

National Statistical Office of Thailand (2010), "Report of reproductive health survey 2009", Bangkok, Thailand. Retrieved from <http://service.nso.go.th/nso/web/survey/surpop2-4-4.html>

Neumark, D. (1988), "Employers' discriminatory behavior and the estimation of wage discrimination", *The Journal of Human Resources*, 23 (3): 279 - 295.

Oaxaca, R. L. (1973), "Male - female wage differentials in urban labor markets", *International Economic Review*, 14 (3): 693 - 709.

Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) (2009), "GDP 1996 (1951-1996)", Retrieved from <http://eng.nesdb.go.th/Default.aspx?tabid=94>.

Rosenblatt, M. (1956), "Remarks on Some Nonparametric Estimates of a Density Function", *The Annals of MatExMatical Statistics*, 27 (3): 832.

Parzen, E. (1962), "On Estimation of a Probability Density Function and Mode", *The Annals of MatExMatical Statistics*, 33 (3): 1065.

Sierminska, E., Joachim R. Frick & Markus M. Grabka (2008), "Examining the Gender Wealth Gap in Germany", *IZA Discussion Paper*, (3573), Retrieved from <http://ftp.iza.org/dp3573.pdf>.

Warunsiri, Sasiwimon & Robert McNown (2010), "The Returns to Education in Thailand: A Psuedo - Panel Approach", *World Development*, 38 (11): 1616 - 1625.

THE IMPACT OF VISUAL MERCHANDISING MANAGEMENT ON CUSTOMER ATTRACTION IN RETAIL STORES

by

Rungarun Benjamapornkul

College of Management, Mahidol University
69 Vipavadee Rangsit Road, Samsennai Phayathai, Bangkok 10400
Tel: 02-206-2000, Fax 02-206-2090
E-mail: memlin.b@gmail.com

Sirisuhk Rakthin

College of Management, Mahidol University
69 Vipavadee Rangsit Road, Samsennai Phayathai, Bangkok 10400
Tel: 02-206-2000, Fax 02-206-2090
E-mail: sirisuhk.rak@mahidol.ac.th

and

Prattana Punnakitikashem

College of Management, Mahidol University
69 Vipavadee Rangsit Road, Samsennai Phayathai, Bangkok 10400
Phone: 02-206-2000, Fax 02-206-2090
E-mail: prattana.pun@mahidol.ac.th

UTCC
International Journal of
Business and Economics **IJBE**

THE IMPACT OF VISUAL MERCHANDISING MANAGEMENT ON CUSTOMER ATTRACTION IN RETAIL STORES

by

Rungarun Benjamapornkul

College of Management, Mahidol University
69 Vipavadee Rangsit Road, Samsennai Phayathai, Bangkok 10400
Tel: 02-206-2000, Fax 02-206-2090
E-mail: memlin.b@gmail.com

Sirisuhk Rakthin

College of Management, Mahidol University
69 Vipavadee Rangsit Road, Samsennai Phayathai, Bangkok 10400
Tel: 02-206-2000, Fax 02-206-2090
E-mail: sirisuhk.rak@mahidol.ac.th

and

Prattana Punnakitikashem

College of Management, Mahidol University
69 Vipavadee Rangsit Road, Samsennai Phayathai, Bangkok 10400
Phone: 02-206-2000, Fax 02-206-2090
E-mail: prattana.pun@mahidol.ac.th

