

Part 1: 1-2 Terminology for Visual Merchandising and Display

Terminology defined for "Defining Visual Merchandising and Display".

Accent Lighting: lighting technique that emphasizes, highlights, spotlights, or focuses on specific areas of the store, merchandise displays, or focal points of a display

Add-on-Sale: merchandise added to the customer's final selection for purchase at the point of sale; additional merchandise suggested by sales associate or visual presentation to compliment final merchandise selection of the consumer

Adjacencies: floor layouts which position products used together next to each other

Ambient Lighting: secondary lighting to set mood for store image and/or merchandise presentation

Advertising: paid media or marketing tool with message controlled by the organization purchasing the mass media outlet

Art (Design) Elements: color, texture, proportion, line, shape

Assortment Display: display composed of a collection of unrelated items found within a store; display with variety of merchandise or merchandise mix of a specific retailer

Attention-Getting Devices: tool or mechanism in display that attracts the attention of the consumer; e.g., color, surprise or shock, humor, nostalgia, motion

Awning: covering over a door or window that makes viewing of merchandise easier for the consumer or that provides protection from the climate, omits glare on the window for the viewer, or introduces a special event or advertising campaign for the season

Back Wall: vista wall or architectural wall in the back of the department or store; it is one of the second most important selling areas in the store; it should be merchandised with current, trendy coordinated products that entice the consumer to browse from the front to the back of the department or store

Balance: design principle used by visual merchandisers to create equality of weight and positioning of elements across the display for a unified composition; two types of balance include:

Formal or Symmetrical Balance: each side of display is a mirror image of the other side or elements of equal weight are equidistance on either side of the display; used to display expensive merchandise; career wear, formal wear, etc.

Informal or Asymmetrical Balance: either side of display appears to be of equal weight but elements are not replicas of one another; more interesting and more difficult to achieve than formal balance; used to display sportswear, active wear, etc.

Banner: communication tool usually made from fabric or treated paper designed with colorful graphics and created to attract the attention of the target consumer

Brand: name, sign, symbol, logo, graphic, color combination, term, jingle, or any other concept or feature that identifies a company's product or services and differentiates them from other companies' products and services

Brand Communications/Marketing Communications Division: a division or department of a brand company or manufacturer which is responsible for visual merchandising – trade, visual merchandising – retail, advertising, special events and promotions, publicity, etc.

Brand Image: characteristics, attributes, cues or personality that identify the brand or retailer and help to position the brand as compared to its competitors

Chrome: shiny finish on fixtures used in retail store for presenting product categories, classifications, and grouping of merchandise

Color: attribute or feature of product and store brand that consumer sees first when entering store; first characteristic that attracts the customer's attention and the art element that motivates consumer to shop

Cool Colors: colors that recede; blue, green, violet, blue-green

Warm Colors: colors that advance; red, orange yellow, pink, rust, brown, peach

Color Psychology: the study of the impact color has on the consumer's emotions and perceptions of the visual presentation; therapeutic aspects color has on consumer; mood color establishes in mind of consumer

Color Scheme: combination of various colors in product design and visual presentation

Analogous or Adjacent: color scheme with colors located next to each other on the color wheel; e.g., yellow, yellow orange, orange, red orange

Complementary: color scheme with combination of two colors directly opposite from each other on the color wheel; e.g., yellow, violet

Double-Complementary: color scheme with combination of four colors or two colors plus their complements; e.g., green with red and blue with orange

Split-Complementary: color scheme with combination of three colors or a central color with the two colors on either side of its complement; e.g., blue, red orange and yellow orange

Monochromatic: color scheme using one color in different values and intensities or the color range extending from the lightest tint to the deepest shade of the color: e.g., sky blue, marine blue, navy blue

Neutral: color scheme of all white, all beige, all gray, all black, all brown

Triadic: color scheme consisting of three colors equidistant from one another on the color wheel; e.g., red, blue, yellow

