4.1 - INTRODUCTION

Indian retail industry is going through a transition phase. Most of the retailing in our country is still in the unorganized sector. The industry is evolving, as many international players are coming in the picture which has taken retail to newer heights. Harish Bijoor – CEO and chairman of In-store Asia, gave a pleasing picture of Indian market. Talking highly about India in context to retail and design, he states that “India is happening, 12 years ago it was stated that India will happen and today it is not wrong to state that India is happening. India is the flavor of the year and it is the blazing hot property today. It has quantity and quality market as we are the world’s largest population. In Eight big metros we find a great degree of value market. We are the nations of shop keeper; we are a nation of Hungry people. People hungry for food, for beverage, for clothing, for shelter, for home, for telecom and lot more. The GDP rate of the world had grown @4.4% in 2011, Advance countries GDP is growing @ 2.5%, developing countries GDP has grown @ 6.5% and India’s GDP has grown @ 8.4% in 2011. With this alarming growth the Vision 2020 is not too far when India will emerged as the 3rd largest economy in the world”

According to him the biggest thing for any retailer is design and an insight of design. Insight for good design is rare and upper end issue. It is based on multilayer format. Insight can be based of different layers such as Basic Insight, Quasi brand, Insight as a brand and Insight as a super brand. The job of a good designer and a visual merchandiser should be to bring out the concept and design in such a way that the brand should land as a super brand and not a basic or a quasi-brand. Every retailer who is in the business with the help of designs and VM strategy should try to raise themselves above the basic level. They should definitely build their brand identity not like a quasi-brand or simply a brand but like a super brand. To make the brand a super brand one needs to stick to an idea or a USP or an insight which helps them to treat the shoppers superiorly in a retail environment. Customer engagement and good ambience can help retailer to achieve success and create demand at the point of sale.
In such a scenario it is little difficult to predict the element of benefit to Indian retailers but one thing is sure that visual merchandising will prove to be the best element of the success to the retailers as it is the core element of consumer touch points in retail. In store display and store planning is the most important aspect of retailing along with other elements like integrated in store branding and promotions.

*Image – 4.1 – Consumer Touch points at Retail*

As the market today is flooded with international brands and these international brands are opening their stores in India with their own 100% subsidiary and are also bringing their own visual merchandising standards and professional attitude for setting up a store, it becomes very important for Indian retailers to develop and implement the concept of visual merchandising in merchandise presentation, branding and planning within the stores.

**Glyn Philips-Regional Director – India. Dalziel-Pow**

When the researcher interviewed Mr. Glyn Philips during the in-store Asia, his views regarding the current status of visual merchandising in India was that, “very less focus is given to good design in India”.

*Image – 4.2 – Glyn Philips – Regional Director – India. Dalziel-Pow*

As per him “Product is the prime focus of all the retailers today and the second aspect which is the most important is the Design aspect”. He rightly says that customers are the king and they need to be treated and gifted with the best design. He also rightly points out that India
needs to learn from the mistakes of the west. India is a very progressive nation and still has time to leap in the design process. It would be too late once the FDI flows in this section in various forms. Today Retailers needs to value Visual merchandisers and Retail Design Firms to bring in better design and to keep up the customers’ loyalty towards a store.

4.2 - Visual merchandising and sales associates

It also makes it easy for the sales associates to make a sale. The logical merchandise displays helps the sales associates to assist the customers. It also helps them to sell associated products. Most importantly visual merchandising increases the stock turn rates. It brings 40% more business. It increases sales per square foot. It helps the sales associates to sell and service more customers in a shorter time. It also decreases the Mark down rates as in a well-organized store the retailers can very easily spots the slow moving items and they can be auctioned with Markdowns much earlier. Early Markdowns are less expensive than an off season markdowns. It drives the traffic in the right direction. Thus due to visual merchandising the shoppers will not only decide to stay but buy and come back for more. The importance of this retail element of visual merchandising is been realized by Indian retailers and so visual merchandising is become a part of their success plan. And so today some retailers have started looking at visual designing as the most important element and have begun to improve their store designs and merchandise presentation.

Some improvement in merchandise presentation can be noticed today and what we need today are good VM professionals to help out large retailers. Looking into the benefits of visual merchandising what is the need of the hour is to develop corporate VM structures and create consistency in Visual Merchandising in all 1000 odd stores across the country.

Table – 4.1 -Below given table gives a brief idea about the current trend of hiring visual merchandising professionals and corporate VM structures which is growing today.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company Name (designing firms with VM professionals)</th>
<th>Year established</th>
<th>Retail Projects (%)</th>
<th>Non-Retail Projects (%)</th>
<th>Total Retail space rendered per year (sq ft)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sanjay puri Architects</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20,00,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idiom Design and Consulting</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>10,00,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design for change</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4,00,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemon Design</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>2,75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Design solutions</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1,96,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SJK Architects</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaf Design</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>26,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vibe Design Labs</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>22,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amity Intex Pvt. Ltd.</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The figures stated above are just a fragment of the actual numbers which observes that there is a continuous rise in demand for retail design, retail designers and visual merchandisers. The reason of this increase is to meet parameters such as cost-effectiveness, customer centric concepts, current global trend and importance of advanced technology demanded by retail clients.

### 4.3 - Visual Merchandising - The Indian way

Today, we notice many Indian retail projects are being designed by international design firms, who apply their superior technology, techniques and methodology. However, Indian design firms speak about various factors which give them an upper hand in the industry. Visual merchandising by international designers may be efficient but Indian designed features today have the advantage of reaching the soul of the consumers. Today it is trying to trigger the emotions of a consumer. Warm services are of importance in the Indian retail space as compared to an unassisted environment. This visual merchandising practice is designed keeping in mind the Indian consumer psyche. A visual merchandiser needs to also keep in mind the Vastu factor while designing the store as many Indian customers buy from a shop which is based on vastu. Today visual merchandisers are trying to understand the local consumers and their needs by providing local solutions, rather than simply following western guidelines in implementing their projects. Because it is noticed by the designers that India is a place of snake and ladder game- there are challenges that can set a retailer back by 40 squares, equally there are opportunities that can take a retailer right to the top of the heap. Dealing with India’s mix of challenges and opportunities needs a mix of flexibility and creativity, a good term to explain this is “Global Localization”, a sophisticated version of ‘Jugaad’ if there is a readiness to experiment and innovate to meet dramatically different local needs.

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137 Rising up, Visual merchandising and Retail Design, Volume 6 (Nov 2010), issue 6, pp14.
While talking to some experts during the in-store Asia, a seminar on insight on Visual Merchandising, some important views collected by researcher from some experts on global localization were very surprising, that in-spite of the advanced and outstanding internationals features of Visual Merchandising still many head designers, Big retailers and Visual Merchandisers prefer completing Visual Merchandising and designing projects keeping in mind the Indian culture and the Indian mindset. Visual Merchandising the Indian way and understanding the local needs are the need of the hour.

**Mr. Shailesh chaturvedi- CEO and Director-Tommy Hilfiger Apparels India.** Views regarding “Global Localization” are worth mentioning. While talking about visual merchandising and retail design in context with international brand he says that, “a designer needs to focus on ‘unified global feel’ i.e. there is no need of local version of the brand for the local customers. As the customers who walk in would like to have the same global feel”.

According to him small town consumers are well to do consumers. To judge the presence of light consumer space they grab those locations of the town where either a Domino’s Pizza outlet or a luxury car outlet is doing successful business.

According to him “Retailing is always about detailing” and while talking about visual merchandising the Indian way, he states that there is pressure of localization and local adaptation to meet the needs of local customers. But he still feels that no compromise should be done on localization beyond a point.

Today there are many designs of Retail brands in India which are the one which has truly brought in the Indian style of design keeping the culture of India and understanding the Indian consumer psyche which is deep rooted towards its cultural heritage and is been appreciated by customers.

