



## RECENT TRENDS IN VISUAL MERCHANDISING

## Management

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## ABSTRACT

In today's competitive retail environment, Visual Merchandising is becoming much more than neatly arranging products on a shelf or dressing a mannequin in a store window. To stay relevant, retailers have to meet the needs of shoppers' today and successfully anticipate their expectation of tomorrow. Visual merchandising refers to the visual elements that can be adapted, re-designed and re-arranged to entice customers in store, and maximize sales. In the world of events, branding and visual merchandising, businesses need to be ahead of the game by assessing and tailoring current and upcoming trends, advertising and merchandising strategies can be continually updated to portray the unique proposition and attract the desired audience. This study attempts to explore the recent trends in visual merchandising.

## KEYWORDS

visual merchandising, retailers, recent trends

## INTRODUCTION

Visual merchandising refers to the artistic display of the products to attract the latent buyers, prompt them to buy and ultimately increase the sales of the store. It helps the customers to easily find out what they are looking for. Visual merchandising is creating visual displays and arranging goods within a store to improve the layout and appearance, and to increase sales. It encompasses all activities concerned with the presentation of the product within the retail outlet, including the choice of store layout, the method of product presentation, the choice of fixtures and fittings, the construction of displays, and the use of point-of-sale material. The overall purpose of visual merchandising is to get customers to come into the store and spend money

## RECENT TRENDS

Visual merchandising is an essential step in running a successful business. The term refers to the way in which products are displayed. The recent trends in visual merchandising are described below.

## LED Lighting

Effective lighting can grab instant attention and facilitate the creation of that favourable first impression of the products and its surroundings. In-store lighting has always been an important aspect of visual merchandising, but recent advancements in tunable white lighting and LEDs have equipped brands with new and increasingly delicate ways of influencing customer experience.

Brands have also begun to bind the power of LEDs. Since LED shape and execution are flexible, they can be used in stores in a large number of ways, such as in grid formation to emphasize product displays or draping from walls to alter an ambiance. As a strong and low maintenance lighting option, brands have begun experimenting with embedded LEDs, which can be integrated into different store displays

## Mannequins with Personality

The focus of visual marketing is presenting the products in a way which entices customers into the store and subsequently into making a purchase. And in fashion retail, a mannequin's role is vital in this process; telling a sales story, helping the customer visualise how they could look in clothing, and even just seeing the latest trends at a glance. Retailers are now going for mannequins that feature more lifelike bodies, odd poses, and celebrity faces. Mannequins can help to create an atmosphere, demonstrate the brand's personality and reveal the trends in store.

Using mannequins for ecommerce site is a much cheaper option for product photography than using expensive models. They also allow the products to hold their shape, which can make product images seem more professional and consistent.

With the rise of ecommerce and online shopping, traditional brick and mortar stores have been forced to think outside the box when it comes to getting consumers in their doors. Mannequins offer one such

option; they are a 3D perspective on clothing and accessories different from the 2D images consumers see online. Nowadays, vendors have been experimenting with mannequins that are fun, relatable and real rather than simply a faceless vehicle for clothing.

## Going Digital

Many brands have begun to integrate technology into their in-store visual merchandising approaches, both because of the ease it affords employees and customers, and also because of the environment it creates: modern, sleek and high-end. Engaging graphics, colorful video footage and electronic flat screen displays work well together to create a consistent brand image around multiple product offerings.

Tablets have become popular as well from both a customer and employee perspective. Customers using them are able to quickly learn what a product is, how it's used and why they should purchase it. Employees are able to move about a retail space with all the information they need at their fingertips.

Technology is changing the way visual merchandising takes place in that it allows stores to change their in-store content anytime they want. Digital displays can offer special price promotions one day and unveiling a new collection another day. They could even be customized to reflect current topics in pop culture, or feature different types of merchandise at different times of the day. In addition, technology displays usually take up less space than physical merchandising props do, gifting brands with even more flexibility in their store layout.

## Sustainable Décor

Many of the hurdles that have traditionally prevented brands from making a commitment to eco-friendly practices, such as an expected low-return on investment, are disappearing due to evolving materials and cheaper options. Most important in motivating the move towards sustainability, however, is that consumers have begun to demand brands that match their values. An increasingly competitive retail market only exacerbates the pressure on brick and mortar stores to bend to the will of the consumer.

Eco-friendly designs are being acknowledged not only for their long-term positive effect on a utility bill, but also for their ability to increase brand recognition and strengthen customer loyalty. Since most brands have online sites as well, it's easy for customers to quickly search and read about its environmental commitment

Popular sustainable design practices include using materials such as reclaimed wood, regionally sourced substances, renewable resources and LED lighting

## Constant evolution

Leading retailers and brands are now changing their installations and configurations at least once a month, with windows changed even

more frequently. Retailers are realizing that to get people in their stores, they have to maintain a fresh look. This means store windows should be changed as often as shop assistants can manage, with this point especially crucial for clothes mannequins.

### **The Third Dimension**

3D visual merchandising is used by retailers and manufacturers around the world as the new standard for visualizing the category and navigating the virtual store aisle, gaining an immersive consumer experience before the launch of new concepts within a store. 3D visual merchandising deliver the consumer shopping experience at the desktop and in the office, allowing to explore ideas for building brands and improving the overall consumer experience and gain visual insights. A 3D product display is the perfect complement to the grid by showing more products in the active window and increasing engagement when customers are looking to buy.

### **Flexible Arrangements**

Designing fixtures while keeping flexibility in mind is every retail designer and visual merchandiser's essential. Having the opportunity to quickly and easily change out a display is just as important today as it's ever been.

Flexible wall units that allow for unique merchandising techniques, as well as visual displays, keep the store fresh and inspiring. Printed patterns and textures are easily interchanged to complement each collection on display, while helping to create an overall strong, visual impact.

### **Eco Friendly**

There are a numerous of new products with varying degrees of environmental impact. They range from being recyclable, to biodegradable, to compostable. Climate change is real and is largely the result of human activity. People also believe there are no quick fixes. Therefore, all the people need to work together to address the serious work of protecting the environment by making the right choices that reduce both greenhouse gases and all forms of waste.

### **Warm Colours**

If a business is concerned primarily with attracting initial attention from customers, the use of bright colors in merchandising displays can help it achieve its goal. In areas saturated with certain colors, the use of contrasting colors 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.

### **CONCLUSION**

Convincing people to visit and buy from the store requires staying on top of merchandising concept and trends. The latest ideas in merchandising are all about educating and informing the customers about the products. By staying on top of new concepts and trends, it's easier to change the way that the retailers present their products to get the attention of buyers. At the end of the day, visual merchandising decisions are a mix of scientific research, an eye for aesthetics, and good luck. Not every retail merchandising trend will be a perfect fit for every store, nor is this list of trends exhaustive.

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