Color Story: combination of colors used in coordinate grouping, seasonal line, or visual presentation; colors used to tie design concepts, and solids, prints, and pattern fabrics together in a grouping or seasonal line

Colorway: assortment or combination of colors a brand company or manufacturer utilizes to design its seasonal line, product groupings, or related separates

Color Wheel: graphic depicting the relationship of colors to one another

Consumer Marketing Division: a division or department of a brand company or manufacturer which is responsible for design, development, merchandising, and often times sourcing a seasonal product line for the company

Core or “Bread & Butter” Area: middle section or area of a store or department for presenting and housing volume merchandise such as basics, large assortments, coordinated groupings and related separates

Demonstration Cube: blocks that may be covered with fabric, laminated, or finished wood used for a mannequin platform, display surface, etc.

Design Principles (Elements): include unity, harmony, balance, repetition, rhythm, emphasis, contrast

Display: the act of dramatically or theatrically presenting merchandise categories in order to excite, stimulate, and encourage consumer motivation and interest for creating sales and increasing profit

Display Calendar: a schedule of a store’s or department’s upcoming displays, usually planned a year in advance and based on store merchandise delivery dates, promotions, and seasonal holidays

Display Case: a mechanism, fixture, or area for presenting merchandise; usually has glass top and sides for easy viewing of merchandise

Display Plan: includes the who, what, where, why, and when of a merchandise presentation or display; includes a timetable or checklist for strategic points or calendar of dates for completion of all activities, an organizational chart of job responsibilities and personnel who will execute the activities for building the display, and a sketch or rendering (sometimes to scale) of the actual display

Display Settings: background or type of setting for presenting merchandise or display

Abstract Setting: background setting does not look like a realistic area or concept; the eye cannot decipher a concept but setting supports and reinforces the message and merchandise in the display; e.g., arrangement of lines and shapes in various spaces of the setting to provide a backdrop for merchandise

Environmental Setting: all items in display are for sale or background becomes merchandise to sell; e.g., a bedroom display with furniture, home furnishings and textiles, and accessories for a bedroom

Fantasy Setting: a setting created with expected or unexpected elements in unexpected places; a whimsical setting or an imaginative or fictitious setting for ordinary merchandise categories; e.g., chair and table on ceiling of display area

Realistic Setting: an everyday life environment or recognizable area interpreted in the display; e.g., couple sitting at table in restaurant – display could feature apparel or fine china, crystal, and silver on table or all of the product classifications

Semirealistic Setting: vignette setting or setting with recognizable product in a recognizable space but viewer must use imagination to complete the design idea

Dominance: the element in the display that attracts the eye first and directs the viewer’s eye to other parts of the composition; emphasis of one element over other objects of the composition

Dress Form: armless version of body shape (figure) that is utilized to present apparel, as if on actual physical body

Emphasis: highlighting or calling attention to a particular item, usually the focal point, in a presentation

Endcap Display: display featured at the end of fixtures; spaces with displays of complimentary merchandise positioned toward the aisle of entrance into an area in order to entice consumer to make add-on or impulse purchases

Faceout Fixture: arms (straight or slanted) on fixtures so that front of product is presented to viewer

Fashion Image: the position of a store's product in the fashion cycle or on the bell-shape curve of fashion; tool used in order to forecast the movement and direction of fashion for a particular trend, concept, or product

Fixture: costumers, merchandisers, or other implements to hold and present merchandise or product categories

Floodlights: incandescent bulbs utilized to focus a wide beam of light on an area

Floor Fixture: merchandise units used to hold and present merchandise in the store or department; e.g., rounders, quads, T-stands, multiple merchandisers

Floor Plan: a flat sketch or drawing of the store or department floor space with wall areas, aisles, and fixture placement depicted

Fluorescent Light: flat light with very little shadowing; low costs and efficient source of overall store lighting; provides no focus on merchandise texture or color