Some of the below stated designs of Retail brands are the one which has truly brought in the Indian style of design keeping the culture of India and understanding the Indian consumer psyche which is deep rooted towards its cultural heritage and is been appreciated by customers. These are also some of the researcher’s favorite

The best example is the **“Kingdom of Dreams”** Designed by **Sanderson Group** is an outstanding example of global localization where the inspiration is drawn from Rajasthan fort. It also has a cultural gully which has a Goan facade designed to represent the amalgamation of the Portuguese architecture with the Indian ethos. It is built like an Indian
palace where all styles of Indian architecture are created in a unique design style. This place generally host music releases, Bollywood press conferences etc.

Image – 4.3 -Below is the picture of Kingdom of dreams-Delhi (India’s first ever entertainment and leisure destination initiated by Great Indian Nautanki Company.

Image – 4.4 -Swarovski- located in Mumbai’s luxurious palladium store.

The design of Idiom Design and Consulting Traditional retail in Banaras and markets in Ahmedabad were an inspiration for the design of Ethnicity. The store takes on the design of the steps leading to Ganges at Banaras to add the Indian touch and create a unique retail experience. The store layout is inspired by a traditional Indian market place with chowks and gallies. The display adds Indian touch to the space. The merchandising is a mix of traditional with contemporary fixtures. Bringing tradition and modernity together is the essence of the display.

Image – 4.5 -Below is the picture of the traditional Rani Market designed by Idiom Design and Consulting
Impact of Visual Merchandising on Customers can be judged on the basis of how far the visual design had made the retailer successful. Winning retailers typically share six common attributes. These six traits not only differentiate their way of doing business from others in the same category, but also clearly establish their leadership position in the consumer’s mind.

These six attributes are the MASTER plan
M- Mastering Magnitude—i.e. giving consumers a range of choices beyond expectations, as consumers value meaningful choices. Meaningful and perceivable choices excite consumers.

![Image - 4.7 - Choice of shades of cosmetics beyond expectations at Bandra, shoppers stop, Mumbai.](image1.jpg)

A-Mastering Authority- i.e. Consumer wants to sense that the retailers have a plan. It makes the consumer believe that the retailer knows his business and has a bold plan for them.

![Image – 4.8 - A perfect plan of see through cosmetic counters at shoppers stop, pune. The picture is a good example of intelligent store layout. The visual merchandiser of Pune-2 shoppers shop had used a unique layout for the cosmetic counters. A person standing at any angle of the store is able to see all the cosmetic counters.](image2.jpg)
S- Mastering Stimulation – i.e. Retail must be a place of excitement for consumers. It should be a place of experiencing life little pleasures, Feeling great and important.

Image - 4.9 - The above picture is from the home section of Lifestyle, Ghatkopar, Mumbai. (R City Mall). This is a very good example of beautiful lamps used to highlight the home products. The place is full of excitement of new styles

T- Mastering Temptation- i.e. the desire to be seduced by an idea. An idea created to seduce the customers

E- Mastering Ease- i.e. Feeling at ease in the store environment and making the customers feel at home. It should give solution to consumer’s problem. Good Earth is the example for the same which is discussed in detail below.

R- Mastering Revelation: i.e. the ability to make the consumers and customers feel that they are an important part of the whole set up as they are invited again and again. It also believes in making the consumer leave his stress behind and enjoy the shopping experience.138

Today’s Visual Merchandisers takes these six attributes as a challenge and try to incorporate them in their VM Practices. Few of these above mentioned attributes also helps the VMs to bring out a bold USP. As every brand has an identity of its own, and where design becomes a very important differentiating factor, Visual Merchandising plays a major role in giving a unique place to the brand and the store from the existing visual clutter. Let us discuss regarding some successful practices of leading visual merchandisers and retail brands in India who had set a benchmark in visual designs and incorporated the above six attributes in some or the other way. It is worth mentioning few Indian Design who won awards in 2009 (VM-RD Retail Design Awards 2009). They are listed below:

138 Mastering retail, Six essential attributes that can create retail domination, Visual merchandising and Retail Design, volume 5 (Sept 2009), issue 1.pp11.
1. Good Earth (Store of the Year Award)

It is the best example where the attribute of Revelation and ease is been applied by the visual merchandisers. It place takes the customers away from the daily grind to a space that makes customers world a wonderful place. According to Mr. Ankur Chokshi, Director of Lotus Design, The place Good Earth was to provider a flexible space with a distinct to hold Good Earth merchandise.

Home improvement products. Area more than 5000 sq ft. i.e. nearly 13000 sq ft. Design – Lotus Design services. Design Team—Ankur Chokshi, Amrish Arora, Sidhartha Talwar, Kailash Chandra, M Naushad, Richa Kapse.

It is Spread over Four Floors, each level offers space for various product categories i.e. Walk-in-show window, followed by a spa which has a temple like feel. The aromatherapy products, lamps and lanterns and accessories and furniture, then dinnerware, barware, vases, textiles and the last level offering furniture. Each section provides a unique space for the products they wish to showcase. Unlike the Home Concept of Lifestyle which totally depends upon the KMP (Key Merchandising Principles). The Visual Merchandiser has very less creativity here as they follow the pattern given by KMP.

2. Rohit Bal (Gold) - (Best Fashion Apparels Award) less than 5000 sq ft. Visual Merchandiser—Rohit Bal

Different from the usual look of designer boutiques and stores, the Rohit BAL store in DLF Emporia Mall has a luxurious interior which complements the designer’s collection as well as
the richness of Indian culture by highlighting the richness of Indian fabrics. The unique part is the 111 lamps, tall leaning mirrors dull gold and dark metal grays provides an Indian royal lifestyle look and gives the feel of rich culture of India. This is a very good example of mastering Revelation and makes the costumer feel royal.

3. Goregoan Central (Gold) (Best Departmental Store Award) The design strategy for the Central outlet in Oberio Mall was to create a unique shopping experience for this each brand space has been designed to reflect the character and attitude of the brand. The store front sets the stage with the iconic Central logo stretching from floor to ceiling. The deign language is carried forward in each and every element, like the very feminine petal columns in pink in the women’s section, the use of mature browns in the men’s formal section, sporty greens in the sports section and playful free flowing red ribbon in the kids’ area. Goregoan Central is the best example where the attribute of Stimulation is used where in the customers are thrilled of seedin something new and unexpected.

Image – 4.12 -Above is the picture of Oberio mall – Goregaon central

4. Levi’s Square (Gold- Best Visual Merchandising award- Fashion Apparel more than 5000 sq.ft.) (Linking Road, Bandra, Mumbai) Visual Merchandiser—Hammer Visual Merchandising solutions

A spread of 10,000 sq.ft. At Linking road, Bandra, Mumbai is maintaining a strong focus on retail expansion. The store has various sections for its sub brands including the 501, Levi’s Blue and Levis Red loop, Levi’s Vintage Clothing, Levi’s Red Tab and the Levi’s Sykes. The
specialty about the trial rooms are designed for the sub-brands and products on each level. The brand that are manifested in the trial rooms look like classic telephone booths to attract the youth.

Image – 4.13 - The picture above is the picture of Levi’s Square, linking road, Bandra, Mumbai.

5. The Collective: (Gold-Best Visual merchandising award 2011) Designed by Liganova India Brand Retail Pvt. Ltd.

Image – 4.14 – The collective store and Elena Maurer- Director- Key Account Development and Siddhant Sahu-LIGANOVA taking the award at Instore Asia

The Main Visual Merchandising aim for the Collective was to achieve international VM standards and provide correct ambience to the luxury brand it carries. The visual merchandising presentation at The Collective store is of the highest standards. With every aspect of the presentation taken special care of, and all the minute details are taken into consideration. Product has been given utmost importance and has been treated as the STAR.
The other winners of merit best visual merchandising 2011 of VM-RD awards are:

- Zoya—Designed by FITCH
- Pantaloons—Designed by Pantaloons Retail India Ltd.
- Rattrap-- Designed by Restore solutions

Most of the designs mentioned above have made use of Graphics as a main tool; let us also understand the importance of this element in today’s structures.

