Subject : Visual Merchandising

Unit 1: Introduction to visual merchandising and need

Quadrant 1 – e-Text

Learning Objectives

The learning objectives of this unit are to:

- Understand key terminologies in Visual Merchandising.
- Review the difference between Visual Merchandising and Interior Design.

1.1 Introduction

Visual Merchandising is to make a shopper a stopper and a “walk-in” rather than a “walk-by”.

It is selling by showing and promoting. It is arranging items for display. It is the coordination of all physical elements of a business to project a right image.

In brief it is “silent selling.”

Interior Design is the décor of the store, the props and placement of merchandise.

Visual Merchandising includes not only the products on sale, but also the décor of your outfit, your shop flooring and ceilings, your restrooms and trial rooms, staff uniforms, the colour of lipstick worn by female personnel, and the tie-knots of male personnel.

It is also inclusive of the attitude of your personnel who interact with customers. Hence, everything that makes a visual impact on the prospective customer is part of Visual Merchandising.

On the other hand, Interior Design is a part of Visual Merchandising.

The ultimate aim of Visual Merchandising is to sell or increase sales. This can happen not just by beautiful interiors, but by fulfilling these five points, which have been elaborated earlier.

1.2 Visual Merchandising
- Attract the attention of the passerby.
- Arouse his or her interest.
- Create desire.
- Win the confidence of the customer and instill faith in the store and its product.
- Cause the decision to buy.

Layout And Design

Straight Floor / Grid Layout

It is mostly used in clearance sale. It is one of the most used floor plan.

Diagonal Floor Plan

Angular Floor Plan
Geometric Floor Plan

Mixed Floor Plan
It is along the edges of the wall and the centre is kept vacant or has minimal display units. It is also called as the Race course layout. This floor plan is adopted by Peter England stores as you can see in the image. Here, departments are on the right and left and encourage circular movement. They are mostly seen in discount or department stores.
Fixtures and Lighting

There are various types of fixtures:

- Conventional metal fixtures
- Furniture fixtures
- Found objects
- Vendor fixtures
- Custom fixtures

Let’s go to the first one… conventional…

They are also of different types…one of them being round rack- it is a capacity fixture- holds large quantity

- Sometimes it is tri-level

T-stands- 2 ways and 4 ways – straight arm and slant arm (sketch)
Bins and cubes - open on sides and cubes are open on top.
Furniture Fixtures

- Furniture fixtures - chairs and tables
- Found objects - vintage objects/furniture by the owner
- Vendor fixtures - vendor supplies his fixtures for uniformness
- Custom fixtures - made based on theme

Conventional Wall Fixtures

Conventional Wall fixtures are: Garment rods and cross bars and Slatwall and gridwall.

1.3 Lighting

Lighting is of main 2 types: Ambient Lighting and Accent Lighting or highlight. Lighting can best be understood by visuals.

Here are examples of highlight or Accent Lighting and Ambient Lighting.

A highlight created by light.
Mannequins highlighted by light and Ambient light.

**Display**

Displays are done on various places: on walls or on floor, on shelves or on props and fixtures.

**Product Placement**
1.4 Conclusion

To summarize, Visual Merchandising is “Silent Selling”. Interior Design is the décor of the store whereas, Visual Merchandising is more. It is creative problem solving, and can be well explained by a creative thinking model ‘SCAMPER’ given by Robert Eberles. With it being Silent Selling, sales increase is the ultimate aim through display and other means and converting footfalls into sales.