Focal Point: the dominant element or the emphasized element within a display or merchandise presentation; central focus of the display from which the viewer's eye may move in order to view other items in the display

Fourway Faceout Fixture: four arm costumers or merchandisers used to hold and present merchandise or product categories: front view of four different product classifications or outfits can be shown simultaneously, with one being featured on each arm/prong

Free-Flow or Maize Floor Plan: floor layout where fixtures are placed without a set pattern or set of aisles, however, traffic aisle is determined by placement of fixtures which are set in same direction or at same angle; fixtures are arranged in an informal pattern with nonlinear groupings

General Lighting: an all-over level of lighting or primary lighting

Gondola: fixture or merchandiser with flat bottom and four straight sides used to merchandise product in aisles or high traffic areas

Graphics: artwork, sketches, enlarged prints, photographs, and other types of art used to depict merchandise and/or to set the mood, create store ambience, décor and image

Grid Floor Plan: floor layout where fixtures are placed in a linear pattern on the floor, creating horizontal and vertical aisles for traffic patterns throughout the store and/or department

Hanger: an implement used for hanging garments

Harmony: a design element creating a unified whole or unity in a display

Hue: word used for the name of a color or as a synonym for color

Integrated Marketing Communication Plan (IMC): retailer's use or coordination of promotional tools of advertising, special events and promotions, visual merchandising, publicity, and fashion coordination and training to present a constant and consistent marketing strategy and message to the target consumer

Institutional Display: display promoting the image of the store or promoting a cause supported by the store rather than promoting the store's merchandise

Intensity: the brightness or dullness of a color; purity and strength of color

Intermediate Color: color that is results of mixing a primary and secondary color, using various amounts of each color

Kiosk: fixture or freestanding, open-ended unit for housing and presenting merchandise; usually found in store aisles, main traffic paths, or open spaces for maximum visibility

Layering: imposition or positioning of one garment on top of other garments; adds possibility of add-on sales and depth to display

Ledge: an extension or shelf-like projection extending from the wall; it may hold displays or merchandise presentations

Lifestyle: combination of how a customer lives, works and plays; a combination of activities, interests, occupations, hobbies, avocations, etc. of the consumer

Lifestyle Presentation: a collection or assortment of various merchandise classifications presented in a setting where the customer will use the merchandise; merchandise depicting a particular lifestyle

Lighting: device to call attention to display and merchandise presentation; device to build store image

Line: direction; one element of a composition; line may be used as an attention-getter for the display

Curve Line: an arc, circle or sphere; imparts grace, charm, femininity, softness, flow

Diagonal Line: action line that suggests movement and excitement; designates action, forcefulness, strong and dynamic movement

Horizontal Line: long, low, wide spreading line; imparts relaxed, peaceful, calm, quiet, tranquil atmosphere

Vertical Line: straight elements joining floor to ceiling; symbolizes strength, height, pride, majesty, dignity, poise, balance, forcefulness, elegance, refinement

Line-of-Goods Display: a display of one type of product classification shown in various colors and designs

Logo: symbol, graphic, emblem, insignia denotes a company, product, service, etc.

Mannequin: replica of human form used to present clothing

Marketing Mix: blend of components of product, price, place, promotion, people, positioning, presentation, packaging, processing, playback used in combination to build and present an idea, product, or service

Market Segment Analysis: dividing a large, heterogeneous group of consumers into sub-segments or subgroups that are more homogeneous or that maintain similar values and product desires and needs

Marquee: canopy or awning over an entrance to store; large sign containing a listing of store names in a particular shopping center location

Media Mix: combination of store's usage of direct mail, Internet, magazines, newspapers, outdoor advertising, radio, television, etc.

