

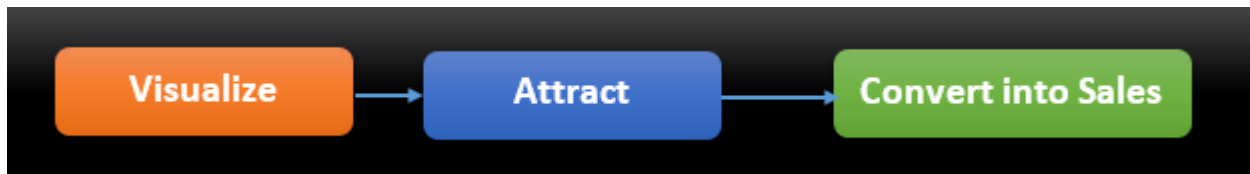
Visual Merchandising

Now visual merchandising is a widely used tool to bring success to the retail business. Visual Merchandising is getting higher acceptance because of its ability to visualize an idea, attract the target customer through creating a visual effect on their mind which induce to buy a product from the store.

3 Phases of Visual Merchandising

Three phases of visual merchandising help to clearly define the functions of visual merchandising. The phases are

- Visualize
- Attract and
- Convert into Sales



Merchandising

Merchandising is a set of activities Merchandisers do to sell the product or services to the target customers. Here merchandising is done by the merchandiser. And visual merchandising is one of the popular tools used by merchandiser.

What is Visual Merchandising?

Visual merchandising is a process of creating a visualization of marketing ideas for the purpose of creating attraction, interest in the mind of customers by visual means. Sometimes visual merchandising helps to make people better-understood the product and service type of a business.

Examples of Visual Merchandising

Suppose you are planning to buy a new dress and go to a particular place but you did not yet select the shop or brand from where you will purchase your dress. After reaching there you saw a well-decorated shop with beautiful dolls are placed in gorgeous dresses, salespersons are well dressed and outside display is showing they are offering a 50% discount. You saw all of these and become interested to go inside the shop/stall. So your mind induces to visit their shop and purchase a few items. Here the main focus thing is, you were first influenced and this influence is created by their visualization which is as a result of visual merchandising. They successfully influence you to buy their product and merchandisers are actually working for selling goods and services.



Let See Another Example of Visual Merchandising



Look into this picture, a company trying to sell their product “Fresh Drinking Water” so they put this image for promoting their product. Here they were trying to use the emotion of health conscious people by showing the sugar level in a particular product. People know that too much sugar is not good for health, and they are showing their drinks is sugar-free. Actually, they are using visual merchandising for sales promotion of their product which will help them to sell their product.

Characteristics of Visual Merchandising

From the above description of visual merchandising, you can identify the following characteristics of visual merchandising:

- Visual merchandising is used for creating a visual effect
- This help to attract the customer and create an intention to the customer mind
- This idea is mainly applicable to a retail store of different products but now you can see varies uses of visual merchandising.
- Success depends on how well you convert your ideas into the visual outcome
- One form of popular merchandising widely used in cloth shop/apparel industry

Where Can Visual Merchandising be Used

The scope of visual merchandising is broadening day by day. The main reason is a worldwide improvement in living standard, earning power, spending capability, technological development, innovation etc. If you have money then you will have end number of things to buy. And marketers are targeting people those have smart earnings power. High raise shopping mall are made, thousands of different shops are in there. And to display their varieties of product, they are taking help of visual merchandising. They decorate their shop in a way that anyone can easily identify what product they are offering. If you look around then you can see all popular brands creating a visual effect in their shop and this is possible they applied visual merchandising. Now the question is, where we can use visual merchandising? The answer is in the following list:

1. Apparel Store/Shop
2. Electronic Device Shop (Mobile, Computer Equipment, Accessories etc.)
3. Luxuries item (Diamond, Gold, Platinum, Jewelries)
4. Foot Wear
5. Ornaments
6. Hotel & Restaurant
7. Car, Motorcycle, Cycle
8. Furniture
9. Specialized Equipment and Machinery and
10. Super shop etc.

Importance of Visual Merchandising

1. Helps to Create brand awareness
2. Get the intention of Customer
3. Bring Target Customer
4. Share Idea of Product

Helps to Create Brand Awareness

In early days, visual merchandising was used by the popular brands but now this trend is followed by the small business also because of the advantage of creating brand awareness among the individuals.

