

Part 3: 3-5 Product Elements for Building Store Image

The right product in the right styles, colors, and sizes; at the right price; in the right quantities; merchandised in the right place; at the right time are a major factors impacting store image. The “Retail/Vendor Matrix”, or a listing of the retailer’s major vendors supplying the store’s merchandise, assists the retailer in denoting the fashion level of the merchandise carried by the store as well as suggests price points of the merchandise.

The number of designer and national *brands* made available to the customer by the retailer as compared to private labels, private brands, or store brands of the store reverberate store image cues and provide integrity and status for the retailer. Further the *merchandise mix*, or all product classifications and assortment offerings, carried by the retailer reflect the merchandising philosophy and mission of the company.

The *quality of the merchandise* in relation to the expected standards of workmanship, finesse of fabric, and fashion positioning of the assortments by the target customer also impact the perception of store image, as does the assortment mix. Does the retailer differentiate its product from the competition? Does the store carry exclusive merchandise, unique merchandise, a variety of assortments of seasonal merchandise and/or the most fashionable offering in the community? All of these factors help to establish a consistent store and fashion image.



Additional information on product may be found in this section, *Part 4: “Develop the Fashion Image”* and *Part 5: “Establish the Merchandising Policy”*.