



VISUAL MERCHANDISING FOR THE

*holidays*



An introduction to using visual merchandising methods in preparing your selling space for the holiday season!

Presented by ARC Design Studios LLC

# visual merchandising

## B A S I C S

*What is Visual Merchandising?*  
A marketing practice aimed to optimize the presentation of products to best highlight their features and benefits!

### VISUAL merchandising



#### AN ART

The curation of visual elements using; line, layers, levels, colors, textures, lighting, proportions, pattern, and spacing to create beautiful and balanced displays.

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### VISUAL merchandising



#### A SCIENCE

Using concepts from psychology to influence a shopper's emotions and purchasing behavior.

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### VISUAL merchandising



#### A BUSINESS STRATEGY

Using the information provided by sales analysis to implement strategies for the composition of the artistic elements and the use of the science research to further promote sales.

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## Retail Merchandising and Design CONSISTS

### of:

- Layout
  - Product Placement & adjacencies
  - Occupant circulation
- Lighting
  - Product
  - Ambient
- Color & Texture Concepts
- Display Methods
  - Feature
  - Lifestyle
  - Mass
- Window Displays
- Signage
  - Way finding
  - Promotional
- Product Knowledge
  - Staff Training
  - Market Trends
- Exterior Conditions
  - Signage/ Branding
  - Lighting
  - Design
- Consumer / Community Experience
  - Safety
  - Shopping process
  - Display interaction
- Sales Analysis
  - Consumer observation
  - Sales per sq.ft/inch
  - Monthly Sales Trends
  - Seasonal sales trends
- Social Media & Branding Consistency
  - Branding and marketing that carry's over to the in-store experience.

## Retail Merchandising and Design applies to selling environments including, but not limited to:

- Retail Brick and Mortar
- Pop Up Shops
- Trade Show Exhibits
- Art and Craft Fairs
- Residencies
- Business Events ( Launches, Openings, Community Events)



*feature display:*

Feature Displays are created to draw shoppers in. These are destination points that are eye catching, head turners, and are inspiring to shoppers. These are normally larger displays and can pull additional propping if needed. Ideally this display stands on its own and does not share a fixture with a mass display; however, be sure to have a mass merchandised display of the product nearby for easy shopping. For example: Lets say you have one of your new shirts for sale on a mannequin, mannequins are considered a fixture for a feature display. It would be crucial to have those same shirts massed in a display nearby so shoppers can find their size and purchase. Here is another example: You have just put a new display in your storefronts window featuring your new bath bombs, you used additional propping like bathtubs and a vintage sink to create a unique eye catching display. It would be important to have the bath bombs near by in a mass display so guests can shop them without reaching into the window display.

*lifestyle display:*

Lifestyle displays focus on grabbing merchandise of different categories and creating a "lifestyle" look, grouping items that work together to sell a lifestyle rather than a single item. The goal is that the client is drawn to the overall story and wants to purchase the items together to be able to recreate it on/for themselves. These displays should also be complimented with a mass merchandising display and can share the same fixture. Lifestyle displays range from small table top displays to large free standing displays. For example: If you were to sell body products like body wash, lotions, hair products, etc. it would be beneficial to pull one of each of those together in a lifestyle display to showcase that the products work together and can help a shopper create a full routine with the displayed products. It will be important that a mass display is nearby hosting all of the products represented in the lifestyle display.

*mass display:*

Mass displays are when we showcase products lined up on shelves in mass quantities. The important elements here are neat straight rows with visible pricing and signage information. This is where we make sure to show the different variations of the product and make it as easy as possible for clients to grab and go! These displays can be used alone but are important in supporting the other two types of displays. When used alone it is not as inviting to a shopper; however, can be the easiest to shop when products have multiple variations (size, scent, color).

## DECIDE ON SELLING SPACES & PLACES

- Where will you sell your product over the holiday season?
  - Online? Pop-Up? Do you own a brick and mortar? Maybe multiple methods?
- Once deciding on your spaces and places, do your research!
  - Understand the space you are allowed/have, the rules, hours, find out what other businesses are sharing the space (if doing a pop-up or market).
- If you have your own brick and mortar space you will want to consider setting special holiday hours, mapping out promotional sales throughout the season, finalizing your marketing methods, deciding how much of your in store space you plan on fully flipping for holiday and what square footage will stay your day to day product displays.