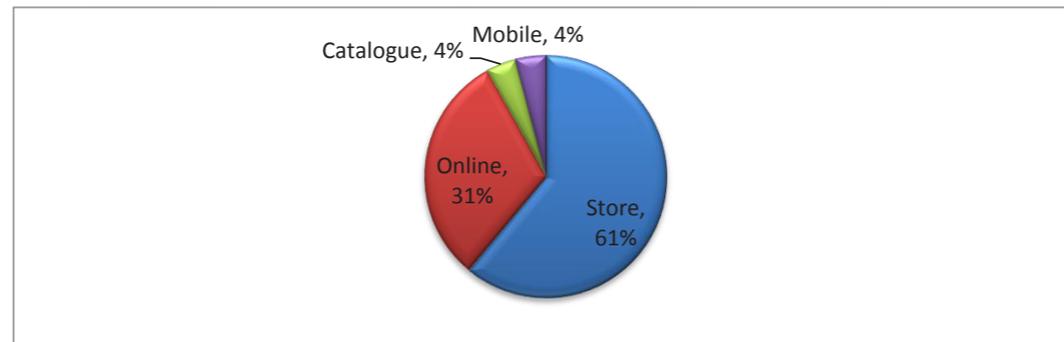
Abstract

Shelf visual merchandising techniques can maximize product attractiveness, create good store atmosphere, and attract more customers accordingly. These techniques allow brand managers to differentiate their offerings from other competitors. This study aims to investigate the effective visual merchandising techniques that influence customer awareness during a buying decision making process at the point of purchase. Using an experiment method together with customer interviews, the findings indicate that the interplay among appropriate position of shelf facing, in-store promotion, and shelf decoration strongly attracts customer attention when entering a store and influences customer evaluation of brands displayed on shelf. For example, left side of both eye- and touch-level shelf positions gain more attention than other level shelf positions because Thai people usually read or write from left to right. The results also reveal how different brand characteristics affect shelf setting and highlight the impact of promotional sign on customer attention and buying decision. In summary, this research study provides insights into how retailers or brand managers could deploy shelf visual merchandising techniques to increase customer attention and purchasing evaluation at the point of purchase. The results could be used as a part of strategic marketing planning in retailing businesses.

Keywords: Visual merchandising, Store display, Customer buying decision, Brands, Marketing

1. Introduction

There are many channels for consumers and shoppers to make a purchase such as in store, online Internet, mobile shopping and catalogue shopping that caused the increasing in business competition. As the A.T. Kearney Future of Stores studied that shopping in store still be the most popular channel for customers (A.T. Kearney Future of stores, 2010). In Figure 1, 61% of customers spent a large proportion of time shopping in store, it is followed by 31% of customers spent time through online shopping. Thus, in stores shopping remain the best opportunity for a business to inspire customers to spend more money and times.



Retail stores become the important platform for every business including in fashion, home furnishing, automobile section, technology, food and beverage business and FMCG industry. Many businesses confront with the problem of how to arrange their product to gain the most customer awareness and what is the best system to gain better use in the point of purchase (Kim, 2013, POP).

There are characteristics of the retail store purchasing behavior, which are the important factors that should be determined in the purchasing behavior. Firstly most of the customers' decision making occur in the store. Customers generally process product information in the bottom-up than top-down in the nature (Hoch & Deighton, 1989). Another research investigated the behavior of customer in the supermarket, the study have found that only 25% of purchasing are planned before customers come in the store (Dagnoli, 1987). Secondly, some research showed low involvement of customers in store in making a purchase. Customers may make their purchasing choice very quickly after searching for information and after price comparing (Hoyer, 1984). Lastly the survey expressed that most customers go to shopping in store every week. The average number of shopping times is approximately 2.2 times a week (Coca-Cola Research Council, 1994).

Visual merchandising normally is defined as everything that customer can touch, see, both exterior and interior representing overall store environment including in shelf display, merchandise presentation, in store design, window display, mannequins, props, store lighting and graphics and signals (Cahan & Robinson, 1984; Diamond & Diamond, 2003). These visual merchandising tools help customers to easily approach product without the help of a sales person. Because of the mood of customers can stimulate their purchasing decision in the positive way. Moreover having good virtual merchandising can create positive image of business and can potentially result in attention, interest, desire and action on the part of the customers (Baker et al., 2002). Visual merchandising is the way to differentiate oneself in businesses from other competitors in the case that competitor's product is quite similar in the market. It is crucial to make difference in customer eyes as superior store presentation would match with customer's expectation. It gives the business an opportunity to compete with other competitors.

There are many factors that should be considered to design effective visual merchandising in the retail store (Bailey & Baker, 2014). High level design includes ceiling, walls, lighting, architecture, graphics and display product. Eye level designs includes product positioning, props, point of sales, countertop installation and graphics. Ground level design consists of fixtures, seating, layouts, densities, product positioning, flooring and lighting. Windows includes fascia, storefront and entrance.

Wrong shelf arrangement between low price and higher price product could lead to low expected sales. By changing the layout of shelf display and adding some trail product, the revenue might potentially significantly increase and the defect product may be decreased. In other words, changing product positions may help company in the positive way and have highly involved with customer awareness.

