

## Visual Merchandising

Visual merchandising (VM) today is not only limited to floor and window display, nor is it only restricted to fashion and clothing. Visual Merchandising covers all the efforts to capture the attention of the customers by all means - from the facade of the store to the location of each product inside, be it a department or specialty store.

To capture attention, awaken the senses, provide the customers with a wonderful buying experience, which will bring them back to the store for the next time and become a loyal customer, and make more sales are the major concerns of effective visual merchandising. Every visual merchandiser wants to have an interesting shop window and indoor display to not only grab the attention of the customers, but also appeal to their senses.

Store environment is an important element in retailing, given that 70% of the purchases are impulse and unplanned. A critical review on the effects of store environment on shopping behaviors shows that there are many factors and elements to consider in order to have a good store environment. These elements include music, colour, scent, lighting, visual information, consumer density and much more.

### 1. Do not limit your theme to four.

Winter, spring, summer and fall may be popular but there are still thousands of visual merchandising themes which you can avail yourself of. Actually, sky is the limit as far as themes are concerned. Try to employ at least six different themes in a year. If you can use varied themes in every month, it is better, but this is quite unmanageable. You can inline your theme with special events like Fathers' Day, Mothers' Day, Teachers' Day, Valentine's Day, anniversaries festivals, and other celebrations and holidays.

### 2. Use variation to support your theme.

Variation will support your theme to avoid boredom on your display. You can use the same theme every year but avoid using the same display and style. You need to create a new look or else you will only annoy your viewers. Scheme is also best applied to employ variation. A scheme works like a sub-theme. Say for example your theme is Christmas, you can create one White Christmas Window, one Toys Kingdom Window and one Christmas Party Window. All of these three schemes are related to your Christmas theme. Also avoid using the same material for different themes consecutively. You may keep the materials you have recently used and use them again after a few months or put them in other locations or branches of your chain.

### 3. Go for unusual and big display.

People love novelty. Copy different ideas, combine them and then modify. It is copy, combine and modify - not copy and paste. In Southeast Asia, it is common for some popular brands to conduct merchandise display contests to generate more sales. The participating stores are required to design and set-up displays with oversized props to get the attention of the shoppers. This strategy has been proven to be effective.

### 4. Apply the elements & principles of design

Don't forget to apply the elements and principles of design to your projects. The elements of design are line, shape, form, size, space, colour, value and texture, whereas the principles of design are novelty, variety, harmony, unity, balance, proportion, emphasis,

contrast, rhythm and pattern. Establish a focal point on your window display for easy viewing, then harmonize each element of your display to maintain neatness and to direct the eyes of your viewer to each element of the display.

#### 5. Integrate dynamic techniques in your display.

Integrating printed materials, multi-media, interactive installations and sensory input in your display is very dynamic and it is becoming the dominant trend in visual merchandising, especially in the coming years because of the fast growing digital civilization. Gone are those days that retail stores rely only on a simple product presentation. Think about what captures the attention of busy people in this digital age where almost everyone who is passing by your store is walking so quickly while looking at their mobile phones or tabs. In some countries with more advanced technology, some retailers install interactive windows where customers can customize features on some products before paying for their own-designed items at the checkout counter.

Adapted from [www.creativitywindow.com](http://www.creativitywindow.com)

**Ex. 1 Find the words or expressions in the text which mean the following:**

- 1) goods you sell: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) smell: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) to use something: \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) impossible to be accomplished: \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) to make something happen at the same time as something else: \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) a different location of the same company: \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) a network of stores: \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) to claim that something is necessary: \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) physical objects used on display: \_\_\_\_\_
- 10) something new and exciting: \_\_\_\_\_
- 11) the central spot to which everyone pays attention: \_\_\_\_\_
- 12) designed by yourself: \_\_\_\_\_

**Ex. 2 Match the expressions from the two columns into logical collocations:**

- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1) visual       | experience     |
| 2) by all       | merchandising  |
| 3) a department | concern        |
| 4) to capture   | purchase       |
| 5) buying       | store          |
| 6) a loyal      | to sb          |
| 7) a major      | sb's attention |
| 8) to appeal    | means          |
| 9) an impulse   | density        |
| 10)customer     | customer       |

**Ex. 3 Provide English equivalents of these expressions:**

1) przeważający trend	7) kreowanie przestrzeni handlowej
2) personalizować	8) motyw
3) kasa	9) ilość klientów w sklepie
4) zasada	10)za wszelką cenę
5) pod rząd, z kolei	11)niewykonalny
6) czynnik	12)towar

**Grammar corner...**

In the text you found a sentence: *Gone are those days that retail stores rely only on a simple product presentation.* What it means is that those days are gone, but what the author wanted to do was making a stronger point, emphasizing that the days are gone. In an English sentence the thing that goes at the beginning of a sentence is usually the most important one and deserves the most of your attention. Therefore, sometimes we use inversion to stress the thing we want to say by putting it at the beginning. So you have something like: **gone are the days when ... , never have I met such a ... , rarely does one see so many ....**

There are other uses of inverted structures, though. For instance, if you want to say that it doesn't matter which option you choose, you can say, **be it** this or the other thing.

