

VISUAL MERCHANDISING IN SPORTS STORES – A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

In the discipline of retailing, there are lot of research coming up from marketing and consumer behavior. More related to retail design, topics as store identity, store personality, brand personality, etc. are widely studied. Though designers benefit from this valuable input, research as such does not offer insight or skills in how to implement or translate such knowledge into a store design. Therefore, we asked ourselves if we could design a framework based on a well discussed - in linguistics - topic: the study of signs (semiotics). Our research question is ‘how can semiotics offer an added value to store design?’.

We believe that, in an increasingly competitive market, one way to stand out in the crowd is to use signs in the design of the store to communicate with the consumer on a different level.

Keywords: Retail design, semiotics

Visual Merchandising:

VM is presenting or displaying products in a way that makes them visually appealing and desirable. Things like themed window displays, dressed mannequins, the arrangement of running shoes on a wall, and fresh fruits organized by color are all examples of visual merchandising. It can also be as simple as stacking toilet paper into a pyramid or as elaborate as recreating a scene from a fairytale. The point here is, visual merchandising is

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all about using artistic product displays to capture the attention and interest of shoppers.

Visual Merchandising like 3D display of products, use of signages, uses of space, lightings, colour pattern are being used in sports retails.

Importance of VM - Visual merchandising increases the visibility of the brand and also enhances brand loyalty. Today fashion and retail industries are employing the retail merchandising technique on a high scale. It is one of the most popular methods used to engage customers and has seen a high success rate in the past few years.

This study uses “Semiotic Analysis” to understand the influence of VM on customer’s perception about the store.

What is Semiotics?

Semiotics describe how people interpret things. Semiotics is a way of seeing and interpreting that focuses on the relation between image, text and beholder (Coumans, 2011). The ancient Greek derived the term semiotics means ‘the science of signs’. In this paper we establish a link between store personality and the science of signs.

Here we have analyzed the study with two sense perception, i.e. Visual analysis & kinesthetic analysis.

Introduction:

The sporting goods retail market is being supported by strong macro tailwinds as people of all ages across the globe lead healthier and more active lives. The sporting goods retail market is expanding at a CAGR of 4% over four years, and is forecast to remain at that

level until 2022. Growth is being driven by emerging markets, casual fashion trends, women's lifestyle sports and rising participation rates.

However, the market is not without challenges, as undifferentiated and unscaled generalists struggle to compete with the giant brands' growing retail presence (Nike, Adidas), scaled players' private label offerings (Decathlon) and the giant online marketplaces (Amazon) – underlined by a series of high-profile bankruptcies in the US, where the market is more saturated.

For growth of sales there are certain factors which are solely responsible but some factors like VM also influences the growth of sales.

Importance of Visual Merchandising:

- **Instant information** - Potential customers can get a good idea of what your store is about.
- **Value for money** - A good display can cost money but it can pay back in increased sales. However, even a relatively inexpensive display can attract the eye of potential new customers if it is effective.
- **Attracting customers** - Eye-catching and appealing window displays can be the difference between potential customers coming into your store to view more or walking past.
- **Building a positive image** - An effective window display can provide a positive impression of your business and products.
- **Increase in brand awareness** - A unique and individual display can help your store stand out from the rest of the retail businesses in the area.
- **Promotion of sales and special offers** - A window display is an effective way to highlight promotional offers.

Objective of the study:

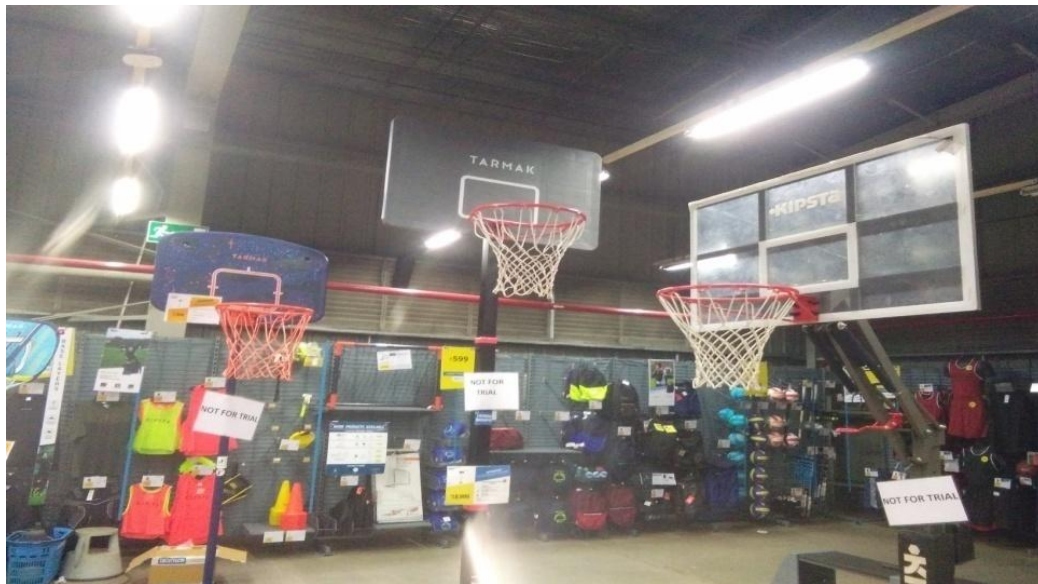
To understand the sense perception of customers which arises by Visual Merchandizing.

Method:

The study is made with the method of Semiotic analysis.

Findings & Analysis

Section I – Space / Layout



The space between the layouts allows the customers to touch & try the product. The customer may not buy the product but he gets the feelings, that it is the best place to buy. They not only get the feelings visually but also kinesthetically.



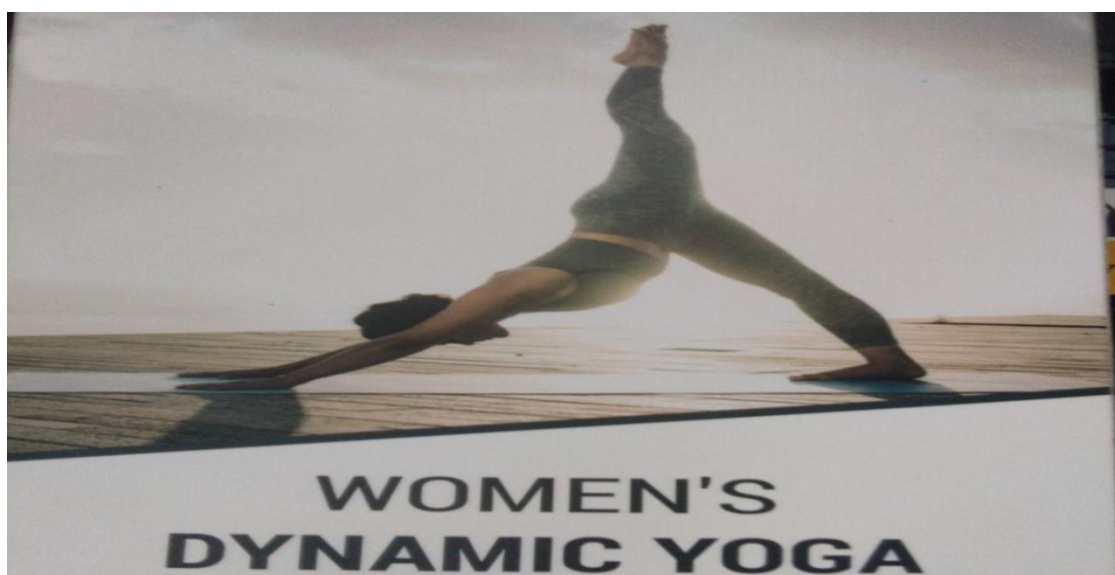
Section II – Colors

The unique color pattern in layouts gives treat to watch. It creates a visual pleasure for customers. It increases the curiosity in customer to try the product at least once.



Section III – Display

The kind of display this sports store is using, clearly make the technical aspect of the product visible to the customer. The features and uses are highlighted through the display. These kind of display make the customer accessible to the customer well. He or she gets the visual effect along with the “Touch and feel” effect.



Section IV – Signage

The signages in the racks convey information designed to assist the customer. It enables the customer to understand feature of the product to some extent through pictures. it creates a visual effect over the customer.

Conclusion:

From the above analysis, we can conclude that VM plays an important role in the visibility of the product as well as attracting the customers. Moreover, the VM is not restricted to Sports outlets but also can be applied to other retail outlets where Physical evidence is necessary like services related outlets.