It is an essential to investigate how the shelf visual merchandising affects customer attention in retail stores. By understanding the most effective the shelf display position would help to the company to display their products properly and efficiently.

The objective of this paper is to identify the most important visual merchandising method that would influence customer awareness in purchasing process. Managing visual merchandising can help to maximize product attractiveness and to impulse customer attention. Moreover, it also helps customers in selecting their desirable products more effectively and efficiently. Eventually, the company could arrange effective display system, which would help to compete with other companies.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Visual Merchandising

Effective visual merchandising plays an important role for every retail business in order to attract customers or shoppers and to increase brand awareness. It could help shoppers to make purchase immediately by using innovative display design, attractive sign board, and advertisement. Shelf arrangement or other factors could draw customer's attention to do impulse unplanned buying. Many researchers investigated that selling the product may not be the only important issue but product should related with customer satisfaction. In addition, facilitation for customers is also important in customer purchasing decision (Quartier, Vanrie, & Van Cleempoel, 2009).

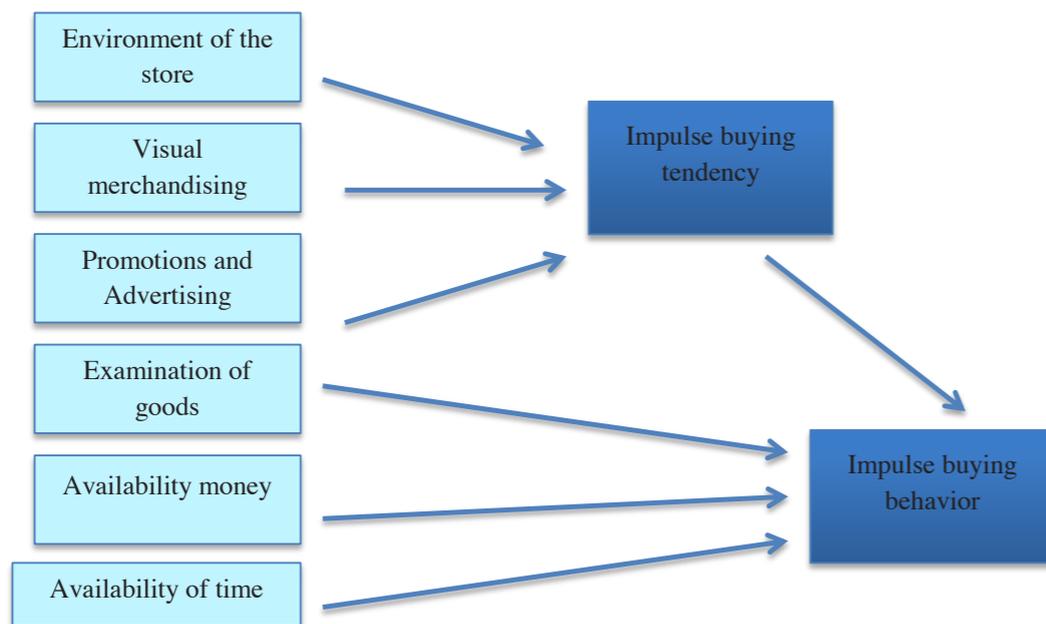
Visual merchandising included exterior displays involving window display, and façade, which create good first customer impression when they enter to the store. (Darden, Erdem, & Darden, 1983). Another component is the store interior including signage, layout, fixturing, props, other presentation methods and ambient condition (Davies & Ward, 2002). With reference to Kotler's (1973), visual merchandising can be defined as atmospherics which could be used as an important marketing tool to increase customer awareness and attract their attention in store. Research in visual merchandising paid attention in studying various aspects of customer response to visual merchandising such as cognitive and sensory effects (Fiore, Yah, & Yoh, 2000). For example, when customers have a stress mood, they will no longer in store. Thus, visual merchandising is an effective way to learn and understand customer purchasing behavior.

2.2 Impulse Buying Behavior

Impulse buying behavior refers to purchasing of a certain product without thinking or spending less time in making decision. It occurs when customers get surrounded in the store by some extra sort of excitement and newest (Underhill, 1999). Unplanned purchase is one of the most important knowledge for understand purchasing behavior and customer's perception (Park and Kim, 2008). Positive feeling in the customer's mind will lead an impulse buying satisfies for social interaction, entertainment, excitement and higher status to the customers.