Merchandise Islands: merchandise presentation near an entrance, escalator, stairway, or elevator that can be viewed from all sides; frequently feature impulse buys, low-price, easy-to-sell items or "pick-up" merchandise

Merchandise Presentation: combination of storing, housing, presenting, displaying and promoting merchandise classifications while maximizing floor space in order to build optimum sales and profit potential

Merchandising Policy: includes retailer's merchandising plans and guidelines for selection of vendors, retail/vendor matrix, pricing policies, presentation and display policies, markdown policies and promotional endeavors, etc.

NADI: National Association of Display Industries; organization with members composed of visual merchandising material producers and distributors

Niche Marketing: targeting a specific market segment and offering unique products and services that the small group or sub-group needs, wants, and can buy

Nostalgia: a remembrance of times, events, or products of the past that can be utilized to attract the consumer by stirring past emotions and memories

One-Item Display: display or merchandise presentation of a single item

Outpost: selling fixture or unit with merchandise from a department within the retail store but located in an area away from the department in which it is usually merchandised

Pastel: a tint of a color or a full-value color to which white has been added, creating a lighter color of the original

Planogram: sketches or drawings of the placement of merchandise on fixtures positioned on selling floor, walls, and in displays

Platform: a riser; elevated cube; a raised area for displaying and merchandising

POP: point-of-purchase display and/or signage for POP display

POPPI: Point-of-Purchase Advertising Institute; international trade association of designers and producers of displays and fixtures, advertisers, and retailers

Pop-Up Shop: retail area set up for a limited amount of time

Primary Colors: three colors from which all other colors are composed; red, blue, yellow

Promotional Display: display featuring concept, trend or product; display may be composed of one-item, line-of-goods, related separates or concepts, or a variety of product that are regular or special-priced goods

Promotional Mix: includes combinations of advertising, special events and promotions, visual merchandising and display, publicity, and fashion coordination and training vehicles that a business uses in order to communicate with its target consumer about store and product offerings

Prop: article, object, or item used to reinforce a display theme, merchandise concept or visual setting

Proportion: design or art element illustrating the proper size relationships between objects and spaces; relationships of sizes, scales, and weights of elements between each other and the entire composition of a display

Publicity: is “free” media exposure that cannot be controlled by a firm or business; it can be both positive and negative for the retailer; message is not paid for, therefore companies attempt to monitor and manage all publicity about their store and/or product offerings

Psychographics: market research that analyzes the impact of consumers’ activities, interests, opinions, values, and mores on the buying and purchasing patterns of the consumers

Racetrack Floor Plan: floor layout where traffic aisles are laid out on right and left of circular, rectangular, or oval racetrack floor layout

Related Merchandise Display: display of items that have same end use; items may be related or share same color, theme, trend, or product classification

Repetition: design principle that utilizes the reiteration of an idea or repeating the idea over and over again in the same display; e.g., same garment, same color, same line, same shape, same form

Retail Services Division: the division in the brand company or manufacturer that has the responsibilities of providing customer services for the retail store, organizing account management for company's account executives and sales representatives, analyzing scanner data of the retailer's inventory and sales realized for the branded company's product, and overseeing retail service coordination between the brand company and retail client

Rhythm: principle of design that promotes movement of the eye from the dominant object to subordinate objects, from the major items to accessories; that promotes movement of the eye from element to element, from background to foreground, and from side to side of the display

Riser: display unit used to elevate merchandise in the display; platform or cube

Sales Promotion (Event): event or happening that communicates the store's image and product offering, which may or may not be reduced price merchandise, to the target consumer; vendor demonstrations, contests, fashion events, vendor sponsored events featuring GWP and PWP

Sales Promotion Division: in the retail store, the division that has the responsibilities of coordinating and creating advertising, visual merchandising, special events and promotions, fashion coordination and publicity in order to market the retail store and its products and services

Scale: a size of item in relation to size of other items in a display; a proportional representation of an object or size of object in proportion to the size of the actual object

Secondary Colors: combination of mixing pairs of primary colors; e.g., yellow and blue becomes green

Shade: color that is darkened by adding gray or black to the color, creating a deeper color

