

13.20: Product Layout

Learning Objectives

- Explain how a retailer classifies its products into layout groupings

An excellent cut of bacon and some fresh eggs off the farm . . . each of those is an example of good grocery store merchandise. Displaying some of that bacon near the eggs in the refrigerator section of the grocery store . . . that's an example of good grocery store merchandising.

You can have all kinds of great product in your store, but if you don't organize it logically and attractively, it won't sell.

Retailers use layout groupings to help the shopper find the product he wants – and maybe a few products he doesn't know he wants. You don't see Lowe's or Home Depot selling paint on one side of the store, and then selling paint brushes on the other side of the store. That would confuse the customer and waste his time. Good merchandising means displaying your paint near your paint brushes, rollers, tape and trays. The customer might come in for paint, and then decide to pick up a new brush while he's there. He might have forgotten the tape if he hadn't seen it. And he has a paint tray, but that new one looks pretty slick—so he picks that up, too.

Before we take a look at some common merchandise groupings, let's take a moment to learn the three rules of visual merchandising

1. Make merchandise visible—what isn't seen, isn't purchased.
2. Make merchandise tangible and accessible—customers want to see and touch before they purchase.
3. Give customers good choices—but not too many choices. Shoppers purchase more when they have fewer products to choose from but a nice selection.

Considering these rules, we'll look at a few different ways merchandise can be displayed to its best advantage, giving consideration to those three rules above and helping increase sales conversion.

Bundled Grouping

Bundled presentations of merchandise allow for a group of like items to be presented together, because they can be purchased together. IKEA does this magnificently. Rather than putting all their couches together, all their desks together, they set up rooms full of their furniture pieces. When a customer walks through, they can see all the products working together.

Shopping at IKEA

This is how it works: You, the customer, come upon the display. Is that room about the size of your room? It is! Would that coffee table work well in your living room, given it's the right size for the room and the right color? Why, yes! And you weren't looking for end tables, but because you see them there, it seems like a good idea to pick them up while you're there.

Bundled presentations don't always come in the form of fully furnished rooms. You also see them at the grocery store, when they're showing off their wine in a basket with bread and cheese. You're not buying that basket, of course, but you're picking those items off a shelf nearby.

Complementary groupings

Complementary groupings (often referred to as “cross-merchandising”) are similar to bundled presentations in that they sell different items that go together. But they're sold adjacent to one another, not necessarily as part of a separate display. They can be grouped right on the shelves.

Shopping in the Grocery Store

This is how it works: You, the shopper, head into the grocery store to grab some pancake mix. While you're picking it off the shelf, you see the bottles of Vermont maple syrup placed right next to it. You pick up one of those, too.

The eggs and bacon, and the painting equipment, are examples of complementary groupings. Birthday cards and wrapping paper, mobile phones and chargers, flashlights and batteries, all of them are complementary groupings. Without the merchandising grouping, one might run in and buy the birthday card and forget the wrapping paper, or buy a new mobile phone and pick up a charger for the car, even though it wasn't the shopper's original intention.

Prop groupings

Mannequins are perhaps the most commonly used “prop” in merchandising. Outfits are created on the mannequin and then tables or racks of that merchandise are grouped around it so shoppers can buy what they see. Mannequins can attract shoppers from a distance away, standing like a beacon over other fixtures in the store. Used wisely, they'll pull shoppers into areas they might otherwise skip in the normal flow of traffic around the store.

✓ Shopping for Clothes

This is how it works: You, the shopper, are headed through the department store to purchase a new pair of running shoes. On your way, you see a mannequin wearing a pair of fabulous biking pants. You stop and check out the displays around the mannequin and find your size. You find you also like the jacket the mannequin is wearing, and it matches the pants perfectly. It goes home with you as well.

Mannequins aren't the only kind of props to be found in a store. Wine stores frequently use barrels to display their merchandise. Natural baskets might be used to display vegetables in a grocery store. An inflatable palm tree might be used to draw attention to a table of suntan lotions in the middle of a northern winter.

Groupings of products positively impacts sales conversion. Putting like products together helps shoppers buy everything they need—it takes the hassle out of their shopping experience and tempts them with items they weren't necessarily looking for. Bundling them and using props helps the shopper see the product “in action.” They can envision the product on their person, in their home, and see how good it's going to be.

? Practice Questions

<https://assessments.lumenlearning.co...sessments/9292>

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