Figure 2 represents the model of impulse buying with a store environmental stimulation and situational aspects of customer consumption. Environmental stimulation accelerates customer buying process by store visual merchandising, promotion, marketing stimuli conducted by marketers. Moreover, the two factors of situation factor, which are money and time available on impulse buying, should be considered.

Figure 2: Factors that stimulate an impulse buying process (source: Afr.J. Business)



There are three characteristics of impulse buying, which are different from other purchase behavior including being unintended or unwanted, being unreflective, and spontaneous or sudden (Jones et al., 2003). Unintended or unwanted purchasing refers to when the customers do not plan to look or buy product but finally customers make purchase without planned before. Unreflective purchase refers to when customers are lacking of evaluating product in thinking about long term result. Spontaneous or sudden purchase refers to customers were making purchase with a very short time or in the other word customers buy the product immediately after seeing it (Dawson & Kim, 2009).

In impulse buying process, customers are being affected by internal and external environment factors (Dawson & Kim, 2009). The internal factors contain of features as light, decoration, integrated sales technique and other marketing activities (Levy and Weitz, 2007). The external factors refer to marketing stimuli, which set by marketers such as in store promotion, discount price in order to attract customer attention (Youn & Faber, 2000).When

customers are persuaded by promotional incentives, they will have high motivation for buying and try to make decision faster which resulting in unplanned purchase of goods or services. External factors effectively can increase customer attention and increase purchasing volume than what customer firstly planned to purchase.

2.3 Visual Merchandising in Relation to Impulse Buying Behavior

In-store shopping has relevant effect in both internal and external factors. In impulse buying process, there is a strong relation between factors from visual merchandising and consumers' impulse buying behavior. Some research investigated that customers who are looking for shopping in the store make more an unplanned purchase, when customers stay in the store longer than usual because customers will tend to encounter more surrounding stimuli in the store such as in store promotion, nice decoration resulting in increasing purchasing (Jarboe & McDaniel, 1987). This supports Stern's (1962) conceptualization of impulse buying as response to the consumer's respond to in-store stimuli. Shoppers may actually use a form of in-store planning to finalize their intentions (Rook, 1987). When customers faced some store stimuli such as in store visual merchandising and in store promotion, they would have more possibility to make more purchase and increase their awareness toward the product (Han et al., 1991).

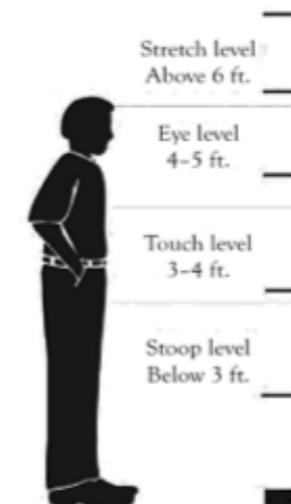
2.4 Shelf Space Management

The shelf display is referred to the location and space where customers meet the products. Actually the shelf display in the retail business is like a silent salesman (McKinsey, 2011). Therefore, managing shelf space is important for every retailers to draw a customer attention and to maximize profits for the company. There are the problems in allocating product to the shelf space as shelf space is a scarce and fixed with retail store condition. The number of product is continually increased, hence, the problem of how to allocate the entire products to the shelf should be deeply considered. Thus, customer's purchasing process may be influenced by in-store factors including shelf space position and in shelf related factors. Well-organized shelf display management can increase company performance, attract more customers and also prevent the defect stock control. Terblanche (1999) stated that the factors that influence shelf attractiveness in customer purchasing behavior are:

2.4.1 Shelf Position with Eye Level Zone

Shelf position normally comprises of different vertical shelf levels including stretch level, eye level, touch level, and stoop level shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: The vertical shelf levels (Stretch level, Eye level, Touch level, Stoop level)



- Stretch level (>6 ft.) is a less valuable shelf zone, which can gain less customer attention. The product placed in this position should be a lightweight product because it can prevent product from possible damaged.

- Eye level (4-5ft.) is located in the eye level zone, which is the key position for the product that is desired to be emphasized or to be promoted to get the best attention.

- Touch level (3-4ft.) this shelf level is located approximately at the customer waist height. Product that is placed in this area will receive more attention than product in stretch level and stoop level but it has less important than eye level. The product that should be placed is high profit product or high price product.