**4.4 - Current emphasis on Graphics and exterior signage -an important element of VM today**

Let us discuss about one element of VM that is Graphics. Graphics are generally used either in store or at the exterior point. The trend today in most of the metropolitan’s cities is to use in store graphics which gives a trendy look to the store and the youth associate themselves to it. Graphics play a significant role in the fashion category.

Visual merchandiser generally suggests that the store should use graphics and signage to convey information that will educate customers and motivate them to buy. Signage gives customer important information they’ll need for e.g. the price of an item, the location of coordinating products, product information and more. One must make sure that the shops graphics and signage are professional-looking and in tune with the shop image. Many stores have found success using oversized in-store or window graphics to add visual impact to displays. The graphics can be repeated on a smaller scale throughout the store to earmark featured merchandise or sale items.

The important issues which today’s VM’s are concern about are that they would see to it that the store signs and graphics should act as a bridge between the merchandise and the target markets. They rather would like to use the signs and graphics as props. Since the main purpose is to catch attention and informs customers the copy is important to its overall success. the KISS formulae also applies here by keeping the copy short and small as customers must be able to quickly grasp the information on the sign as they walk through the store. Carefully done signage's with the help of calligraphy in English script provides a very different message than a hastily written message.

Today VM’s are trying to create a theatrical effect through signage and graphics.
Adding life to space, through an expression or thought, graphics act as an effective communicating agent between the retailer/brand and the customers. Whether showcasing the latest launch of the season to hit the stores or a heavy discount sale, in-store graphics play an important role in the retail environment. Window and in store graphics help in portraying the brand’s identity and often help the customer in purchasing or guiding to a particular product in the store.

In-store graphics consists of:

- Lifestyle graphics
- Promotional graphics
- Floor graphics
- Point-of-sale graphics
- Window graphics

Used in any format, in-store graphics create an atmosphere and completes the story of a retail store or brand. In-store graphics have various uses in store. While decorative elements help in enhancing the stores design and concept the lifestyle and promotional graphics depict the brand’s image and value, and also reminds the shopper in the retail environment about the product and special offers if any.

![Image 4.15 - Above is an example of graphics used for the Mojo brand of eyewear with the store mapping at shopper’s Stop.](image)

**Views of some leading Visual Merchandisers on In-Store graphics**

According to Ajay Shah (2009)[139]. Director, Picture Studio Pvt. Ltd, a graphic design consultancy in Mumbai “In-store graphics is an effective communication tools. They become attracting tools creating a visual snapshot in the consumer’s mind. The graphics play a dual

139 When the shop talks, Visual Merchandising and Retail Design, Volume 4 (May2009), issue 5, pp12.
role-first of presenting the merchandise in an environment that makes the product more desirable and secondly the graphics could offer a more illustrative approach building a context for the brand in terms of attitude or simply association,

As for the stores, periodical change of in-store graphics helps the retail space to get a new and fresh look in an easy and cost-effective way Juhi Santani (2009) Interior Designer Retail Design Solutions, believe that Posters and lifestyle graphics, give the retailer an opportunity to change and refresh the look of the store in a frequent manner, which does not require much investment or time.

While stores have colors and textures, in-store graphics facilitate in setting the mood of the store and helps in translation of the brand into visual imagery and also at times there is a tendency of an overuse of in-store graphics, which gives the store a cluttered look. Cherishma Mehta (2009) Design Director, Design Square, ask Visual Merchandiser to take care and avoid over polluting the environment with graphics and confusing customers.

Agreeing to this even Ajay feels the same that Retail brands which use in-store graphics effectively understand that overkill can give the store a cluttered look. Hence it is important on deciding how much of the space should allow for a canvas for the product to be visible and how much for graphics.  

Many times in store graphics are used to cover up the back service areas

Image - 4.16 -for e.g. the picture below is from the home section of lifestyle, Ghatkopar; behind the graphics is the back office of the head of the store.

140 When the shop talks, Visual Merchandising and Retail Design, Volume 4 (May2009), issue 5, pp12.
141 When the shop talks, Visual Merchandising and Retail Design, Volume 4 (May2009), issue 5, pp12.
142 When the shop talks, Visual merchandising and retail design, volume 4, (May 2009), issue 5, pp13.
At the same store graphics are intelligently used on the back side of the staircase in the apparels section.

Apart from mentioning the above excellent designs it is very important to understand the present strategies applied by the Indian visual merchandisers and retail designers. What plays a very important role in their success story is the application of sensory retailing in their plans. Today Indian especially the people from metropolitan cities who are overstressed with corporate life, heavy traffic rush; large number and keeping up the standard of living are in search of a place of simulation and relaxation. Here the retailers and today’s visual merchandisers are planning their structures and designs, to meet the need of this unsatisfied lot by using the sensory retailing technique. To understand this let us understand what sensory retailing is.
4.5 - Sensory Retailing – A successful technique

According to Jim Dion “Humans are visual animals! Here is a count of our nerve cells: touch = 40,000; taste = 20,000; hearing = 30,000; smell = 15,000; vision = 260,000,000.”

So with the above given statistics researcher believe that methods for effectively influencing the customer should not be just based on visual impact alone but should address each of the five senses equally, that will reduce the burden on eyes and will bring a balanced communication to all the senses. So we are just not taking about feast for eyes but a satisfactory environment for all five senses.

Extending the sensory impact of the retail environment can even define the retail brand experience, and ensure increase in sales.

Sensory Retailing is a term that also explains the effect of a total consumer experience: to create an atmosphere that has a subconscious effect on the consumer by appealing to the senses. The sense of smell has a powerful influence on behavior. In-store television, video walls and music are more established ways of seeking to excite customer interest. The right

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tempo of music throughout a store will also further enhance the retail experience for the customer.

Out of the eight key components of store design and visual merchandising i.e. Image, Layout, Merchandise presentation, signing and graphics, displays, lighting, floor, ceiling, fixtures, walls and peripherals. **Peripherals are concern with sensory retailing. The Peripherals consist of colors, music and video, fragrance and cleanliness.**

It all begins with the image that one want to convey to the customer. The image is reinforced by store layout. Then the merchandise is presented in the best possible way on different fixtures, with different lights and sign on it. Then the magic is played by “peripherals”– colors, music and video, fragrance and cleanliness. The effect can also start with peripherals to attract customers other than visuals for e.g. Flowers placed at the front of shops, perfumery departments positioned at the entrance of stores and in-store bakeries emit smells which have a powerful, instantly recognizable and tempt the customer to enter and buy.

### 4.5.1 – Lighting – In light of today’s technology

Effective lighting is vital to selling. People buy the merchandise because they see it. The light on a display should be two to five times stronger than the overall room lighting. To illustrate the importance of good lighting, consider a different type of business that uses lighting particularly effectively – the theatre. To highlight particular characters on the stage a spotlight is shone on them to strengthen their presence and focus the audience attention on that character or spot. Good lighting in a store also involves more than simply illuminating space. Lighting is used to highlight merchandise, structure space and capture a mood or feeling that enhances the store’s image. Lighting can also be used to downplay less attractive features that can’t’ be changed. A well-lit window provides a visual link into the store itself, highlighting the type of shop it is, the attitude, atmosphere and ethos of the business and not just the goods on sale. The final effect of the display depends on good, carefully planned lighting, enabling the customer to see the merchandise with perfect clarity. Intelligently controlled, the lighting assists enormously in the design of the window display, and by varying the power and type of illumination, the appearance of the window and the merchandise can be altered to a great extent. Lighting highlights the focus of the display and creates the ambience required for a well-dressed window. Customer’s eyes always focus on the brightest spot within a space; therefore good lighting can lead the customers' eye to the product the retailer wants them to see. Retail units use various lighting in accordance with
their store image and positioning. For example, McDonalds uses bright lights in their stores as it keeps customers in high spirits. A good lighting system provides an accurate color rendition of the merchandise. A green silk tie should look the same color in the store as at the office. When customers evaluate subtle color distinctions to make purchasing decisions, true color rendering is especially critical. For example, maintaining high sales volumes of specialty goods like cosmetics, fabrics and jewelry depends on providing customers with reliable lighting that does not mislead or disappoint them once they get their purchases into daylight. (A department store's cosmetic area requires more expensive lighting than a bare fluorescent lighting found in most grocery stores.)

