Influence of Visual Merchandising on Customer Purchase Decision in Selected Retail Outlets

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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 can also play a role in the look, feel and culture of a brand. The Study aspect finds that display elements, such as mannequins, color, lighting and props that emphasize feelings of consumers which finally affect purchase intentions. This paper aims to explore consumer affective response on visual stimulus in stores by considering the aesthetic, symbolic and cultural perceptions of a function-oriented product. In this study the Researcher selected the Retail outlet in Shopping mall. A well structure Questionnaire was prepared and given to the respondents who visited the shop. The researcher given certain Recommendations to enrich existing knowledge of Visual Merchandising to the retail stores in the Shopping mall.**

***Keywords*: shopping Mall, Retail, outlets, display**

1. Introduction

Visual merchandising is the art of presentation which puts the merchandise in focus. It educates the customer or creates the desire and finally augments the selling process. Window display is the best form of advertising when your next customer is right in front of you. Storefront is an important factor. Today's customer needs are effective store communication to help them make choices. Visual Merchandising helps the customers about the product and service in an effective and creative way

Fig. 1. Merchandising

- Establishing a way to present merchandise in 3d.
- Setting the store in a creative exclusive position.
- Marketing by keeping the product in focus.
- Establishing linkage between store designs, product designs and combining the creative, technical aspects.
- The main process is to attract their attention towards the store.

- The primary goal of visual merchandising is to attract shoppers and increase sales.
- The goal is to draw shoppers into the store and keep them in there long enough to buy products.

A. Techniques

- *Interior displays:* In-store visual merchandising can be used to capture the attention of consumers in the store, an essential way in the buying process.
- *Store layout:* The layout of a store is an important factor for the maintenance of a business, which can help advance sales and profitability. An effective store layout encourages consumers to shop the store and view an extensive assortment of merchandise.
- *Atmospherics:* The atmospherics also have a large influence on the store environment. Atmospherics should coordinate to create a consistent ambiance and positively influence the consumer's shopping experience.

Fig. 2. Atmospherics

- *Light:* 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.
- *Music:* The music played within a store can promote a brand's image. Music that suits the style of the store and the target audience is an important factor to consider.

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Fig. 3. Music

- *Scent:* Having a unique scent in a store can differentiate the brand from others. When customers smell that scent outside of the store, this will trigger their senses.
    - Lavender, basil, cinnamon orange– relaxing, soothing, calming, and reduces anxiety
    - Peppermint, thyme, rosemary, grapefruit, eucalyptus – enterprising, stimulating, increases arousal and productivity
    - Ginger, chocolate, cardamom, liquorice – romance.
    - Vanilla – comforting and calming
    - Black pepper – sexually stimulating
- *Exterior displays:* Exterior window displays can be used to sell product and entice customers into the store. An eye-catching, innovative window display can promote the brand image. It can be used to advertise
- *Seasonal displays:* Adjusting window displays based on seasonal events, calendar dates, and consumerism-based holidays such as Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Father's Day can be a useful approach to encourage consumer purchasing

2. Review of literature

Visual merchandising satisfies that need on commercial scale and has been doing so ever since people began selling. Visual merchandising is the use of visual effects to simulate customers to buy", as explained in the book Visual Merchandising from ICS systems.

According to Charath Narasimhan, CEO Indian Terrain, "we clearly see the value of better visual merchandising techniques and window displays in attracting customer stores. Also better display helps sales as customers get to experience the product in a different environment rather than just a stack of shirts and trousers".

"An important element in any store design is look of the store front. Accomplished successfully, the entrance reflects the personality of the store and gives a glimpse of the merchandise available inside", proclaims Jerry Gelsomino.

"A garment in a hanger may not look attractive to the customer but an attractive display can make the garment come alive and look appealing, thereby satisfying the customer's aesthetic needs. The purpose of a display should be to announce something definitely", says Robert Colborne in his book of

visual merchandising-the business of merchandise presentation.

According to Amol Kumar Banejea, "In India more often than not, mannequins are seen as appendages rather than integral to the store personality and merchandise profile, A good realistic mannequin is a wonderful thing, tells exactly who the merchandise is geared for. When you get creative with your mannequin, the new infusion of energy will enhance your stores and sales".

