



AN EVALUATION ON ROLE OF WINDOW DISPLAY AS A VISUAL MERCHANDISING TECHNIQUE ADOPTED IN RETAIL APPAREL STORES

Roopa J¹, Dr H.H. Ramesha²

Abstract- Visual merchandising is a technique mainly adopted to drive increased store traffic, raise customer engagement levels and to increase sales. window display is one of the important elements in attracting potential new customers. Window display is an effective store level marketing tool that enhances store personality and style. This paper explores the kind of impression that window displays creates in the minds of customers. The importance of displays while exhibiting store merchandise considering their retail apparel store image is studied. This paper is an effort to analyse the role that window displays play in attracting and leading a customer for purchase, as window display is the first encounter of visual merchandising element designed by a retail apparel store.

Keywords: visual merchandising, window display, apparel.

I. INTRODUCTION

Last two decade has seen a drastic change in the competitive retail industry by leaving customer with more choices than ever before. Merchandising is the practice and process of displaying and selling products to customers. Visual merchandising in the retail industry refers to all of the display techniques used to highlight the appearance and benefits of the products and services being sold..it includes everything as to how exterior store looks like to how interiors are designed, how products are displayed, what kind of store layout is laid, how mannequins are used, how themes are designed, colour combination of walls, floor, ceiling. The lighting patterns of the store, how many products are offered in the store, signages used, promotional messages designed, kind of furniture and fixtures used in the store is also a part of visual merchandising in short it includes effort taken by retail store to create a customer value by making his shopping experience pleasant. visual merchandising image should be aligned with the image a retail store brand carry. Displays serve as a unique form of advertising rather than making it a piece of art it should be attractive enough to make a customer enter into a store

It influences customers to choose what they are looking for by making a choice of what they see in the store mannequins and window display give a self-image of how they can carry a product this happens especially with the apparels. customer decision making process is very much influenced by what they see in front of them say for example when a see a discount tag or a promotional signage like sale they might get carried away with the feeling that products are available at less price than usual and unconsciously involve themselves in the purchase to enjoy the reward. The process of visual techniques starts outside a retail store it engages a customer and motivates to enter a store.

The reason why visual merchandising is getting important these days is to earn increased customers base coz they notice what's in your store to offer them and enjoy the experience created for them and also to lead to store again. It creates an approach where every inch of store is used to a maximum limit where more goods can be displayed and highlighted that helps customer to get associated to the merchandise in the store. The possible barriers to implement visual merchandising could be changing layouts and aisles, interiors, layout to make it

¹Research Scholar, Bangalore. Centre for Post Graduate Studies Bangalore Region, Chickaballapura, VTU-562101.India.

²Associate Professor. Centre for Post Graduate Studies Bangalore Region, Chickaballapura, VTU-562101.India.

more engaging by customers frequently. This increases more pressure on staff as more service issues may be involved a well-trained staff to handle customers. Added cost, lack of insight may be a block for visual merchandising implementation.

Window display is the creative method to display your products to your customer so that customer develops an interest of the product. It gives wide information about the store. It's the first point of contact where a quick impression is created between customers and retail store. Window display is one of the key external factors that influence purchase decision. Window displays silently speaks about what they can expect from store, what exactly store is offering them and it invites them to enter into store. With the properly planned displays it leads to positive and significant impact on consumer attention.

Window display establish a connection between shopper and brand in its first interface, even before shopper enter the store retailer can influence a purchase i.e. an impact displays got to play. A good window display should explain the image that store carries for its customer. It's one of the good source or a platform through which retailers can advertise, promote for any seasonal sales, discounts new arrivals etc to consumers. One important benefit of window display is it can lead to impulsive buying customers might get carried away with the products that is displayed and immediately engage themselves in a unplanned purchase decision ie the power of window display. This happens when window display is planned, orderly, innovative and attractive to catch customers attention.

Different types of window display could be open display gives a glimpse to the store, closed, island display found in store with huge space with the centre island display, semi closed contains displays that are partially covered but not in whole of window, corner displays are created at the corner of stores to create awareness when people walk around store, elevated used for high value items display is raised enough to catch ones eye, shadow box window display used in displaying smaller items like jewellery and accessories. The types of display varies with the space available, brand image of the store.

Window display principles include starting with a story or theme to be more effective, need to keep it simple and balanced, lot of importance to be given to lighting and colour combination, provide instant information to people who walk around store. window displays to be creative enough to draw customers attention. Themes should not be repetitive design them to engage viewers imagination. Design should be such a way that it makes use of available space and expose more products to customer and budget friendly design. Need to go with the current fashion trend. create a focal point i.e. display the advantage of buying the product. Using props and having multiple layers of height so that customer can discover various items. use of graphics that is visible from far accomplish the goal.