- Stoop level (<3ft.) this shelf level is not that attractive for customer while walking in the store. The product in this level are low margin merchandising or heavy product. Heavy product is placed in this level to avoid the damage. It is easy for customer to select the product.

The difference in the shelf zone does not affect only customer's perception toward the product but some researchers also studied that products in customer's mind differently depend on the place which they are located in. The products that are located in eye level and touch level generally get more customer awareness and attention.

The shelf position also has an impact on the sales of the retail store products. As the natural tendency of customers who are focusing on the product which are located at the eye level (Abratt & Goodey, 1990). The research investigated that the shelf vertical position had higher attraction when compared with the horizontal position. (Dreze, Hoch, & Purk, 1994).

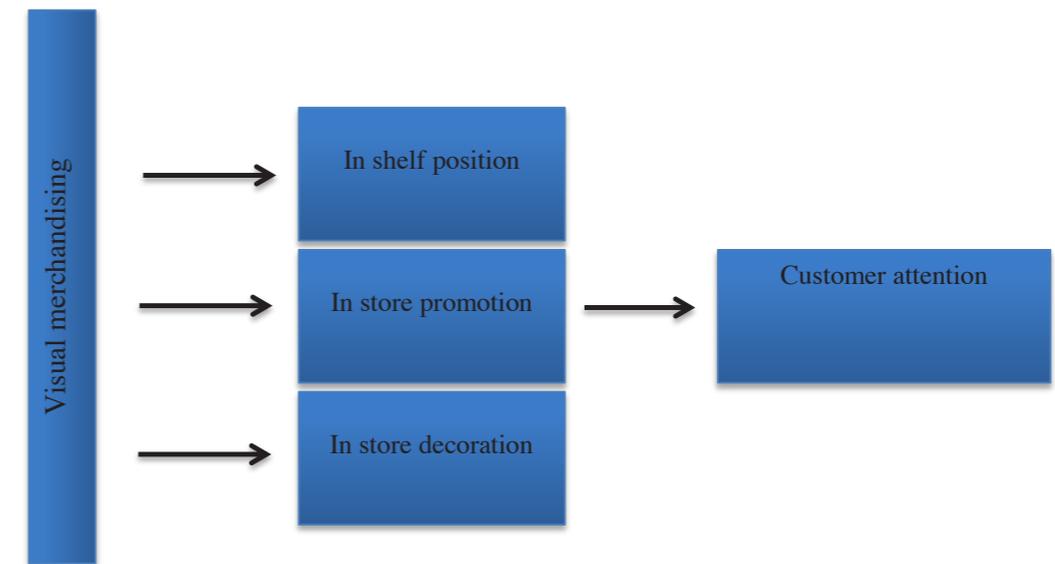
Some research also stated that several packages of the same product which was displayed on the shelf. Customers had more possibility to choose the product at the middle (Christenfeld, 1995). The central position can draw customer attention comparing with other position on the shelf (Shaw et al., 2000).

Customers believed that the shopping place where was quite expensive can show the high quality and higher perception for the customers. In addition, these shopping places mostly will place an expensive or high quality product on the top of the shelf and placed the cheaper on the bottom shelf (Raghubir and Valenzuela, 2008). Moreover, some researchers studied that customers when making a purchase of wine product among unfamiliar brands, they will intentionally choose the product that is located at the top or in the middle of the vertical shelf.

2.5 Framework

From literature review, the research framework is developed to indicate factors that stimulate customer to get more attention in the store. Figure 4 showed the framework on visual merchandising on customer attention in the store. There are three factors, which have an effect on customer attention. These three factors are in shelf position, in shelf promotion and in shelf decoration.

Figure 4: Framework of impact of visual merchandising management to customer attraction in retail stores



3. Research Methodology

This study was conducted with the form of experimental method, which allow to understand the real behavior of the customers. This study has been divided into two research phases:

3.1 Phases One: Experimental Method with Observation Process

This phase focused an experiment and exploratory of the customer behavior. The selected product was from one stationary business named ABC brand. The product of this company included mobile phone case, pencil pouch, notebook, sticker, pen, wallet and key chain distributed to sell at many department stores such as; Be trend (Siam Paragon department store), B2S, Loft and Be trend (Emporium). An observation research is performed in the ABC shelf display at one department store in Bangkok Thailand for four hours from 16:00-20:00 in the weekday of August 2014 which is a high traffic time in order to observe customer behavior and to understand the impact of visual merchandising element that is adopted to test.