Image – 4.19 - The above example is the cosmetic counter at Bandra Shopper's stop, Ground floor.

Image - 4.20 - The above picture is a display at the steps of the store. Shopper's Stop, Bandra, Mumbai.
The use of lights is also very important at the display corners. Just turning up the brightness of the display lamps does not always give better illumination and can introduce problems of glare, color distortion, surface damage and fading. Excessively bright all-purpose lamps actually cause perceptual distortions of color by putting out too much yellow and green portions of the visible spectrum. Additional problems arise when bright all-purpose lighting is used due to high levels of ultraviolet wavelength emissions that cause dye colors to fade or change. Sensitive merchandise displayed under lights in display cases suffer damage from the effects of heat and light radiation caused by infrared and ultraviolet rays, and everyday lighting is often too bright and frequently produces washed out colors with strong yellow and green portions of the visible spectrum. Products like cosmetics cannot be sold once they have been on display, since the colors fade drastically under fluorescent lighting or natural light. When a single leather glove or shoe is exposed to light in the display case, it can become so faded that it no longer matches its partner and the pair cannot be sold.

**Diamonds** are graded and valued according to their whiteness and purity, and trying to buy or sell them under a light that is too yellow or too green will have a considerable negative impact on their retail value.

**Lighting types which are generally preferred today are as follows.**

In retail, fluorescent and incandescent lamps are mainly used. Discharge lamps offer poor to no color rendition (emitting a yellowish to orange light), and are not appropriate for indoor use.

*Image – 4.21 - Below given picture is an illustration of Incandescent Lamps*
Tungsten halogen lamps have a light quality that is closer to daylight with an even longer lamp life. Also available are low voltage tungsten halogen lamps that offer excellent color rendition, small lamp sizes, long usage life and low operating costs. These low-voltage lamps are ideal for display purposes and are available with various lamp sizes, beam widths, and brightness (wattage). They can be mounted in down light fittings, on tracks (to create adjustable spot lighting against a display wall), on dropdown pendants, or on wall lamps (to throw light upwards). Recommended on tracks or down lights to create ambience in fashion boutiques, cosmetics stores, cafes, salons etc. Also highly recommended for window displays.\footnote{A Botany Bay council, NSW Dept. Visual merchandising simple and practical ideas to improve your business, retrieved 20 April 2012 from http://www.botanybay.nsw.gov.au/pdf/cityplanning/factsheets/BotanyVisual_MercGuidelines.pdf}

High quality lighting can make a mediocre display look extraordinary. Lighting is generally used to focus the attention of the customer on areas of interest and to highlight items that are unique. Beam spread techniques (the diameter of the circle of light) are also used today as follows:

- **Floodlighting**: recessed ceiling lights to direct light over an entire wide display area
- **Spotlighting**: Focuses attention on specific areas or targeted items of merchandise. It is important that spot lighting within display should be two to five times stronger than the display lighting
- **General lighting**: sometimes called primary or ambient, is the overall lighting for the store. It includes the overall room light, the lights along the aisles, at exits and fire exits, and in the office. General lighting fills the room and shows customers how they look with the merchandise.
- **Secondary or accent lighting**: focuses on the merchandise. It includes special lighting for display areas and spotlights and floodlights to brighten the shelves, cases, counters and windows.
- **Atmosphere lighting**: creates special effects. Color filters, pinpoint spotlights and black light may be used to create drama and to feature specific displays.
- **Pinpointing**: Focuses a narrow beam of light on a specific item
4.5.2 - Use of color - Its impact on customers

Color contributes significantly to people’s impression of a display, as well as a store’s overall appearance. Color in a display can catch the eye and make people pause and look. The color combinations of the ceiling, walls, floor concerning and the overall décor can affect the atmosphere of a store. Changing the color scheme can change people’s attitude and perceptions of a store, and increase or decrease business.

The creative use of color can enhance a retailer’s image and help create a mood. Color can change the shape and add interest to a dull room, and can direct attention towards a specific objects or away from problem areas.

Research has shown that warm colors (red and yellow) produce opposite physiological and psychological effects from cool colors (blue and green). For e.g. red and warm colors have been found to increase blood pressure, respiratory rate, and other physiological responses. As we translate these findings to a retail store environment, Warm colors are thought to attract customers and gain attention, yet they can be distracting and even unpleasant.

In contrast, research has shown that cool colors, like blue or green, are relaxed, peaceful, calm, and pleasant. Thus cool colors may be more effective for retailers selling anxiety-causing products, such as expensive shopping goods. Alternatively, warm colors may be more appropriate in stores that want to generate excitement.  

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145 Holly Bastow-Shoop, North Dakota State University, Dale Zetocha, North Dakota State University, Gregory Passewitz, The Ohio State University, RRD 155, May 1991, Visual Merchandising, a guide for small retailers,
The responses of people in a certain way to colors are also outlined in the following chart.

**Emotional Responses to color**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colors</th>
<th>Emotional Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>A cool color (makes room seem cooler), calms and relaxes excited people, makes time seems to pass quickly. Tends to stimulate thought processes and encourage conversation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Excites and stimulates. Induces aggression, makes time seem to pass more slowly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>A cheerful color. Creates a feeling of warmth and happiness. Draws attention, boosts morale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>Friendly, warm and vibrant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violet &amp; Purple</td>
<td>A cool color. Tends to lend elegant and sophistication, Royal feeling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>Relaxing and warm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gray</td>
<td>Depressing, Cool</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Color schemes are also generally classified by the designers into two categories for simplicity like warm colors and cool colors.

**Warm colors** (red, yellow, orange and colors with red or yellow hues such as yellow-green, beige, peach, brown and orange-red are stimulating and cherry. They make a room feel warm and intimate. Warm colors make a room seem smaller while objects in the room appear larger. A Warm color on the end walls of a long narrow room will appear to shorten the room.

**Cool colors:**

Blue, green, violet and colors containing blue such as blue-green and violet-blue, are cool colors. These help create a relaxing atmosphere. Rooms decorated primarily in cool colors tend to appear larger and more spacious. Cool colors are especially pleasing in smaller rooms. There are no absolute rules for choosing and combining colors, Imagination and experimentation will find color schemes that lend to the atmosphere and attract customers. The type of merchandise featured such as cosmetics, hardware, jewelry, clothing etc. will have an effect on the type of color schemes that can be used and the extent to which they can be used.

The different types of color scheme generally used by visual merchandisers today are as follows:

- **Monochromatic scheme:** A single color used with three to five shades of that single true color. Several pieces of blue merchandise each consisting of a different value ranging from baby blue to navy blue is an example of a monochromatic color scheme.

- **Analogous scheme:** Any three or four color creates an analogous scheme. This can be used to create a soft and subtle décor and warm or cool effect. This color scheme needs to be used with caution so as not to end up with an over stimulating nor depressing atmosphere. E.g. of analogous schemes could be yellow, yellow-green, green and blue-green or blue, blue-green and green.

- **Triadic scheme:** This is a good combination of three colors that can create the traditional look as well as more vibrant color characteristic of modern color scheme. For e.g. red, blue, yellow

- **Complementary scheme:** A complementary color scheme is represented by two colors that are exactly opposite to one another such as green and red or yellow and purple. It can result in a very pleasing combination of warm and cool colors. One should avoid using opposite colors in equal amounts of light and dark combinations.

- **Split complementary scheme:** It is a popular color scheme to create interest and richness. E.g. (yellow, blue-violet and red-violet) and (blue, yellow-orange and red=orange.)

- **Double complementary scheme:** Four colors, consisting of any two sets of complementary colors create a double complementary scheme. E.g. Yellow and purple, as well as red-orange and blue-green.

- **Tone on tone scheme:** Generally no change in either intensity, such as degree of brightness, or shades is used in a tone on tone scheme. A display of blue and blue-violet silk flowers is an example of this scheme.

