

A Study on V.M.M(Visual Merchandising Design) Environment of Mobile Telecommunication Company Store

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Abstract. V.M.D(Visual Merchandising Design) covers every space, environment, and visually stimulating factor. This includes not only the architectural appearance but interior, graphic sign boards, window display, layout, store appliances, lighting, and even the looks and service attitude that sales employees have and show to customers. Even if good quality merchandise and design hit the shelf of the store, but customers don't visit the store, those merchandise are not sold. Furthermore, V.M.D intends to provide customers with information; to design the environment of store; to inspire customers to establish an impressive brand image. In this regard, the objective of this study is to study brand perception and effect of V.M.D displayed in the stores, on customers, and thereby to present the concepts of V.M.D, suitable for display in the stores, which can be used continuously in the future.

Keywords: V.M.D (Visual Merchandising Design), Advertising media, Interior Design

1 Introduction

VMD (Visual Merchandising Design) can be cited as the advertising media, which have effect on customers at the closest contact point. Evolving from pop, V.M.D was derived from a new self-service style retailer in American supermarkets in the 1930's. Self-service retailer means that consumers choose and buy merchandise, and it has been developed as a means of sales promotion, from the seller's viewpoint, which can save labor cost and has the goal of V.M.D. The word, V.M.D (Visual Merchandising Design), started to be used first and introduced as a differentiated strategy by Bloomingdale Department Store, under the awareness that merchandising alone could not raise sales, when American department stores were in the economic slump in the 1970's. In case of Korea, V.M.D started mainly with mobile telecommunication companies. In addition to major four media, V.M.D activities are being undertaken by them, in order to innovate the images of stores, where they have the closest access to customers. In an effort to strongly appeal to consumers, visually stimulating factors

are being developed and applied as a strategy. Multiple ideas like merchandise experience are carried out by applying V.M.D.

2. Objectives of V.M.D (Visual Merchandising Design)

V.M.D aims to heighten the images of stores and merchandise, and also increase sales efficiency. To do this, it needs to establish a strategy different from other competitors', create an enjoyable shopping atmosphere and organize stores effectively. The objective of V.M.D is to provide customers with popular and new merchandise; to increase sales volumes; to provide the chance that goods are sold well; to build up store identity. Show window, which is considered the representative ingredient of V.M.D, provides information on the displayed products, thereby increasing customers' purchasing desire, leading customers into the store, making it actual sales. 1)

V.M.D plays a role in adding information values to merchandise, complementing images of certain merchandise, delivering merchandise message, and establishing an image delivery strategy. V.M.D also plays a key role in determining success or failure at the closest contact point of sales activity. V.M.D can be classified into the following three axes.

- 1) Axis of Marketing by display inducing sales
- 2) Axis of Communication..... Forming identity in customer's mind
- 3) Axis of Customer Satisfaction ... satisfaction by improving service in Sales environment

3. Research Method

The objective of this study is to suggest V.M.D' s effect and its improvement. The research work was done as follows;

We visited many mobile telecommunication stores, made interviews with consumers about V.M.D' s role and effect they actually feel, and analyzed the research data.

1) Research Content

The objective of this research is to clarify the correlation between the following five factors, based on the research which asks consumers how they feel about each 5 factors, and to help to establish a strategy of introducing and implementing V.M.D.

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- (1) Perception of V.M.D
- (2) Effect of V.M.D
- (3) Satisfaction of V.M.D
- (4) Store Interior Design
- (5) Store Exterior Design

4. Analysis in detail

1) Average time customers stay at stores

Although the time customers stay at stores is not so different, the time customers of Kangnam area stayed at stores appears to be comparatively a little longer than that of customers of other areas.

The average time customers stay at stores was less than 10 minutes, and therefore we need to make POP. The time by gender customers stay at stores had no particular difference, and if we looked into the range of age, it seemed that the age of 19-24 stayed for short time, whereas the range of other ages stayed for long time.

2) Customers' Behaviors they showed while visiting stores and waiting

If we looked into the customers' behaviors they showed while visiting stores and waiting, it appeared that the visitors of Kangnam area had higher interest in store ads than that of the visitors of other areas. If surveyed by gender, it appeared that women had higher interest in store ads than that of men. It was found that the age of 13-18 had much interest in store ads. Since most visitors often look around store ads even if they see cell phone products while waiting, we need the PR strategy using POP.

3) Survey for the image theme in stores

The preference for V.M.D theme installed in stores showed the following order, that is, seasonal image, providing new products information, and effect of paying attention to visual. In addition, it appeared that women showed higher preference for seasonal image than men, and that men had much interest in providing new products information. It appeared that the age of 25-35 was impressed by seasonal image, and that the age of 13-18 was more impressed by new products information and effect of paying attention to visual.

4) Mobile telecommunication stores that showed the most impressive POP

It appeared that the consumers of Kangbuk had preference for SK Telecom stores' POP, and that there was no difference between SK Telecom stores and KTF stores in

Kangseo area. It also showed that there was no big difference between men and women.

5) The type of V.M.D that was most remembered

It was surveyed that Kangbuk area's most remembered V.M.D was window type V.M.D, and that Kangseo area showed high preference for showcase type V.M.D. It appeared that there was no big difference by gender and area. In the comparison by age, it appeared that the age of 13-18 had higher memory of POP than that of other age groups.

5. Conclusion

The stores play a role of the place where they meet customers' most closely, which caused stores to improve their prestige. It was found that this phenomenon is a kind of diversification for satisfying customers' needs, and that it is used as non-mass media and space communication.

The ultimate goal of V.M.D is to enhance corporate brand image by visualizing merchandising at sales site, to establish an image through store display, advertisement and promotion, and to lead to purchase behavior by making customers have favorite attitude.5)

Consumers identify their identity in the stores where their purchase behavior is made, and they want to actively acquire products information. This result is related with the change of store environment that reflects the trend in which consumers seek for sentimental values. After survey, it was concluded as follows;

First: it was surveyed that mobile telecommunication stores play a role of a place where consumers experience in advance before purchasing products. They made their purchase decision after experiencing products when selecting their products, and they recognized stores as an important place for acquiring new products information. When applying V.M.D, this factor should be considered carefully since their preference for V.M.D varies, depending on age and area.

Second: Self-satisfaction

Consumers' satisfaction is important until they decide to purchase products when visiting stores and consumers want to make their identity or individuality clear. Especially, the young age group shows their strong self-assertion for V.M.D and products when visiting stores, which is different from other age groups.

Third: Giving value to store environment

A number of mobile telecommunication stores competing each other have high interest in store environment, and we can find the phenomenon that consumers' sentimental purchase is made, depending on V.M.D display. In addition, consumers seek for the recreational factors pertinent to product attribute, and they want enjoyable purchase.

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Later on, store environment will not be just a sales space, but a space that will reflect consumers' rapidly changing consumption trend in their living pattern. V.M.D requires a strategic approach that it provides every consuming experience before purchasing and sets up the store environment which maximizes customers' value.

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