



## Man of Rubber Merchandising: Beyond Basics

### MERCHANDISING

Simply put, Visual Merchandising presents your business to your clients through your retail space and arrangement of merchandise. You create the desire to buy through a combination of display, advertising, and products – all coordinated TO SELL!

Your guided river services provide extra ordinary experiences for your clients. They bond with guides, the land, and the river and often learn something new about themselves. But the trip doesn't end at the take o out. After an unforgettable journey, clients want to purchase mementoes to mark and extend their experiences. That's where you store comes in.

Consumers have a desire to preserve the characteristics of the experience with tangible evidence. The trip doesn't end at the take out – the memory lingers and is sustained through their purchases. These products extend the experience. Your store simply must be an extension of their imagery for it to be the success your financial statement wants it to be.

How you display your merchandise tells the shopper more about your store than the array of products. Visual cues such as lighting, display fixtures, signs, and merchandise send signals that the consumer interprets as the overall *image* of your store. First impressions mean everything!

### INTERIOR SPACE ALLOCATION

Retail space allocations should not be made entirely on the basis of creativity. Decisions must also focus on the profitability of each area and space as a whole. The most common way to allocate is called **SALES PRODUCTIVITY METHOD**.

$$\text{Square Foot Allocation} = \frac{\text{Total Expected Sales} \times \text{Shares of Sales From Product}}{\text{Average Sales Per Square Foot}}$$

Interior spaces different values in terms of bottom line. For instance, most people will turn to their right when entering a store. Only 25% of customers walk more than halfway into a store. Statistics show that the front 1/3 of your store provides potentially almost 48% of sales while the middle yields 36%, and the back only 16%.



## ANIMATED VISUAL MERCHANDISING – FLYING DISPLAYS

This is an economical exciting alternative to mannequins or other types of stationary fixtures. By means of invisible filament such as fishing line, merchandise can be pulled, stretched or otherwise manipulated. The line can attach to hems, sleeves, or a garments shoulders seams, to be pulled back and secured with pins or attached to the ceiling, floor or wall to appear to fly or float. Garments can overlap or fly in front of each other in a sort of visual conversation.

### 8 ATTENTION GETTING DEVICES

1. **Color** – Be careful using loud or bright colors as they will initially attract attention, but distract from the merchandise upon closer contact. Choosing warm colors for backgrounds enhance items and push them forward optically. Cool colors appear cal, soothing, and balanced while enlarging the space optically.
2. **Lighting** – Effective lighting catches the eye. Here a few tips: Always focus on the merchandise and try not to direct beams onto a blank wall or ceiling. Angle adjustable lights rather than focusing them straight on. Crossing beams allows for more distance from light fixtures to spotlighted products. Front lighting makes an area too bright in the center and too dark around corners.
3. **Nostalgia** - Antiques are great non traditional fixtures. An old trunk positioned at the rear of your store could be fun for customers to sift through as a “Clearance” venue. An old chabby chic hutch instantly transforms a wall unit from something ordinary to something extraordinary.
4. **Scale** – A change in proportion between products can be an attention-getter. The introduction of props in this scheme gives relevance to the products while tying together your companies experience offering.
5. **Contrast** – Play with the Magic of opposites just like artists do through light and color. A white tee shirt pops against a black background. Or a white spotlight focused on a dark display adds drama. There are so many wonderful combinations to try!
6. **Repetition** – Put together garments of the same fabric or pattern. Or line same-sized props to draw the eye.
7. **Humor** – Who doesn’t like to chuckle? A shopper becomes a customer when you’ve made him or her smile. Here’s a simple idea: make a shirt “talk” by positioning a carton bubble with a funny quip inside the neck opening. The possibilities are endless!
8. **Motion** – Movement is life. Set a bandana in motion and evoke a customers memory of a pleasant day at the beach.



## RETAIL CUSTOMER SERVICE

*Perception leads to opinion, which becomes reality. Any moment of truth in business is when an opinion is formed.*

1. Customers don't think of themselves as customers, but rather folks that could possibly need assistance from you.
2. Always take your role in the company very personally.
3. Care FOR your client.
4. Don't assume you know it all. We must always be in a learning curve.
5. Is your glass half full or half empty? One person's problem is another person's opportunity!
6. You may think you deliver quality service...what does your customer say?