3.1.1 Key Object

One item product was selected as the key object to test the customer attention. The selected product is the medium sales product with high price (Aurore Kitchen second bag) shown in Figure 5. The reason to choose this product is because this product has high price and the size of product is medium. The product is not the newest with higher interest from the customers.

Figure 5: Key Object Product (Aurore kitchen second bag)



3.1.2 Observed Variables in Observation Process

In this experiment, the key object product was placed in different location as described in 3.1.3.1. In 3.1.3.2, the key object product was placed with different in store signal and promotion. In 3.1.3.3, the key object product with placed with different shelf decoration. The key object product was placed for half an hours to see the number of customer visiting shelf and number of time that customer touch or hold the product to take a look. We observed the following variables of the customers:

- Number of visited customers,
- Average time spending in the shelf,
- Number of customers who hold the key product,
- Number of customers who buy the key product.

3.1.3 Experimental Design

Data on the observed variable were collected when the key object product was placed in different location described in (1), with different in store signal and promotion described in (2), with different shelf decoration described in (3).

(1) In Shelf Product Position (Eye-Level Zone)

In this experiment, the key object product was placed in six different location including the eye level, the touch level, and the stoop level as the following preposition (P) in Figure 6. Moreover, additional factor was included to impulse customer attention in (2).

Figure 6: The positions of the key product in the shelf during the observation

Left P1-1	Right P1-2	Eye Level
Left P1-3	Right P1-4	
Left P1-5	Right P1-6	Stoop Level

P1: In shelf product position are positively related to customer attention

- P1-1, Placing the key product in the eye level shelf in the left side position.
- P1-2, Placing the key product in the eye level shelf in the right side position.
- P1-3, Placing the key product in the touch level shelf in the left side position.
- P1-4, Placing the key product in the touch level shelf in the right side.
- P1-5, Placing the key product in the stoop level shelf in the left side position.
- P1-6, Placing the key object in the stoop level shelf in the right side position.

(2) In Store Signal and Promotion

The key object product was placed in different in store signal and promotion.

P2: In store signal and promotion are positively related with customer attention.

P2-1, Placing the key product in the top-left side of the shelf and using in store promotion sign “SALE”.



P2-2, Placing the key product in the top-left side of the shelf and using in store promotion sign “NEW”.



P2-3, Placing the key product in the top-left side of the shelf and using in store promotion sign “HOT”.



(3) Shelf Decoration

The key object product was placed in different shelf decoration. We placed the key product in the top - left side of the shelf and using additional shelf decoration by adding colorful wallpaper, product sampling and cartoon character on the shelf and investigate how customer are attracted by the decoration shown in Figure 7.

P3: Shelf decoration (Colorful wallpaper, placing cartoon characters) is positively related with customer attention

Figure 7: The ABC shelf in Korea in Thema park event



3.2 Phases Two: Qualitative Method

This qualitative method is used because it is a suitable method for research that studied customer attention behavior in the store (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). The qualitative analysis is chosen because an open-ended questions helps to gain deep information which hard to gain from other tool of primary research. Data were collected by interviewing to formulate the meaningful insight of the customer mind. This qualitative insight was needed to investigate or to gain the best proposition, which can be empirically hypothesized. The result data come from the interview with target customers and come from the observation in the real store.

3.2.1 Interviewee's Profile

Data were collected by interviewees include ABC customers of 6 women and 4 men. They were both frequent and occasional purchase customers of the ABC brand which the age 20-35 with a medium to high income (18,000 baht to above) due to the price of the brand is quite high compared with other brands.

3.2.2 Interview Process & Instrument

In depth interview was conducted in the department store (Be trend, Siam Paragon department store). The instrument would be administered to the customers who walking around Be trend. Customers was asked to cooperate in the interviews by providing deep detail response to the questions. The question areas were prepared in non-leading question formats to ensure validity and honesty of responses. The interviews had a time limit of an average of 20 minutes in order to avoid some interview went over of the time limit and no enough time to give information additionally. The interview questions were developed from Diamond and Diamond (2007), Law, Wong, and Yip (2010), Youn and Faber (2000), Rook and Fisher (1995), Gopal (2006), Bhalla and Anurag (2010), Vezotolu (2011), and Hubrechts and Kokturk (2012).