Get Intention of Customer

It is easy to get the intention of the customer and influence them to visit your store with the help of visual merchandising. You made a design for your outlet in a way that looks attractive and you can expect that definitely, people will come to visit your store. And then all you need to offer your customer a better product and services.

Bring Target Customer

Through visual merchandising, you can design your store layout in a way that will bring your more target customer and increase your revenue.

Share Idea of Product

You may find both inside and outside of the store is decorated based on a particular product idea. The product which indicates the major value of your product, it can be in terms of value or in terms of quality. Share your product idea through visual merchandising will give you an extra edge of getting market competitiveness.

Challenges of Visual Merchandising

- Costly Process
- Higher Need of Applying Creativity
- Time Consuming

Higher Need of Applying Creativity

To ensure effective business there is a requirement of creativity. A creative mind can design a perfect visualization of promotional ideas. Without creativity in the visual merchandising field, it is not possible to get your desired outcome.

Costly Process

As the design of outlet is one of the costly operations of initial business startup so money should spend carefully. A proper planning is required for initiation to the execution of merchandising ideas.

Time Consuming

Design of store and construct accordingly is a time-consuming process. You may require at least two weeks for interior design, setup of furniture, a fixture of furniture's and then arrange your product. Another thing is, when you design your outlet you must need to find out a good interior designer.

Three Forms of Visual Merchandising

1. Retail Store
2. Online (Virtual)
3. Trade Fair

Visual Merchandising for Retail Store

You already know that; visual merchandising is mostly applicable to the retail store because here visibility is important to attract the target customer. Business owner spends millions of dollars on the design and outlook of their store.



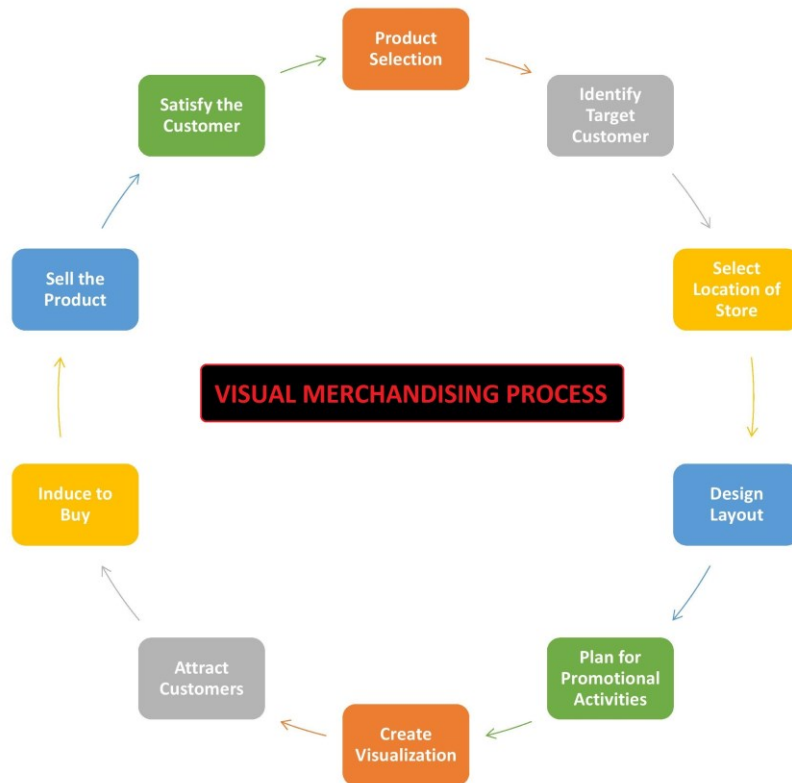
Visual Merchandising for Online Store

Earlier people thought that visual merchandising is only applicable for retail store, that's why their core focus was for applying it to a retail store but now because of expansion of digital communication and flexibility of online transaction the demand of e-commerce is increasing day by day. People are now using online shopping facilities and shifting from traditional to digitalized. But the question is how visual merchandising can be used in the online shop? The idea is applying your visualization idea is through your website. Make a perfect design, which is attractive, user-friendly, auto responsive and also have an online payment option. As long as you provide the best product and services you will be successful.