Shadow: in lighting, a part of an area that is darker as compared to the other areas of the display, merchandise presentation, or store

Shadow Box: small, elevated window box of glass or part glass for displaying expensive or special merchandise

Shop Concept: small area of store where similar types or the same brand of various product classifications are merchandised and displayed; small area in store housing specific brand in order to portray a lifestyle setting or to create the brand image for a particular brand company or designer

Sightline: when standing in an aisle or in a shop or department, the area the consumer can view from the front aisle when looking toward the back of the shop or department; from front aisle viewing the back and side walls and throughout the department; created by placement of aisles, walls, and fixtures

Sign: graphic or signage on outside of store building or inside store designating a department or area within a store; it imparts store image through graphics, color, letter type and font, scale and materials

Signage: system of signs within a store to designate location, information, and department placement

Store Attributes: cues or elements that build store image, assisting the target consumer to form a mental image or impression for what the store stands; elements include history of the store; physical

cues such as exterior and interior décor; customer services, including type and quantity; store personnel; merchandising and pricing policies; channel of distribution and location of store; marketing and promotional mix

Store Image: mental perception the consumer perceives of store's personality; character or unique personality store represents; opinions consumer form of store based on policies and activities of the retailer

Store Planner: designer, architect, or visual merchandiser who plans spaces, coloring, lighting, store exterior/interior, etc.

Target Consumer (Market): sub-segment of a larger homogeneous market for whom the store can provide the best value offering while meeting the needs and wants of the consumer; a segment of the population or consumers who have similar needs and wants and whom the retailer is capable of providing the products or service offerings to meet those needs and wants

Tertiary Colors: combination of mixing primary colors with secondary colors to form a new color

Texture: a design or art element that describes the way a surface feels or the "hand" of the item; texture affects color of merchandise or is the absorption or reflection of light on a rough or shiny surface

Theme: unifying concept or commonality that ties the display and/or line of merchandise together; e.g., Southwest theme

Tint: color that is formed by adding white to a color, creating a lighter variation of the color

Tone: the mood set by the store image or theme of merchandise presentation or display

Trademark: word, design, graphic, symbol that designates a particular company's product

Tradeshow: the location or mart building where a brand company or manufacturer presents its line-of-merchandise to its client, the retailer; usually these shows are held in large exhibit halls and all vendors with like product exhibit at a designated time or week

Trading Area: the geographic area from which the store targets its consumers

Trends: direction and movement of major ideas, themes, product or design concepts

Unity: in a display, the organization or grouping of elements into a pleasing, harmonious whole

Value: the lightness or darkness of a color

Variety Display: display composed of unrelated items found in a store

Vignette: display with a partial version of a realistic setting

Vista (Top) Wall: the back walls of a store or department; the second most important selling space found in a floor layout; second area in sightline when consumer enters store or department

Visual Merchandising: combination of store design, merchandise presentation, and display in order to promote sales and increase profit margins

Visual Merchandising Department: in the retail store, the department in the Sales Promotion Division responsible for store environment, merchandise presentation, and display

Visual Merchandising – Retail Department: department in a brand company responsible for interfacing with the brand company's client or the retail store buyer, merchandiser, and/or Sales Promotion Division of the retailer; the department plans, develops, and executes the in-store account and category specific strategies such as developing shop concepts, outposts and shop presentations

Visual Merchandising – Trade Department: department in a brand company responsible for development and execution of trade shows and showrooms or exhibit marketing strategies to position products, drive brand awareness, and influence a positive corporate image

Waterfalls: fixtures with angled arms cascading off the wall or on a T-stand; fixtures usually have knobs, hooks, or notches to keep hanger holding the merchandise in position

Windows-on-the-Aisle: area, frequently on an aisle, at front of store or department which the consumer views first when entering the store or department; merchandise is usually the most exquisite or expensive products, new arrivals, and/or the most trendy merchandise carried in the store or department