Knowing about colors and its effect on the viewers can be helpful in designing displays. Certain colors create intense vibration when used together. Bright red and yellow create a hot festive atmosphere that suggests a celebration. Bright colors can also be broken up by an eye-relieving area of solid neutral or light tone. Some of the most effective displays utilize monochromatic schemes because a large area of any one color can be seen from a great distance and will create an impression of strength in that color. The color may also be popularizing fashion, clothing, make-up etc.
The above given pictures are the example of Cinemax. An example of good lighting and color. The Backlit with RGB LEDs on the entire lobby space, transforms into various hues allowing a series of experience.—Design by Sanjaypuri Architects and lighting by Shree Krishna Shrey.

**Background colors:** Generally background colors are selected which shows off the merchandise at its best. Generally neutral colors selected are white, blue, gray, beige and black.

Below table gives a brief of Influence of Background color on merchandise:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color of merchandise</th>
<th>Black background</th>
<th>White background</th>
<th>Beige Background</th>
<th>Dark Gray Background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Enhances in richness</td>
<td>Lightly Duller</td>
<td>Warmer</td>
<td>Brighter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Far more brilliant</td>
<td>Darker, Purer</td>
<td>Bright, but less intense</td>
<td>Brighter, but loses saturation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>More luminous</td>
<td>Richer and darker</td>
<td>A little more luminous</td>
<td>Brighter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Paler, Sharper</td>
<td>Deepens in value</td>
<td>Lighter and yellowish</td>
<td>Increases brilliancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>More luminous</td>
<td>Darker and redder</td>
<td>Lighter and yellowish</td>
<td>Increases brilliancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purple</td>
<td>Loses strength and brilliancy</td>
<td>Darker</td>
<td>Brighter, gray becomes greenish</td>
<td>Gray becomes green.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Color is also graded as per its intensity and can be categorized under 7 groups.

- **Bright Colors**—clear, vivid, primary and secondary colors.
- **Pastels**—Colors with white to lighten and soften their effect.
- **Muted/dusty**—Mid tones with a touch of grey
- **Jewel tones**—Royal colors.
- **Earth tones**—Colors of the earth- Rust, brown, sand
- **Neutrals**—Subdued and compliment all other colors. Neutrals are all shades of beige Brown, Grey, Black and white. They are helpful in softening other colors.

Thus colors create excitement and make the shopping experience pleasant and convenient. It helps in attracting the customer to the stored and creating a loop to navigate the customers direct to the merchandise.

### 4.5.3 – Music – Its impact on customers

Like color and lighting music can either add or detract from a retailer’s total atmospheric package. Unlike other elements however, music can be easily changed and adjusted with a mere change of tape or radio station. For instance a store might use adult contemporary in the morning and switch to latest hit when teen starts coming in. Retailers can also use music to impact customer’s behavior. Music can control the pace of store traffic, create an image and attract or direct consumer’s attention. Like variations in lighting, fixtures, and other store design elements, changing music in different parts of store can help alter a mood or appeal to different markets.

### 4.5.4 – Fragrance – Its impact on customers

Most buying decisions are based on emotions. Of all the human senses, smell has the greatest impact on our emotions. Smell more than any other sense, is a straight line to feeling of happiness, hunger etc. Although particular smells may put customers in a better mood or make them linger in a store longer, there is mixed evidence among researchers that better smells lead to better sales. Retailers must carefully plan the scents that they use, depending on their target market. Gender of the target customer should be taken into account in deciding on the intensity of the fragrance in a store. Research has shown that women have a better ability to smell than men. Age and ethnic background are also factors.
Somesh Singh (2008) Head – Apparel Design and Merchandising National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad. Says “Fragrance and Music are found to be the most relaxing experience for shoppers and supports a great ease of movement within the stores. The fragrance and music also helps expanding spaces and makes consumer feel close to natural and beautiful landscape. The favorite types of music demand are instrumental, Indian classical, natural soundscapes and bollywood music. The fragrance type prefers most are flowers, fruits fresh, mountain breeze, sea side etc.

4.5.5 – Sensory Retailing – A stress-free shopping experience

As per the Researcher, today Consumers are looking for an experience that is inviting and welcoming, a place where they are at ease, a place of solutions for their problems, and a place which helps the consumers to leave their stress behind. Today in this busy and stress full life of urban people, especially in metropolitan city like Mumbai where survival with good life style is a challenge, many people opt for shopping as one of the stress buster.

“Being a consumer sometimes means fantasizing and dreaming about objects, and this is boosted when we come face to face with thing that arouse various feeling of attraction and resistance, “says ottoSOn, who has researched the way we look for things we want to acquire.

According to researcher when a customer is looking or searching for a particular product it becomes an opportunity for him to interact with the world around them where certain aspects which is visually display are focused in their minds and the stress is left behind

It is Retail with a right approach towards visual merchandising fulfills thses aspects. Simple aspect like the sensory retailing with the help of fragrances and music gives a relaxing experience for shoppers and make them feel close to nature and beautiful landscapes. Retail operates as a beautiful window of the world for those who never venture far from their homes. Today’s organized retail with the presence of visual merchandising has become a place of excitement for customers by presenting before them everything from what the celebrities are wearing to how they decorate their homes. Retail is the ultimate place to experience all of life’s little pleasures, diversions and rewards. Today it is Visual

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Merchandising which is used by world-class retailers stimulates customers to discover what they want. Another important aspect of Visual Merchandising is **impacting a sense of ease, making the customers feel at home.**

Therefore researcher personally feels that visual merchandising is a very important aspect which is not taken seriously by today’s retailers. It gives immense benefits to retail business and works positively towards its success. It can also be called as an extension of stores customer service. It enhances the feeling of services and makes the customer feel good. It builds loyalty and helps in repeat purchases by creating a **good shopping experience.** It creates a memorable impression and gives a feast for the senses of customer which helps them to deal with their stress, tensions and loneliness. **It encourages the customer to come back over and over again.** It rewards the customer with benefits beyond the products they carry. It creates an interactive environment and makes it easy for the customers to conduct shopping easily and effectively. Talking about the ethical issue of visual merchandising it shoulders a great responsibility of displaying the products ethically to the customers. In this growing world of media where media had broken so many rules of ethics and had badly affected the young generation, visual merchandisers see to it that their displays do not affect the ethics of the society. When the researcher interviewed Mr. Jim Lucus during the in-store Asia, his views regarding visual merchandising in India advised the Indian visual merchandisers that, today’s VM should help to make complexities of shopping simple and less complicated. According to him a good design should be able to make a loyalty loop and make people reach the right product without wasting time. The design of the store should help to captivate the shoppers and navigate him directly to the product of his interest.

![Image – 4.24 -Jim Lucus. - Director- EVP-DRAFTFCB](image)

He also stresses more on the **sensory retailing** and further states that “While catering to senses, smell and fragrance is at the top. Every store should try in-plant a machine disposing
aroma which periodically dispenses fragrance. Even a Pop-corn machine in the store increases an appetite to shop.

Finally he puts down that it is very important to know our consumers. According to him “Consumers are not marketers because marketers shop rationally but consumers shop emotionally and irrationally. People buy for lot of irrational reasons. High category consumers buy mobiles, cosmetics, perfumes, watches, jewelry irrationally and what is needed by them is a pleasing environment to shop.”

4.6 - Mannequins -A silent sales representative

The Word mannequin came from the Dutch word “Mane Ken” which means little men. There are two accepted spelling for mannequin- “Mannequin” which is the one we have adopted here at Fashion Windows, and ‘Manikin’ which is nearer the original Dutch word.

Mannequins are a store’s most valuable asset for it speaks the clearest fashion message. A mannequin will stand tirelessly for hours and days, in the same place, same position or attitude, always smiling, fresh and pleasant. It does not require ‘love’ but should be handled with care.

