundhariya S, Sathyan S. Visual Merchandising and its Impact on Customer Buying Decisions, *Indian Journal of Applied Research Research Paper*. 2015; 5(1). ISSN - 2249-555X.
11. <http://www.financialexpress.com/archive/the-importance-of-visual-merchandising/62649/>
12. www.displayco.com
13. <https://www.vmplus.com.au/blog-visual-merchandising/page/15/>
14. <http://www.retaildesignworld.com>