



IMPORTANCE OF LIGHTING IN VISUAL MERCHANDISING

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ABSTRACT

Visual merchandising is a retail strategy that maximizes the aesthetics of a product with the intent to increase sales. Visual merchandising is the art of displaying merchandise in a manner that is attractive to the eyes of the customer. Visual merchandising is the activity of promoting the sale of goods, especially by their presentation in retail outlets. This includes combining products, environments, and spaces into a stimulating and engaging display to encourage the sale of a product or service. Visual merchandising utilizes displays, colour, lighting, smells, sounds, digital technology and interactive elements to grasp customer's attention and persuade them to make purchases. Visual merchandising is the only differentiator, especially in a scenario where consumers come across the same fashion designs almost uniformly everywhere. Visual Merchandising is a technique commonly and rightly called "Silent Salesman" and is widely used in market to increase footfalls and catch the attention of shoppers and make shopping a pleasant experience to one and all. With globalization and the retail boom, visual merchandising is growing in leaps and bounds. It is not simply concerned about decorating a store beautifully; but must also symbolize the brand keeping the target audience in mind. The application of more attractive visual merchandising techniques will help to obtain better results. Lighting is one of the critical aspects of visual merchandising. Lighting increases the visibility of the merchandise kept in the store. This article attempts to explore the impact of lighting as a visual merchandising tool on buyer behaviour.

KEYWORDS : Visual merchandising, lighting, sales

INTRODUCTION

Visual merchandising 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.

Lighting is an important factor in the environment's impact on customers because brightly lit displays encourage the consumers to examine significantly more items under good lighting conditions. Lighting can also create a mood or ambiance that will support a display. The primary goals in lighting of merchandise are to attract the consumer, to initiate purchases, and to facilitate the completion of the sale.

IMPORTANCE OF 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.

Lighting can be used in many ways in retail stores, from highlighting an object or area of a store to simply illuminate the entire store. Bright light can create a sense of honesty, positivity, and can promote impulse purchasing. Lighting can also be used to highlight the store layout and urge customers to flow through the store, exposing them to more merchandise. The level of brightness in the store is a very important factor in consumer behavior and the retail environment, as rooms that have dim lighting are less arousing than more brightly lit spaces. Lighting can influence the customer's decision making, behavior, and also the overall spatial environment as lighting and ambiance are connected. Customers become more stimulated when the lighting in the room is considered to be very

bright and speeds up the pace at which customers purchase products.

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 part of the display area, a specific item in the display, or to coordinate parts of the total display area. Lighting can also be used to direct shoppers through the store, attracting them to various displays along the way. Because of this tendency to follow a lighted path, display lights should be two to five times stronger than lighting in other parts of the store. Supplemental lighting treatments had a positive effect on consumer behavior, as qualified by display. Interactions between lighting and display were found to be statistically significant

Good lighting is one of the most important aspects of in-store design. Lighting not only brings attention to a display, they also warm it up making it more appealing. LED light boxes, light panels, and other illuminated sign holders can help your graphics stand out in crowded areas. Along with enhancing the aesthetic beauty of the product display, LEDs are a perfect solution for accent lighting due to their long life, directional light, uniform brightness and illumination. LED display lighting also benefits retailers by reducing lamp replacement costs.

There are three types of lighting used :

1. Primary lighting
2. Accent or Secondary Lighting
3. Atmosphere lighting

Primary Lighting:

Primary lighting is the overall level of illumination of the store using fluorescent or incandescent light sources. Outside, it includes 150 watt bulbs used as basic window lighting, marquee lights illuminating the sidewalks and lighting for general lobby area. Inside the store primary lighting is that which fills the selling floor from overhead lighting fixtures and provides the bare essentials of store illumination.

Accent or Secondary Lighting:

This type of 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. This can be accomplished from down lighting from ceiling, showcase lighting and valence lighting (drapery or canopy). Incandescent bulbs are most often used for secondary lighting. They range in size from tiny Christmas trees light to small candle like or complexion bulbs, to full size globe or reflector type bulbs.

Atmosphere Lighting:

Atmosphere lighting is used to play light against shadow to create a distinctive effect on specific displays. Generally this category includes the use of color filters, pinpoint spotlights and black lighting to create dramatic effects. Fluorescent lights are used for primary lighting, as they cannot be focused directly on an object. Incandescent lamps have sharply defined beams that are easily directed to highlight the merchandise on display. Spotlights are great for merchandise displays. The angle at which spotlight is directed is very important. Any angle sharper than 45 degree is likely to momentarily blind a shopper. Color filters that change the color of the spotlight are available for spotlights. Gels are colored acetate that can be placed over light bulbs. They are similar to filters but are less expensive. They are available in roll form and can be easily cut to fit the light. High intensity discharge lamps are the most efficient bulbs available because they provide more light per watt. They help in reducing the cost and is also flattering to customer.

CONCLUSION

An often overlooked and underestimated tool available to retailers is store lighting. Studies show that proper lighting can increase merchandise sales. Effective lighting is a key in the sale of merchandise in helping to create that favorable first impression of the merchandise and its surroundings. Just as colour creates the emotional connection with the customer, light reinforces this emotional connection by bringing the desired colours to life. Good lighting can guide the customer's eyes, reveal the color and cut of the merchandise, show the styling and tailoring details and emphasize the good qualities of the outfit, helping the merchandise to be pre-sold to customer

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