Mannequins are the most popular symbol of Visual merchandising and a great example of commercial art. An apparel and lifestyle retail segment heavily depends on mannequins to connect with their customers. The need of mannequins have started in India when the Indian consumers have switched over to ready to wear clothing from made to order ones.147

Image – 4.25 -The above picture is mannequin display - brand Panneri, Shoppers stop, Mumbai.

Mannequins help the shopper to connect to connect themselves through the body idiom. A lady would love to see mannequins wearing the sari of the latest trend. To explain better **Mannequins are ‘static models’ used by the retailers to tell different stories and play different role.** It helps to demonstrate how a fashion will look along with the accessories. A shopper generally with the help of mannequin connects and identifies the style and personality of the store.

Generally the strategy of using a mannequin by a VM is to create an emotion in the display and thereby encourages the customers to come into the store and take a closer look of the merchandise.

Today visual merchandiser takes this front as a challenge by displaying and planning the positioning of the mannequins across the store from the window to focal and high points inside the store that creates a unique look for the brand. Well positioned group of stylish mannequins can change the feel of the store environment. Well planned mannequins today help sell dreams and aspirations of looking good. Therefore the density, size, colour and skin texture of the mannequin needs to complement the fashion statement. The target customer for the brand or merchandise also influences the decision of what type of mannequin should be selected.

According to **VM Department at ‘Madura Garments’**

believes that, no one can resist the temptation of a beautiful dress when it’s seen draped admirably on a body. A mannequin has such power to attract and even influence buyer purchase decision.

At Lifestyle the Visual Merchandising team says that “Mannequins talk about brand attitude and fit hence they contribute a lot to the visual communication.”

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*Image – 4.26 - The above picture shows an example of stand-alone bust form mannequin. It is a picture from the ladies section of Shopper’s stop, Bandra west, Mumbai.*

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In the Indian context too the fundamental requirement of brands and retailers are same as anywhere in the world. The Indian retailers are also demanding good basic mannequins in different poses with the same objective of enticing and persuading sale of the merchandise. But still majority of the Indian retailers focus is on the merchandise and not on the mannequins styling, that is the reason why most of the Indian retailers do not plan their mannequin’s positions and style and they go in for the usual stand-alone poses or the usual bust forms.

Image – 4.27 - An example of a cluster of mannequins at the children section of the store. A Visual merchandiser generally helps to plan a dramatic cluster of poses which gives a unique identity to the store image. Also during the EOSS time (End of season sale) which generally a store faces minimum two times in a year the mannequins are removed from their dramatic cluster areas to get in more space to display maximum merchandise on sale. As EOSS time more space is required, mannequins have to be planned again in the spaces which generally are not used normally for eg.

Image – 4.28 - Below is the picture of central 2 pune where the mannequins are beautifully put up near the staircases during EOSS. Also during EOSS to indicate that special happy discounts colour red becomes the theme for end of season sale. Above picture indicates the same.
The researchers had tried to study many issues related to mannequins.
Firstly taking about the supply side Mannequins are available from Rs. 2,500 to upward of Rs. 30,000 in the Indian market. Established domestic players sell most of their mannequins around Rs. 6,000. The rates of the mannequins also depend on their posture and finish. Some best-in-class imported mannequins even cross Rs. 30,000.
The below Table 4.2 - gives an idea of the mannequins demand in the organized retail.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>No of stores</th>
<th>Ave no of mannequins per store</th>
<th>Demand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hypermarkets</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1,875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discount Stores</td>
<td>1,472</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29,440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty Stores</td>
<td>20,612</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>515,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department Stores</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>10,790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>22,325</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>557,405</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Retailers who rely on Indian mannequin’s supplier complain that they don’t get the correct posture and right facial expressions. As different facial expressions are necessary for different kinds of retail format. The major problems in India which the Indian retailers face is that most of the mannequin’s manufacturer gives the mannequins western look which are only fit for western apparels.

Image – 4.29 - The above picture shows how the western looks of many mannequins do not match the Indian apparel.
Practically many of the Indians with whitish skin look do not associate themselves with it. Due to the skin texture even if the mannequins are well planned and placed it fails to touch the heart of the local customers. Local customers fail to relate themselves to it as it becomes difficult for them to visualize the style. For such customers mannequins become only a part of store decoration.

Another problem related to mannequins pointed out by the researcher is that most of the mannequins are of zero size and stress a lot on perfect shape, whereas the assortment kept in a store gives a choice from slim-fit small to slim-fit large, small to XL or sometimes 2XL or 3XL. A customer of large size or XL size is not in a position to visualize itself looking at a zero size mannequins. Instead of putting a positive impact the mannequins’ rather send a negative massage for such group of customers that they are imperfect and they are not fit for the merchandize.

The selections of the mannequins are generally done on the following parameters and the parameters are ranked as follows by some leading visual merchandisers.

*Source: VM&RD, paying attention to mannequins. Volume 7, issue 1.*

![Table 4.3 – Criteria for mannequin selection](image)

**Table 4.3 – Criteria for mannequins selection**

**Views of certain leading visual merchandisers in relation to mannequins are:**

As per **Meera Sapra**, Industry practitioner on VM says that “Mannequins defines the attitude of the collection. Thus mannequins are designated to the focal area/window/in-store panels complementing and enhancing the personality of the brand”

As per **Animesh Ikshit**, General Manager, project and VM, United colors of Benetton says that “Mannequins are a part of the ambience and keep changing from one retail design concept to the other from time to time.”

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As per Unni Augustine,\textsuperscript{151} Head Visual merchandising, Madura Garments, Ven Heusen, says that “Mannequins are a combination of the brand philosophy, brand image, retail identity and the positioning of the brand”.

As per Sanjay Agrawal,\textsuperscript{152} Managing Director, FRDC, says that “Mannequins add glamour, drama, and a seduction factor to retail stores”.

As per Elena Maurer,\textsuperscript{153} Managing Director, LIGANOVA, says that “Mannequins in general, inspire and evoke an emotional influence on customers. It indirectly increases sales, a process which is called the “subconscious shopping behavior”. She further states that customers tend to identify themselves with what they see, and hence compare themselves. Therefore, choosing the right mannequins for a store design is highly relevant for the overall retail business as a success factor.

So today all those visual merchandisers who are bothering about the quality, durability, availability, cost and realistic looks of the mannequins should also try to concentrate on the size and Indian skin textures of the mannequins.

In the race of being cost effective and more stylish the VM should not forget to focus on the issue of mannequins being eco-friendly. They should encourage those manufacturers who keep this aspect in mind.

\textbf{4.7 - Space Management an important job of Visual merchandiser}

Space management is the first and foremost concern of every retailer which is also a real big challenge for a Retail designer or a Visual merchandiser. Space is always an extremely expensive and scarce resource. Retailers try to maximize the return on sales per square foot.

Planning a layout for the store's interior is the first step in designing the store's interior. Out of different types of layouts options available the visual merchandisers generally tries to bring the best combination to use the space more intelligently. Administering space to a wide variety of merchandise categories in a store is very difficult proposition. Such allocation of space can be on the basis of many factors, like historical sales, daily average sales, profit, margins, industry averages and strategic reasons. Apart from allocating space to various merchandise categories and brands, some space has to be set aside for some essential supplementary services. Such essential functions includes the back room for accepting and

\textsuperscript{151} Paying attention to mannequins, Visual Merchandising and Retail Design, Volume 7 (Sept.2011), issue 1, pp20.

\textsuperscript{152} Paying attention to mannequins, Visual Merchandising and Retail Design, Volume 7 (Sept.2011), issue 1, pp20.