The interview question were developed from the three primary factors which influence customer buying process in a shelf. The first factor measured in-shelf product position. The second factor measured in-store signal and promotion attractiveness. The last factor measured shelf decoration such as cartoon characters, colorful wallpaper, Sample showing. In addition, the observations from the real place, which could be directly, investigate customer's attention on the sample situation.

4. Data Analysis

The results from the experiment and interview on the impact of visual merchandising management on customer attraction in retail are presented in this section. Findings from the experiment and the interview revealed the involvement on customer's intention, response to the use of visual merchandising in the in shelf arrangement. Finding reveals the perception towards in store visual merchandising in customer's mind.

4.1 Phase 1: Experimental Method

4.1.1 In Shelf Product Position (Eye-Level Zone)

Results showed that P1-1 (the eye level shelf, in the left side) is the best shelf position because it could attract customers to visit the shelf and importantly both position got the highest number of customer who touching the key product and buy a key product. Table 1 displayed the observed variable of customers with different shelf product position.

Importantly the finding is consistent with the previous research that people normally see the thing from left side to right side and upper to lower level. Therefore, the top-left side position has been seen first and gain attention the most. (Dreze, Hoch, & Purk, 1994).

The research finding was consistent with the previous study of Abratt & Goodey (1990) that shelf position had an impact on products of the retail store, and customers naturally focused on products located at the eye level.

Table 1: Summary of Observed Variables with Different Shelf Positions

	P1-1	P1-2
Number of visited	16	14
Customer touch product	7	5
Customer purchase product	1	0
Estimated time spending	1.24	1.06
	P1-3	P1-4
Number of visited	22	8
Customer touch product	3	2
Customer purchase product	0	1
Estimated time spending	2	3.2
	P1-5	P1-6
Number of visited	16	19
Customer touch product	0	1
Customer purchase product	0	0
Estimated time spending	1.07	1.8

We concluded that

P1: In shelf product position are positively related to customer attention

4.1.2 In Store Signal and Promotion

Results of observed variable when placing the key object product in different in-store signal and promotion were showed in Table 2.

When placing a "Sale" sign with the product, many customer gave more interest to visit the shelf. It is interesting that more than a half of visited customer touch the sale product and see how much the product was discounted. In the experient, 30% discount was provided for this product, and the price is reasonable. Some customers spent long time to find other discount product and some customers use very short time to buy the discount one to avoid solding out.

There are some customers come to visit the shelf when placing "NEW" sign. It is interesting that customers gave middle level of interest with "NEW" sign. They just come to see other product category without an interest to purchase product with the "NEW" sign.

"HOT" sign is placed along with the product to express that the product is bestseller. Some customers visited the shelf to touch the key product and making a decision by comparing with the same product category. One family come to see the key product and talk about the "HOT" sign and uses it as a key decision to purchase it.

This findings were consistent with the study of Youn & Faber (2000) that marketing stimuli including store promotion, discount price had an effect to attract customer attention.

4.2.2 In Shelf Signage and Promotion

Finding reveals that in store promotion signs create different meanings for customers in making purchasing decision shown in Table 4.

Table 4: The conclusion of experimental method in each shelf position

New	“New” sign creates perception to customers that this product is new arrival or it is an innovative product. Some customers think that purchasing a product which has “New” sign makes them to be more fashionable shoppers.
Hot	“Hot” sign creates perception that this product is best seller or selling good when comparing with other products in the brand, which can be delighted product towards customer mind.
Sale	“Sale” sign creates perception in a positive way to customer that this product is on sale. The price is decreased from the original price. This sign is most preferred from customers.

From these three sign, “Sale” sign is most preferable because of discounted price. This sign can attract customers to visit the shelf the most because customers prefer to buy the cheaper products with the same quality. Moreover “New” sign also helps customers to decide what product is newly on shelf or it is new developed version. “Hot” sign is preferable for most of the male interviewee because they are less concerned about price but preferred product which is best seller or quite popular because they want to be accepted as trendy people.

