

13.11: Why It Matters- Retail Image- Layout and Visual Merchandising

Visual merchandising is the way a retail store speaks to its shopper. It may not be the only way to communicate, but it's a very important tactic for a retailer.

Visual merchandising engages the customer. A retailer can use bold colors to draw attention, light a product in a way that makes it attractive, set it up so a shopper can touch it and feel it. He can set up his store so that the shopper walks by many products, sees things he might not have come in to see, and, as a result, buys things he didn't come in to buy.

Visual merchandising also helps organize the store for the customer. There's nothing more frustrating than walking into a store and



not being able to find what you need.

Visual merchandising helps to define the store's brand. If you walk by a window display at Bergdorf Goodman in New York, what you see is not telling you that you'll find deep discounts inside.

Similarly, if you walk into a TJ Maxx, you'll visually pick up on the cue that they sell name brands at low prices by the way the merchandise is presented.

Visual merchandise helps create a store experience. You want your shopper to feel a certain way about your store. If they get the creative vibe, the "clean and neat" vibe, the young and funky vibe then all of those feelings inform the shopper's store experience, creating something memorable, engaging, and fun.

Visual merchandising influences and helps the customer see what "can be" versus what "is." Customers makes up to 80% of their shopping decisions while they are in the store. By grouping merchandise together to show how items can be used together, or how it can be paired with other items, increases the probability of add-on sales.

This is a retailer's time to influence the customer and make more sales. More sales means more margin and profit: this is why visual merchandising matters.

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