\textsuperscript{153} Paying attention to mannequins, Visual Merchandising and Retail Design, Volume 7 (Sept.2011), issue 1, pp20.
sorting the inventories, office and other functional spaces like customer service desks, floor space and changing rooms. All retailers today would love to develop a concept store irrespective of size and budget. For e.g. Lifestyle is based on different concepts. They deal maximum in private label. Their concepts basically revolve round Home concept, apparels, body care, men’s, ladies etc. Most of the VMs may efforts towards creating a concept store and wants to utilize the space creatively but at the same time they need to control the cost which is the real and major challenge. Out of all the basic issues like space availability, material availability, fixture development, mannequin planning, dealing with local and international vendor’s etc. space availability is the most crucial aspect. There is a lot of disparity of space in India which isn’t prevalent in any part of the world. The space available for rental is at very high premium in Mumbai and retailers are waiting for downturn in property market so that more space is available at affordable price. When India’s first two luxury malls opened in 2008- DLF Emporium in Delhi and UB city in Bangalore- it was welcomed by luxury retailers that had otherwise struggled to find suitable space to sell their wares. Real Estate is still a challenge for luxury retailers, restricting growth in the country. The French label Christian Dior, the apparel to fragrances brand scouted for a suitable space in Mumbai for more than four years before finally setting for a store in the upscale Taj-Mahal Palace Hotel in October 2010, as the company hasn’t found a suitable space in the city for its men’s collection, Dior Homme. “Retail estate is a huge challenge in India. Positioning is the primary factor for any retailer. This is a brand building exercise for us in India right now,” said Kalyani Saha, Vice President for Marketing and communication at Christians Dior Couture India. Genesis Luxu-154. This shows that the market has potentials but to find out a right real estate is difficult. It Costs Rs. 800-1,000 per sq.ft to rent space in New Delhi or Mumbai. As mentioned earlier space in Mumbai especially is the most important issue today. It is not that planning of location decides the real estate demand in Mumbai but the real estate conditions today decides the location of the store. The issue arises from the fact that retailers have to size their stores according to business viability based on expected sales owning to which spaces in metro-Politian city like Mumbai needs to be larger. But the availability and rate is not as per the retailers wish. For example if any brand had to start a store of less than 5000 sq. ft. in Mumbai he needs to first look in to the challenge of the real estate rates

The table 4.4 - shown is the actual prices of the store rentals as per the year 2011. The researcher through its formal sources had collected the above mentioned rates which show how a brand needs to invest to capture a location in a well-placed mall in Mumbai. Taking an example of a vanilla store less than 5000 sq. ft. carpet area the researcher had enquired for the rates to locate it and the chart shows how Mumbai is the hot spot for most of the retailers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Ground Floor</th>
<th>First Floor</th>
<th>Second Floor</th>
<th>CAM( Common area maintenance)</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inorbit Mall</td>
<td>Malad</td>
<td>350-400</td>
<td>300-350</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>CAM expensive as it includes AC Cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megamall</td>
<td>Oshiwara</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infinity</td>
<td>Andheri West</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>55-65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oberoi</td>
<td>Goregaon East</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hub Mall</td>
<td>Goregaon East</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Street Phoenix</td>
<td>Lower Parel</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sky Zone Phoenix</td>
<td>Lower Parel</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palladium Phoenix</td>
<td>Lower Parel</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Galleria</td>
<td>Lower Parel</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchid City Centre</td>
<td>Mumbai Central</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sobha City Centre</td>
<td>Tardeo</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Occupied by Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atria</td>
<td>Worli</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R City</td>
<td>Ghatkopar</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nirmal Lifestyle</td>
<td>Mulund</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R Mall</td>
<td>Mulund</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inorbit Mall</td>
<td>Vashi</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Raghu Leela Mall</td>
<td>Vashi</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre One</td>
<td>Vashi</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thakur Mall</td>
<td>Dahisar</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korum</td>
<td>Thane</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R Mall</td>
<td>Thane</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CR2</td>
<td>Nariman Point</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Taking the above example if an assumed vanilla store has to locate itself in Inorbit mall in ground floor with a space of 5000 or less sq. ft. Then he has to pay Rs. 2, 00,000 as rent for
the month. With such high rentals the store needs to keep itself cost effective and need to increase its sale per square foot.

In spite of high real estate the retail expansion plans at the beginning of 2011

At the beginning of 2011 modern retailers had become wiser form experience and drew expansion plans after facing an introspection and market shocks of post-recession. Retailers reworked their strategies to ensure a consistent growth. They learned the tact of dealing with high rentals and operational cost. Many high street single store brand closed down their shops to come into the multiband retail formats. Malls started drawing large foot falls as the consumers spending power was raising. “By 2015, modern retail is predicted to have 15% share of the overall pie.” Said Devangshu Dutta, founder of retail consulting firm Third Eyesight.”

Graph-4.1- Expansions plans: The below chart shows increase in shopping mall space in top Indian cities. -

Comments and plans of certain retail brands at the beginning of 2011.

“We are coming back to the aggressive growth phase and expanding with a clear view, we have seen a swing in our performance in the last two financial years, with improvement of Rs. 350 crores. In 2011 we reckon we will improve by another Rs. 100 crores.” said Thomas Varghese, CEO of ABRL.

155 Hindustan Times, Mumbai, Monday, January 17, 2011.
At the beginning of 2011 ABRL planned to expand both its supermarket chain, more and its hypermarket chain, More Mega store adding 50 supermarkets to its count of 532 and three hypermarkets to its nine as “anchor sores” in malls. By 2016 the retailer aims to scale up its supermarket and hypermarket chain to 1,300 and 65, respectively, this same ABRL had closed 200 stores during recession.

“Expansions plans are very much on course. The aspirations and depth are high in smaller cities and thus very much on our agenda” Said Govind Shrikhande, managing Director, Shopper’s Stop.

Shoppers Stop at the beginning of 2011 had planned to add up 60 more malls to its present number of 34 by 2013, and raise its hypermarket number to 26 from 8.

“The hypermarket model seems to be the flavor of the day. Our intention is to keep growing and consolidate the business. In the last four-five years, we have been growing at a CAGR (Compound annual growth rate) of over 30% Last year, we touched Rs. 8,000 crores in revenue and are looking at crossing Rs. 12,000 crores this year” said Raghu Pillai, CEO Future Group. “So far we were primarily in high streets, but now we are looking at malls in 10,000-15,000 square feet spaces. Large format is the place to be” said Sunil Mehta, CEO, NEXT Retail (Electronic Chain).

“We are in expansion mode and are looking at another 10 stores across important cities in the next one year, “said Niliesh Gupta, managing partner, Vijay Sales (Speciality retail chain in consumer electronics).

Shashank Patwardhan (2009)\(^{156}\) says “The space availability is at a very high premium, this effects the role out of new stores project to a great extent. Retailers are waiting for a downturn in the property market so that more space is available at an affordable price.

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**Table - 4.5 - These are few names of VMs and Design firms who are successful operating in India especially in Mumbai and they had taken the challenge to increase the shelf-esteem of its brand, administer the space and increase the foot falls in their store.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Company/Brand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surender Gnanaolivu</td>
<td>VP-Store Development</td>
<td>Mahindra Retail. Pvt. Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shibani Shourie</td>
<td>General Manager, VM</td>
<td>Aditiya Birla Retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somesh singh</td>
<td>Head - Apparel Design and Merchandising</td>
<td>National Institute of Design.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{156}\) The Go-Getter, Visual Merchandising & Retail Design, Volume 4 (Jan 2009), issue 3, pp57
Badal Suchak | Head-VM | Titan Industries
--- | --- | ---
Surender | Store Development | Mahindra Retail
Balaji Natrajan | VM | Tanishq
Savita | VM | MY planet home
Sandesh | VM | Arvind
Vinay Kumar | Deputy Manager-VM | Mahindra Retail
Arden | VM-Head | Shoppers stop
Sharon Pimento, Astha sinha, Namrata sachdev, Kranti fernandes | VM | Shoppers stop

**Names of few well known retail design firms**

- Four Dimensions Retail Design
- Ajay Shah Design Studio
- Design Forum
- Fourth Dimension
- Design for Change
- LIGANOVA
- FITCH
- Shark
- DRAFTFCB
- WD Partners India Pvt. Ltd.
- Orangetip
- KIingsmen Fairtech International Pvt.Ltd
- Insight
- Idiom Design and Consulting Ltd.
- Glue Design Pvt. Ltd.
- GH Graphics Pvt. Ltd.
- Design-square
- Foley Designs

**4.8 - Developing customers Loyalty towards a store**

It is very difficult to develop customer’s loyalty towards a retail store. Customers are getting ready to see abundance of retail and more so they prefer high values, high designs and specialty stores. Today large Indian customer base is generally aspirational middle class who first look at value and then class. Therefore all those formats who keep in mind such ideology of local customers have better potentials to develop customer loyalty towards it.