II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to know the role window display has got to play in retail apparel stores, to what extent they add on value to store and how big the impact they can create in the minds of customer to attract customers and lead to sales. How it can help retail stores to keep up the competition and entice consumer to shop in the store. window display can be of a great help which convert a window shopper or a walk in customer to an actual customer of a retail store. This topic helps to analyse the store atmospherics and create an engaging store environment.

III. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of study is restricted to study of window display as a part of visual merchandising technique used in retail apparel store. The study is an effort to know how creative window displays can be more successful in attracting customers towards store and how it can influence store window attitude, store image and retailer's effort in designing seasonal themes. This paper is an understanding of all effort which goes in to creating an eye-catching window display to enhance sales.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study importance of window display techniques adopted in retail apparel store.
- To analyse the impact of window display on customers.

V. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Visual merchandising effect in retail industry is studied in depth in recent times including various dimensions of it like window display, mannequins display, colour, lighting, music played at the background. store layout etc. window display is something that is studied at a preliminary level in earlier study(1) window display impact was studied with connection to surroundings, message, fashion trend they carry.(2) they have highlighted window display as a aesthetically pleasing fashionable presentation that converts passive customer to active customer ,they have discussed in detail different types of window display that are implemented across retail stores.(3) research was undertaken applying the stimulus organism response theory and study perception of window display in creating customer desire to visit store and purchase.

VI. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The effectiveness of window display can be enhanced by not overcrowding the space, combining the products that are complements to encourage cross sales. educating customers about the new arrivals in town, need to pay attention to the backgrounds and lighting and give importance to the small detailing also to create attention, need to look into the expenditure and sales ratio of maintaining window display. window display is a popular tool to publicize and sell items in store and this strategy should go along with the overall marketing strategy of the store. use of props and signage, graphics definitely helps to connect with the senses of passer-by.

An art of creating effective display is need of the hour to make retail space productive and to generate maximum revenue it's a combination of aesthetic art of thought process to be involved in designing along with the modern science of techniques and strategy to be inculcated in putting across and testing a new display and constantly updating it as per the requirement . a lot of changes have been observed in window display earlier it used to be only a part of store information but now it has grown in dimensions being related to image it adds to the store. professionals are hired to design displays for the store to not only beautify the stores but also to give an edge to stand apart from the crowd that is the growing importance of store displays.

A good display can give an instant information about and serves as an excellent platform to promote sales and special offers if any to customers. It directs a customer by giving a hint of what you can expect from a store by reducing unnecessary time and energy in. It requires to measure the success after implementing or making changes in display to monitor the performance whether changes in window display techniques has paid off in terms of sales, drawing customers to stores, is it persuading to buy impulsively in short whether investing in shop displays has paid off in financial terms to check cost benefit ratio.

Window display convey quality, value and create interests to make customer visit a store. success of displays all depends on creativity of retailer towards planning displays, themes, background, originality of themes, creativity and artistic visualisations involved in executing displays. Displays should be in such a way that it should affect customer purchase decision in a positive way. Display should be creative and aesthetic to create a image in the market and certainly to achieve commercial success window displays have a great role to play. displays in short communicate the content, current fashion trends, price, sales going on in the store.

Displays should not take customer away from the product coz too much of investment and too many graphics, photography, lighting, colour combinations used may take away limelight from the product to the background display. Sometimes displays pattern may be unrelated and fail to create the required shopping environment. should plan to make display place not been crowded nor having too less products to display.

VII. Conclusion:

This external façade of store is definitely a critical element for success of store, it has lot more to do in terms of adding value to the store image, pulling a customer to store and standing different among stores which carry similar products. This element of visual merchandising takes more efforts in creating first and best impression of retail store as it improves customers perception and enhances willingness to enter store. Mannequins, colour combinations used, lighting, graphics, signage used form an integrative part of displays. This should suggest the current trend and always to be updated as per current fashion apparel scenario. This has an emotional element attached to the customer perception and customers can rely on their own interpretation of the image conveyed rather than depending on the image created by brands i.e. to enter a store or not is in the hands of customers. This element of visual merchandising makes a store keeper focus more on how does the store looks and what image it is carrying to reach the desired set of audience. Store has to reach the concerned segment of shoppers and suit their taste and preferences .mannequins in the window display form an integral part of the display cabinet where it give a picture of how does the apparel look like when worn by customer it is something which

gives a hint and leads a customer to enter a apparel store as apparel is something which depends more on visual attraction rather than previous purchase experience like electronic purchase.so it is always required for a apparel seller to create and re create magic in designing window displays or else his store may go outdated and fail to attract people which lead to economic burden on the seller.

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