# Elements of Visual Merchandising

| A. Prabu Asirvatham | Assistant Professor, Department of Management Studies, Surya Engineering College, Erode. |
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| Dr. N. Mohan | Professor and Head, Gnanamani Institute of Management Studies, Namakkal |

**ABSTRACT**  Visual merchandising is an activity and profession of developing floor plans and three dimensional designs to maximise the sales. It is an art of displaying the merchandise in an attractive way in order to attract the customers. Both goods and services can be displayed to emphasize their features and benefits. It attracts the customers thus increasing the sales. It creates awareness in customer about the merchandise. It attracts, engages and motivates the customer towards purchase. It helps the customer to locate and self select the merchandise. This article sets out to examine the impact of different elements of visual merchandising on success of retail stores. The elements of visual merchandising which have been taken up are colour, lighting, store layout, signage and store interior.

**KEYWORDS : visual merchandising, colour, lighting, store layout, signage, shop interior**

## INTRODUCTION

Visual merchandising is a retail strategy that maximizes the aesthetics of a product with the intent to increase sales. It involves decorating the store keeping the interior presentation the same as what is promised on the outside. Visual merchandising must attract customers through color, product and signage placement, emotion, variety and engagement. Successful visual merchandising attracts and engages customers and motivates them to buy. The practice of Visual Merchandising requires creativity, inspiration, logic and organisation. Visual merchandising's main purpose is to attract and engage customers to sell products. Color, lighting, texture and order are design elements required for successful visual merchandising to display products and merchandise, set a scene and elicit emotional and physiological responses. Merchandise is arranged neatly and attractively, in a clean environment, with large, clear signage that communicates product, brand and price, communicates successfully with the customer.

## ELEMENTS

One of the most creative and fun aspects of running a shop is managing the visual merchandising elements of the retail environment. That means everything from the window display a prospective customer first sees that draws them to your store, to the signage that directs them around, and the merchandising displays that catch their eye and ultimately influence them to purchase something. Some of the elements of visual merchandising are described as follows.

## COLOUR

When a consumer walks down a street lined with shops, each business on the block is challenging for the consumer's attention. Colour is a key component of visual merchandising that can influence consumer choices. One of the most significant roles of color in visual merchandising is attracting attention to a business or product. Bright colors such as red and orange tend to stand out and draw the eye, while cool colours such as blue and green do not. If a business is concerned primarily with attracting initial attention from customers, the use of bright colors in merchandising displays can help it accomplish its goal. In areas drenched with certain colours, the use of contrasting colours can draw attention. For example, if many of the stores in one part of a mall have brightly colored displays, a store with dark displays and could be more effective at attracting attention by creating a stark contrast that gives consumers a break from the bright colors.

Colours can have an emotional affect on customers and portray meaning about the goods a business offers. Different colours tend to suggest different feelings in people, which can affect how they recognize products. For instance, green and blue tend to call to mind feelings of calm, while bright colors such as red and yellow can evoke feelings of excitement. If a business wants customer to con-nect its products with relaxation, using soothing colors such as blue or green in product displays can be more effective than using bright colors. Certain colors carry strong connections to specific ideas and industries, which businesses can use to enhance their visual merchandising. For example, green is strongly linked with environmental friendliness, so a company that is marketing to the environmentally conscious crowd might benefit from liberal use of green in its product displays.

## LIGHTING

Lighting is essential in calling attention to merchandise in a display. A shopper's eye is drawn automatically to the brightest item or area. Lighting treatment may be used to draw attention to the part of display area or to coordinate the parts of total display area. Lighting can also be used to direct the path of the customers and to make them see various displays along the way.

Primary lighting is the overall level of illumination of the store using fluorescent or incandescent light sources. Inside the store primary lighting is that which fills the selling floor from overhead lighting fixtures and provides the bare essentials of store illumination. Secondary lighting provides illumination for designated display areas. Flat, shadow less, overall lighting can create a tiresome selling floor. Accent lighting provides change from light to dark highlight to shadows to prevent the boredom. Incandescent bulbs are most often used for secondary lighting.

## STORE LAYOUT

A store layout is the design in which a store's interior is set up. Store layout is well thought out to provide the best exposure possible. It is designed to create an eye-catching image for consumers. It describes the overall look and feel of the interior of a retail store, including the placement of fixtures and products within the store. It is an important part of implementing retail store strategy. Effective layouts are designed to expose customers to the most products possible given the amount of floor space available.

A well-planned retail store layout allows a retailer to maximize the sales for each square foot of the allocated selling space within the store. Store layouts generally show the size and location of each department, any permanent structures, fixture locations and customer traffic patterns. Each floor plan and store layout will depend on the type of products sold, the building location and how much the business can afford to put into the overall store design.

## SIGNAGE

Signage in shopping environment has a great importance to enhance the customer's shopping experience and is accepted as an integral part of a building's design. Designers know the importance of using

signage inside and outside of a building. Digital Signage is one of the important tools in store design. Digital signage is a form of electronic display. Customers can show information, advertising and other messages relating to the brand. The aim is to convey a message or information to customers and digital signage displays are most usually controlled by basic personal computers.

## SHOP INTERIOR

Shop interior is a significant part of merchandising because designing a modern retail store can affect the profit and image of the brands. Designing a shop interior is the art of planning because it is a creative process. It is the art of drawing, composing and selecting colors, materials, furnishings and accessories to enrich the design of a store interior. The main purpose is to create an attractive shopping environment and to enhance the presentation of merchandise. To create a unique image should be the main task of a designer because such an image will create a brand recognition which will be immediately perceived by the consumers.

## CONCLUSION

Visual merchandising is a intellectual way to exhibit products with the intent to touch the customer's senses, striking the right chords in him and arising in him an emotion to acquire the product in display, thus subtly persuading him to make an impulsive purchase. Visual merchandising is the art of presentation that places the products and the services on offer as well as the shoppers at the heart of selling process. It aims to educate the customers, to tempt them into buying the merchandise. In most cases, this is an area where some small business owners lack adequate knowledge and expertise.  If implemented properly, visual merchandising can be invaluable for accentuating the unique usage points of the products; therefore ultimately optimising the marketing and sales efforts.

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