According to Julius Kantor "visual merchandising satisfies that need on a commercial scale and has been doing s ever since people began selling. VM is the use of visual effects to stimulate customers to buy.

"Clients whose merchandise is available in that retail environment and any marketer targeting the audience that visits modern retail formats stand to benefit by visual merchandising." says Vikram Sakhuja.

"Brands are creating equity in the minds of the consumers through retail space and therefore, retail design is an integral part of the brand identity "quotes Janani Subramanian, business head, Wrangler.

A. Objective

- To influence the customers both impressionable and impulsive shoppers.
- To find the impact on the customers to find the scope for visual merchandising in future.
- To analyze the new features and Trends by using VM in outlets.
- To create brand identity by means of developing the customer reviews.

3. Scope of the project

- The job of visual merchandising is increasing everywhere.
- Retailers now have started realizing the need for effective store communication in attracting the customers.
- With a growing number of designers, visual merchandising is now creating a boom in the retail sector.
- A survey on this can reveal the opportunities in the field. Visual merchandising has evolved beyond simple window displays.
- With point of purchase, displays assuming vital importance in retail marketing deals with visual merchandising.
- An effective visual merchandising strategy should draw shoppers into the store and keep them in there long enough to buy something.

4. Research methodology

A. Sampling technique

In this, the researcher used convenient sampling. In

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convenient sampling, a sample is obtained by selecting convenient population elements from the entire population

B. Non probability sampling

Non probability sampling is that sampling procedure which does not effort any basis for estimating the probability that each item in the population has of being included in the sampling. Non probability sampling is sub classified into convenient sampling, judgment sampling and quota sampling.

C. Convenient sampling

Convenient sampling is the matter of taking what you get. It is an accidental sample although selection may be unguided, is probably not random; using the correct definition of everyone in the population is having equal chance of being selected. Volunteers would constitute a convenience sample.

D. Sample size

In this, sample size of this study is 100 customers

5. Source of data

Data can be classified into
- Primary data
- Secondary data

A. Primary data

The primary data are those, which are collected afresh and for the first time, and thus happen to be original in character. There are several methods of collecting primary data, particularly in survey and descriptive research. Some important ones are observation method, interview method, through questionnaire, through schedules etc.

The data were collected through structured questionnaire.

B. Secondary data

Secondary data means, data that were already available that is they refer to the data which have already been collected and analyzed by someone else and which have already been passed through the statistical process. Secondary data may either be published data or unpublished data and can be gathered through Internet, books, magazines, manuals, journals etc.

The secondary data were collected from official records, internets and magazines.

C. Questionnaire method

A questionnaire will be prepared for the visual merchandiser in charge of the store to answer based of the store design and its role in attracting the customer. Another questionnaire is prepared for the customers to get their opinion about the store and its display.

D. Data collection instruments

A well-structured questionnaire was designed to collect qualitative and quantitative data. The questions related to the objective of the study from a major portion of the questionnaire. It mainly consists of multiple choice questions, ranking, so that the respondent can answer easily by just putting a mark on any of choice of answer furnished. The questions are arranged in an orderly way so as to provide a logical progression.

6. Suggestions

- Finally, after all the process a new method can be implemented to improve and to attain the attention of the customers.
- The display should be more effective to attract the customers and it should not confuse the customers.
- The Lighting effect should not be artificial so that it makes the shade of the product visualize naturally.
- The use of photography and visual representing method is another new idea that could be implemented in the retail branded showrooms which could be the newest way to attract the customers and boost up their confidence that will also help in the sales value.

7. Conclusion

In the current scenario, the visual merchandising plays an important role in attracting customers for the retail outlets in shopping mall. It gives the customers a good ambience and also helps in increase of customer sales. This technique is used to display or highlight the features of the store which helps in maximum sales. The purpose is that to engage, attract and motivate the customer towards buying a product. This study leads me to the conclusion, that every consumer of the retail shops not only just shop but also Perceive the store layout and design. So it is important to have an effective store communication which influence the customer buying decision and leads to maximum sales. It is important to implement proper concept of visual merchandising according to the store which influence the customer behavior. In this study the researcher gives recommendations to enrich the effective of visual merchandising in retail outlets.

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