

2017 Research Week Proposal

Title: The Psychology of Visual Merchandising

Program of Study: Fashion Merchandising

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Category: Creative/Artistic

Abstract:

This presentation examines the psychological research behind visual merchandising and how it prompts customers to buy. The job of a visual merchandiser is to draw the customer in with bold colors, incredible contrasts, and artistic excellence. Visual merchandisers are considered the “silent sellers” behind all retail sales. Creativity and out-of-the-box ideas are key to selling a product by enhancing the emotion and senses of a customer. Customers around the world have no idea their psyche is being put to the test every single time they look at a store front window.

With every store there is a target market and it is the aim of the display to attract the eye of the customer to the product they would desire. Window displays are the first thing a customer see’s and because of that they must tell a story and attract the buyer in a matter of three seconds. Not only should displays attract a buying prospect with clear and concise visualization, it should also tell the store’s story; what is their style? Do they focus on upper class or middle class? Is the customer trendy or traditional? What does the customer want when they enter your store? All of these things add up to who your market is and why you advertise to them specifically.

With my window display created for FACS 423, I wanted to attract a young, fashion forward, woman who is looking for bold and unique pieces. For this display I created a full wall of very unique paper flowers contrasting with the boldness of a red dress. I added small details of prints in the layered button down, gingham printed socks with jewels, and bright purple flats. It is shown that 50% of women find their ideas for clothes by window shopping (Silent Selling, Bell & Ternus, page 34). Because of this statistic, I wanted to draw my market in by showing them they can dress in a sleek and classic way, while still being bold and unique.

Christian worldview integration:

In our world today, most people are striving to become pretty, normal, or just like their idolized celebrity. Mimicking the styles of the “girl-next-door” and trying just to fit in. One lesson I am always trying to remind myself is to walk in boldness. We shame those who are paving their own path and creating new ways of defining themselves, but in reality we should all do the same. Psalm 139:14 says, “I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.” We were created to be a unique being, expressing ourselves in our own way. I integrate my biblical worldview into my studies by understanding I am my own bold and unique person in whom I should be proud of. I want to teach others to be themselves and only enhance what they personally love with fashion. We were created different for a reason, our goal with fashion should only be to make ourselves feel bolder everyday. I want to encourage others to walk in boldness and follow their own path. The billion-dollar fashion industry is a world of creativity and with my display I wanted to showcase how my out-of-the-box idea can still be respected and enjoyed. My bravery is because I am known and loved by my Father, he accepts me as I am and wants us to find our true worth in Him.