

How to Create Retail Store Interiors That Make People Fall in Love with Your Products: 7 Retail Store Interior Design Hacks from Professionals

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Designing a retail outlet is like telling a story – only your customer is experiencing it in 4D. From the very first impression to the very last detail, each and every element of your retail store interior design is the acting plot of your story. The merchandise is your protagonist and the customer is your potential love interest – your job is to make them fall in love with each other.

So how can you do accomplish that?

Let's find out!

1. Intriguing Shopfront

Did you know that it takes eight seconds to walk by a typical storefront? Therefore, an irresistible shop front/façade is the very first aspect of a good retail store interior design. It's basically a bait – a meet-cute of sorts where your potential customer feels an incredible pull towards your shop front. The more unique your store façade is, the more curious passers will be about the inside.

The best way to attract attention is to use eye-catching technology. For example, Jun Aiko's Louis Vuitton store in Tokyo, Japan, uses a backlit perforated façade to grab the customers' eye. It's a double-edged design sword where during the day, the systematic patterned perforations are unique enough to make passers-by curious. Similarly, at night, there's an added appeal of beautiful lighting that makes people passing by want to have a look inside.

2. The Decompression Zone

This Decompression Zone is basically the first few feet of your store where the customer adjusts to the new space. It is the most important part of your retail store interior design. This is essentially the initial impression phase; where your two main characters are taking stock of each other. The customer is in transition mode – they're appraising their current environment and making a critical judgment about going in or out.

In order to make the most of this Decompression Zone, retailers should use innovative lighting, statement pieces that feature the best products. You can also use creative floor patterns, materials, dais designs and materials that contrast with the outside environment. This shift alerts the customers to the changing environment and helps them pay attention to the first products they encounter.

3. Wayfinding and Customer Journey

Anyone who's taking on a retail store interior design should be aware of 'The Rule of Right.' According to studies, 90% of customers opt to turn right when they encounter a crossroads in a retail setting. This is why proper wayfinding and creating an impactful customer journey are two of the most important parts of retail interior designing.

Brands and retailers should always consider the path they want their customers to take around the store. This is the part where you're orchestrating events to make the customer fall in love with your products. The customer assesses the merchandise and the point of sale when they're walking around the store, and you can definitely employ some wayfinding techniques to make them choose your products.

Here are some great techniques you can use to embellish this customer journey in your retail store interior design:

- Create small waiting nooks and alcoves.
- Looking mirrors are a great way to make the customer interested in the products. They'll occasionally pull something out and want to try it on.
- Good accent lighting that highlights your merchandise is always helpful.
- Some interactive design detail that catches the eye is also a good way to make customer experience memorable.

4. The Power Wall & Brand Identity

The very first wall your customer encounters in their path is the 'Power Wall.' this wall is a very important part of the overall retail store interior design. It should feature the best merchandise in the store and should urge the customer to go further. The Power Wall is also a great way for you to incorporate the brand identity of your store. You can even use the store logo in this wall in order to make a truly memorable impression on the customers.

5. Flexibility & Seasonality

One of the biggest challenges for retailers is flexibility within the retail store interior design. As the seasons change, product lines come and go. Several promotions are run in the course of a single season and the retail design of a store needs to allow for maximum flexibility and seasonality. Here are some ways to do so:

- Use product displays that can be easily added or reduced.
- Don't use heavy set display tables or statement pieces that will be problematic during the inevitable dismantling.
- Use window displays that can be easily switched out.
- Use signage and displays that can be regularly updated.

6. Accessibility & the 'Butt Brush' Effect

A retail outlet can have the most eye-catching, well-designed store in the world, but if it is not accessible to all shoppers, then it might as well have a 'Closed' sign above the door. The 'Butt Brush' effect – a consumer behavior where customers avoid aisles where they might accidentally brush someone's back – can be hard to avoid when there are clearance sales and big crowds in a store. Here are a few ways to improve

accessibility in your retail store interior design:

- Shop aisles and displays need to be wide enough for shoppers with pushchairs, wheelchairs and mobility scooters to move freely around the store.
- Shelving needs to be of an appropriate height so customers can easily reach the products they want.
- Visibility matters the most when it comes to merchandise display, so always pay special attention to it.
- Displays need to be disruptive by necessity but try not to make walking around the store an impossible task.

7. Path to purchase

The final aspect of a great retail store interior design is the 'Path to Purchase.' Once the customers have navigated every part of the store, found the products they want and decided on what to buy; retailers need to make the path to purchase as clear and simple as possible. This is the 'make or break' point of the customer journey. Retailers need to do all they can to encourage a purchase and this means the positioning of the cash counter needs to be especially strategic. Here are a few tips for you:

- The position of the cash-counter must be carefully thought out. The path leading to it should be a natural stopping point.
- There should be logical and comfortable queuing systems.
- There should always be ways to keep the customer engaged if they have to wait a long time to be checked-out.