Visual Merchandising in Trade Fair

Visual merchandising in trade fair is another dimension where for local and international trade fair thousands of business owner participate just to share their product and services and do some business also. But here they focus on visualization and induce visitors to come and see their products. If you closely look around in a trade

fair then you must notice that how organizers applied the visual merchandising concept to decorate the whole trade fair.



The Visual Merchandising Process

1. Product Selection
2. Identify Target Customer
3. Select Location of Store
4. Design Layout of Store
5. Plan for Promotional Activities
6. Create Visualization
7. Attract Customers
8. Induce to Buy
9. Sell the Product
10. Satisfy the Customer

The Process of visual merchandising involves 10 steps and these are explained below:

Product Selection

The first step is to select or identify your product for which you want to do merchandising. Based on the product type you need to develop a strategy for sales and marketing. So this one is the crucial step of starting visual merchandising.

Identify Target Customer

Identify target customer is the second stage. In this stage, you must work for identifying and selection of target customer. Whether your target customers are child,

adult, male, female or any other group. Based on your target customer you need to design your store layout because of different things preferred by the different group of people.

Select Location of Store

Store location is one of the key success factors because a good location will give you more customer exposure. Store location can be highly populated areas or it can be in the middle of the market or in a huge mall or any other place where your target customers are moving around.

Design Layout of Store

In this stage, you can hire a professional or you can do on your own if you have enough expertise. When you design your store layout you must consider the following things:

Use of Glass

If you want to make your store more visible from the outside then you can choose a glass of different design which may increase attractiveness.

Color

The color of wall, window, door, and shelf everything matters in visual merchandising because this will increase the visibility of your store and your product. Color preference for both male and female is different, so you have to keep in mind who is your target customer.

Height

If you are targeting child then your inside decoration should be different, your shelf should be set in a way that child can see desired For cloth items, this factor should be carefully maintained.

Horizontal or Vertical Positioning of Products

Your product can be a position like horizontal form or vertical form. It is all about your choice. If you go to a superstore then you may have seen that product is displayed horizontally and vertically based on the product type.

View

Here, the view is the outside look of your store. If your store looks attractive from the outer view then you must definitely get a lot of customers visiting your store. A three-dimensional view will add an extra edge to your design.

Lightning

Sunlight is not enough most of the time, so you must depend on lightening but here the important thing is, the color of light and extent of lightning. You can use moderate lightening rather than heavy lightening for your apparel store.

Temperature

If your store is always remaining hot then this is the problem. So, it will be better if you set air conditioning but keep in mind that before setting AC you need to calculate the air-cooling amount required for your store. A suitable temperature is preferable for the customer of the store.

Plan for Promotional Activities

After layout design and required activities, you can plan for promotional activities that how you are going to promote your product or services. For promotion, you will be required to make a *promotional tagline* which you can use for creating a *visual effect*. People will see your promotional message from outside and if they become interested then definitely they will visit your store.

Create Visualization

It's time to create a *visualization effect in your store*. If you can successfully create a visual effect which will help you to attract your target customer. The visualization effect will come from your interior and exterior design, your product setup and all other promotional activities.

Attract Customers

A positive visualization effect will attract your target customer. And it depends up to you whether your customer converts into a loyal customer or not.

Induce to Buy

Your store, your product, your price and the attitude of your salesperson will induce the customer to buy your product.

Sell the Product

When you convert your target customer into an actual customer through visual merchandising then you must get your desired revenue and profit from your business. All your hard work will pay off to you as a reward.

Satisfy the Customer

You know a long-term success of a business is depends on the satisfaction of a customer. A customer will be loyal if you provide prompt service and your product quality is good enough to meet the customer satisfaction and the price they had paid

for. And as a visual marketer, it is your responsibility to ensure the satisfaction of your customer.

The demand for Visual Merchandising in Apparel Industry

The demand for visual merchandising is increasing day by day because you can get your target customer by creating a visual effect of your apparel store and your garments item. All local and international brands are trying their best to display their product in an attractive manner so that we get influenced by their promotional activities and go there to buy their product. And for displaying their product is a best possible way would be a visual merchandising policy.

Qualities of Visual Merchandiser

If you want to be a good [visual merchandiser](#) then you must have the following qualities:

- Ability to Visualize
- Ability to Think Out of the Box
- Creative Mind
- Understand Customer Needs

After all these discussions, hopefully, you can now clearly understand the idea of visual merchandising and how it works for boosting our business. If you have any query, then please let me know.

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