If you want to exclude both options, you say that something isn't the case, **nor is something else** the case. If you would rather show agreement, you also use inversion, e.g. I always fall for Christmas promotions. Yea, **so do I!** I never trust telemarketers. **Neither do I!**

**Ex. 4 Rewrite the sentences so that they begin as indicated and the meaning stays the same or provide reactions to the statements:**

- 1) The times of honest advertising are finished. => Finished ...
- 2) I rarely use consumer loans. => Rarely ...
- 3) I despise the Christmas atmosphere in shopping centres. So ...
- 4) I have never been taken in by travelling salesmen. Neither ...
- 5) It doesn't matter which means of transport you choose, the train or the airplane. You will be late anyway. => You will be late no matter what means of transport you use, be ...

6) The company isn't well known and it doesn't have much market share, but it offers great value for money. => The company isn't well known, nor ...

7) I have never been more furious! => Never ...

8) It seldom happens that you enter a shopping mall and leave empty-handed.

=> Seldom ...

9) I'm going to return it first thing in the morning! => So ...

10) I never max out my credit card. Neither ...

<b>GLOSSARY</b>	
<b>neatness</b>	ład i porządek
<b>to fall for something</b>	dać się na coś nabrać
<b>a consumer loan</b>	kredyt konsumencki
<b>to despise sb/sth</b>	nienawidzieć kogoś/czegoś
<b>to be taken in</b>	dać się na coś nabrać
<b>a travelling salesman</b>	komiwojażer
<b>value for money</b>	stosunek ceny do jakości
<b>a means of transport</b>	środek transportu
<b>first thing in the morning</b>	z samego rana
<b>to max out your credit card</b>	przekroczyć limit na karcie kredytowej
<b>merchandise</b>	towary
<b>scent</b>	zapach
<b>to avail yourself of sth</b>	użyć czegoś/skorzystać z czegoś
<b>unmanageable</b>	niewykonalne
<b>to inline sth with sth else</b>	zgrać w czasie
<b>props</b>	rekwizyty
<b>a novelty</b>	nowinka/nowość
<b>a focal point</b>	centralny punkt
<b>by all means</b>	za wszelką cenę
<b>a major concern</b>	główny problem
<b>an impulse purchase</b>	zakup pod wpływem impulsu
<b>customer density</b>	ilość klientów w sklepie
<b>to customize</b>	personalizować
<b>a check out counter</b>	kasa (np. w supermarkecie)
<b>consecutively</b>	pod rząd
<b>visual merchandising</b>	kreaowanie przestrzeni handlowej
<b>emphasis on sth</b>	nacisk na coś

**ANSWER KEY:**

*Ex. 1*

- 1) merchandise
- 2) scent
- 3) to avail yourself of sth
- 4) unmanageable
- 5) to inline sth with sth else
- 6) a branch
- 7) a chain
- 8) to require sth
- 9) props
- 10) a novelty
- 11) the focal point
- 12) own-designed

*Ex. 2*

- 1) visual merchandising
- 2) by all means
- 3) a department store
- 4) to capture sb's attention
- 5) buying experience
- 6) a loyal customer
- 7) a major concern
- 8) to appeal to sb
- 9) an impulse purchase
- 10) customer density



*Ex. 3*

- 1) the dominant trend
- 2) to customize
- 3) a checkout counter/desk
- 4) a principle
- 5) consecutively
- 6) a factor
- 7) visual merchandising
- 8) a theme
- 9) customer density
- 10)by all means
- 11)unmanageable
- 12)merchandise

*Ex. 4*

- 1) Finished are the times of honest advertising.
- 2) Rarely do I use consumer loans.
- 3) So do I.
- 4) Neither have I.
- 5) ... be it the train or the airplane.
- 6) ... nor does it have much market share, but ...
- 7) Never have I been more furious!
- 8) Seldom does it happen that you enter ...
- 9) So am I!
- 10)Neither do I.