Today the customer does not want a store that is cluttered with merchandise or fixtures. They need foot breathing space and a relaxed and easy to shop retail layout. They are on a look out for a warmer and more elegant look to the store which gives life to the product.
Today’s customers are attracted to those retail formats who understand customers’ needs and present the store concept in such a way that it adds value to the customers purchase. The customers are in search of solution providers. **Mr. Stephen Remedious** (Head, Trade and customer marketing, Personal care, modern trade). –Hindustan Unilever Ltd. and **Mr. Damodar Mall** (Director, Food Strategy- Future group– Big Bazaar) had very unique views regarding design and customer loyalty. According to Mr. Stephen Remedious “A Visual Merchandiser has a great challenge in designing a store like Big Bazaar, as it does not work on pure VM strategy . What works in such a store is a planned clutter, Elbow push factor, but brush factor. He believes in stocking more merchandise in the store as according to him and Indian women would like to pick up from a basket full of products rather than picking up one from the five or ten.

Simple solutions works wonders according to him for example increasing the basket size, spacious and beautiful aisles, not making the customers rethink about their purchases while waiting at the payment counters, so providing them more payment counters with attractive merchandise placed at the counters.

According to Mr. Damodar mall “Customers who shop at Big Bazaar are not necessarily from nuclear family. But they do have senior citizens and youngsters therefore the store look needs to connect through different generations. Though nuclear living is growing aspect but still extended family is living in the mind i.e. family, cousins, and society or mohalla mindset. Every city is different therefore designs should be changed as per new city. The store head becomes the ‘karta’ for its look and the VM works accordingly. Even pricing and promotions are at store level for e.g. different strategy is adopted for Bhayander store were we have more of Gold Collared (Self-employed) in comparison to Vashi were we have more of White collared customers.”

He also stresses on the ‘elbow push factor’ which is a contradictory element of visual merchandising strategy which gives importance to foot breathing space and spacious ailes. According to him what works in a big bazaar king of store is the elbow push factor where the trolleys dashes each other and the customer feels that the place is very important and had stored something very important for them. What works is the deliberate disorder. But such an element of deliberate disorder does not work for all the categories. So for categories like perfumes and watches etc one needs a planned design.

The researcher on the other hand believes that the Indian appreciate the magical experience in the store because of the royal and rich culture. They need personal attention which helps them
to associate themselves with the store. Retail formats that see to it that sufficient manpower is present at the front end will remain successful in creating a rapport with the customer. The front end staff always invests a lot of time in knowing their customers. So it becomes the duty of the retailer to retain them in their places. Even when the VMs are designing a self-service format they need to keep in mind that a ‘greeter’ or some technique of making the customer feel homely is required which will help to create the loyalty of the customer towards the retail store.

**Visual merchandiser and their expected role today in interior store design and its relation with customer’s loyalty towards the store.**

Conventional retailers design their stores in ways that produce emotional effects on shoppers, which in turn influence their shopping behavior in favor of the retail store. Retail store image is one of the most powerful tools in attracting, influencing, and satisfying consumers. A retailer manager or a visual merchandiser is expected to design or redesign a store, with an objective of influencing customer’s preferences, buying decisions, and shopping behaviors. The store interiors are designed in such a way as to influence customer behavior. It takes care of the optimum use of equipment, displays, color, illuminations, music, ambience and floor management. Merchandise management is the most insignificant facet of store design, because it is a key attribute to draw customers’ awareness. A retailer can adopt several strategies of merchandise presentation such as idea-oriented presentation, item-oriented presentation, price lining, color presentation, vertical merchandising and frontal presentation, which supplement a distinct image of the store. It is a well-known fact that store layout decisions certainly determine the issue of the amount of time that customer spends for shopping.

The shopping experience, as created by the store environment, has been found to play an important role in building store patronage.

According to the researcher general factors affecting operational efficiency which can become the reason for discomfort of customers today are also important elements. The visual merchandiser cannot overlook these factors which has a relative effect on their work.

Today if we look around any retail store we can face the below mentioned following situations that will definitely cause customer attrition. These situations may exhibit poor customer relation and servicing offenses which creates discontentment. Here are ten situations which may turn off customers: *Dirty Bathrooms, Messy Dressing Rooms, Loud &
unsetting Music, Handwritten Signs, Stained Floor & dirty ceiling Tiles, Poor illumination, Horrible & Odious Odors, Crowded Aisles, Disorganized Checkout Counters, Lack of Shopping Baskets

Even taking about the service area and the maintenance part most of the time the service areas of a store may appear to be a secondary consideration in the design process, but they can in fact be central to the success of the store. These areas can include cash and wrap areas, fitting rooms, waiting areas, repair counters, ticketing areas, staff rooms, offices and space for tailoring and alterations. These areas need to be well thought out in the planning stage to accommodate every need of the store.

Taking about other services majority of the customers would not like to stand at the cash counters for more than 2-3 minutes. A seating arrangement is require especially for the aged who would like to sit at intervals during their shopping hours. A medical assistance to meet any injuries to customers during shopping can make the customer sense the responsible of the store for its people. Grievance redressal is one of the biggest areas of concern which can create loyalty. When the customers feel that all these requirements are fulfilled definitely what is created is the loyalty towards the store.

When a visual merchandiser designs and place the merchandise beautifully he also intends to attract customers but the whole efforts taken by him becomes useless if the store is not been properly maintained. A dirty looking store makes the impression that the store keeper does not value his store, merchandise and customers. He makes the customer feels that the retailer has lost interest and is not respecting his business. So therefore housekeeping is very important to keep intact the charm of the beautiful work done by a visual merchandiser. The retailers of India should learn from retail outlets of other countries like Dubai, where the House keeping is an important and serious affair.

Today these situations have to be corrected as motivating customers to visit the store and making them buy are two different things and require different strategies. Research has revealed that 60% of customers make buying decisions while they are moving in the store. This revelation clearly signifies the value of ambience, design, and display in the retail store that influence customers to make purchasing decisions. Small and few simple thoughts can revitalize a store's displays. Apart from proper utilization of space, a strategic mix of colors, layout, and overall atmospheric can do wonders to create an enticing ambience for their customers. The most important agendas which are generally kept in mind by a successful
visual merchandiser today are keeping consistency with retailer’s image, positioning and strategies. Being cost effective and achieving sales-per-square-foot, providing positive influence on purchase behavior and last but not the least attempting innovation in recreating their displays periodically. Yet another way of winning customer loyalty is making customer aware about the use of technology in retail

**It is well said “The future depends on what we do in our presence” a saying by Mahatma Gandhi totally fits here.**

In the light of modern retail and what is needed is modern advance technology for e.g. mobile transaction solution, smart phones to shop. This modern technology will be successful if the retail design back up these plans. But still “VM and retail design is all about simplicity” as rightly said by Mr. Jaspreet Bindra- Regional Director Entertainment & devices Division Microsoft Corporation (India) Pvt. Ltd. According to him “Retail is show business and a show needs a good story, script and cast i.e. consumer experience @ retail. A show needs best crew comprising of internal team and vendors i.e. Building categories @ Retail. A good show needs profitability”

**As per the Researcher:** The secret of success of a good design is to start from scratch and keep scratching. There will be tremendous shift of power. Power of big MNCs will decrease as companies are not going to be important. Real cutting edge activity is going to come from retailer. The power will shift because 80% of these MNCs will become modern retailers therefore retailing is going to get more powerful. As the world of retail gets complex with automatic shopping process, automatic shelf managing process. The consumer is still going to remain unautomated i.e. why we need to give them solutions. It is important for retailers to get simple in these complexities. “Consumers are very simple person who make complex buying decision very simply, therefore VM should be all about simplicity”.

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