## SALES ANALYSIS

- Review product sales from the last 30-60-90 days (each business will use a different time frame in reviewing sales).
- Review previous holiday sales from earlier years (if the precedent is available).
- Analyze those sales to see what products were your best sellers, worst sellers, and what seasonal product you want to create and/or bring back from previous years.
- Decide if there is a product that didn't do so well over the year that could be discounted throughout the season.
  - We tend to forget that the end of the year is also a good time to sell off old inventory. It shouldn't be a featured product but displayed in a way that encourages it to be an add on sale or a "special find" for your shoppers.
- Check out the seasonal trends! What is the market doing? How does your product or service stand out amongst the rest being offered? It is important to come back to what sets you apart prior to starting the busy holiday season.
- Use the information you find to help build your assortment in preparation for merchandising.

## DECKING YOUR DISPLAYS

- Decide what fixtures you will need to support the assortment you will be merchandising.
  - Think about the season as a whole, do your fixtures need to be able to support different types of products throughout the season therefore needing to be flexible in function? Or do you plan on keeping a similar product set throughout the whole season and can go with something with a more permanent composition? If you are traveling with your displays what makes the most sense logistically?
- Decide what pieces in your assortment will need a feature display - life style display - or mass merchandised display and what combinations of the three will be required.
  - When making these choices remember that products can use multiple display types. Refer to the Visual Merchandising basics sheet attached for what each display type entails.
- Do your products need space and fixtures for demonstration? Will shoppers be able to test or try on your products? Make sure to think about how your shoppers will interact with your displays when finalizing your layouts and merchandising plans.



- When building your displays, think about creating destinations within your space, pull your shoppers in so that they get the full experience.
- Design your pop-up so that shoppers can come into the booth rather than just standing at a table in front.
- If you are working in your brick and mortar think about from the entry door to the very back wall, how will you get shoppers to stop at your displays, how will you lead them through your whole store?
- Use design principles and elements in creating your displays! Play with heights, textures, and patterns to create interest.
- If applicable, think about your windows to pull in foot traffic from the street.
- Make sure your displays are properly priced and relevant information is present.
- How you price your products is up to you, but make sure the information shoppers need to know is present on or adjacent to the displays.
  - Putting prices on each individual product and/or pricing sheets for each display.
- Get creative with information presentations! Explore options that incorporate your branding and more digital approaches like QR codes.
  - This can help drive traffic to things like your website or social media platforms as well!
- If you have a brick and mortar space be sure prepare the outside of your space as well!
  - Make sure your signage is intact and in good condition.
  - Plan for winter weather: make sure to have the needed equipment for snow removal, melting of ice, and entry mats to help absorb any potential slip hazards at the entry door.
  - Make sure holiday store hours are posted and any other protocols are visible to shoppers prior to entering your store.

## **DON'T FORGET MARKETING**

- What marketing materials do you need to support your promotional efforts and displays?
  - Business Cards? Pamphlets? Catalogs?
  - Digital options? Scannable codes?
- Utilize what you wrap (or bag) your shoppers items in as a marketing tool.
- Consider doing promotional giveaways throughout the season to drum up excitement.
- Create your social media content strategy to educate and empower your shoppers with information in regards to where they can shop your product during the holiday season.
  - Decide what platforms work best for you!
    - Outline a timeline for your content.
    - Stressed about getting in the moment content? ASK FOR HELP! Reach out to a professional or get support from your team in capturing all the holiday magic! EVERYTHING CAN BE CONTENT!
  - Make sure the branding, promotional messages, and overall holiday efforts align on your website, social media platforms, hard copy marketing material, and in person merchandising displays.

## **DON'T FORGET! - CREATE COMMUNITY!**

Show your other small business in the area support through collaborations, interaction on social media, and spreading the word to shop small.

Want to learn more about how visual merchandising can help you prepare for the holidays?

Check out <https://www.arcdesignstudios.com/retail.html> for more information.