4.2.3 Shelf Decoration

Shelf decoration is divided into three factors, colorful wallpaper, cartoon character and product sampling. These three factors can gain customer attention when they enter to the store but cartoon character is most preferred from customers. The decoration depends on the product or brand, for example, product which expresses as the cartoon brand should decorate by cartoon character. However, for mobile product, customers would like to try it, therefore the decoration should be product sampling. For ABC shelf, there are some concerned in making the shelf to be more attractive. Firstly, the shelf should be well arranged with the same categories product that will make customers easily to find products. In addition, cleanliness dramatically affects customer perception. Some interviewees recommended ABC shelf to use most of brand cartoon characters as the main decoration in the shelf to attract customers and make customers to remember the brand toward these cartoon characters.

The research findings of visual merchandising are important for retail business because of the followings. In store promotion is the most important variable in in-store environment. It can significantly influence consumer’s store making decisions. For “Sale” sign, it is suggested to specific the discount percentage. For “Hot” sign, it should be change to be “Best seller” to make it more attraction or to make positive perception toward the key product than using “Hot”. Moreover, design layout, cleanliness and lighting are also concerned. Defected product on the shelf, dirty stand and dust will make negative perception towards customers. Brand staffs should check and have area cleaned all the time. Trial products can solve the problem of defected product causing by customers. Brand should provide sampling for all items.

5. Conclusion

After collecting the data from experimental and customer interviews, the results showed that there are correlative relationships between in shelf visual merchandising and customer attention for the brand. The major finding indicated that in store visual merchandising effected customer attraction when entering to the store especially with suitable shelf position, in store promotion and shelf decoration. The finding implied that most of the customers tended to make a purchase with “sale” sign as customers were generally impulse by the store environmental stimulation, i.e., in store promotion and visual merchandising. The best shelf position which gained most customer attention was on the left side of the eye level shelf position and left side of the touch level shelf position because they could be seen clearly as those positions were on the eye sight position. Moreover, the left side normally be the first shot or first image in customer eye because human normally see the things from left to right as writing and reading style of Thai people was from left to right.

Results from the data analysis showed that each business has different factor to concern in setting a shelf. If the product is a cartoon stationary, the shelf should express as the funny or cartoon theme to attract customer. If business which wants to be more prestige brand image or more reliable and professional in some area, shelf has to be set in luxury or more detailed in acknowledge customer about the product benefit or history of the brand. Moreover, the changes in product position effect the trend in which customers seek for certain product with the limit time to impulse their attention. We concluded that firstly high price product or the product that company wants to promote should be place in the eye-level or touch level. Secondly promotional sign can attract customer to visit the shelf more than shelf without any promotional signal. Moreover, “sale” sign is the most attractive tool to gain customer attention. Lastly, shelf decoration is needed to impulse and to gain customer attention. The results of this research were highly beneficial to marketers or retail store managers. Managers can potentially use this visual management guideline to set up effectively marketing stimuli to attract customer attention.

This paper focused only on products display on shelf in retail stores in Thailand and those factors impacting the shelf display. This research did not examine other factors that affect customer purchasing process. In addition, this research is limited to in store decoration and in store promotion. Future research could be expanded to other internal and external factors affecting customer purchasing process.

References

- Abratt, R. & Goodey, S. (1990), “Unplanned buying and in-store stimuli in supermarkets”, *Managerial and Decision Economics*, 11: 111 - 121.
- Baker J., Parasuraman, A., Grewal, D. & Voss, G. B. (2002), “The influence of multi-store environmental clues on perceived merchandise value and patronage intentions”, *Journal of marketing*, 66: 120 - 141.
- Bailey, S. & Baker, J. (2014), *Visual merchandising for fashion*, London, UK: Fairchild Books.
- Bhalla, S. & Anurag. S. (2010), *Visual merchandising*, New Delhi, India: Tata McGraw Hill.

Cahan, L. & Robinson, J. (1984), *A practical guide to visual merchandising*, Canada: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Christenfeld, N. (1995), "Choices from identical options", *Psychological Science*, 6: 50 - 55.

Dagnoli, J. (1987), "Impulse governs shoppers", *Advertising Age*, October 5th :93.

Darden, W. R., Erdem, O. & Darden, D. K. (1983), "A comparison and test of three casual models of patronage intentions", *Patronage Behavior and Retail Management*, NY: North Holland.

Davies, B. & Ward, P. (2002), *Managing Retail Consumption*, London, UK, Wiley.

Dawson, S. & Kim, M. (2009), "External and internal trigger cues of impulse buying online", *Direct Marketing: An International Journal*, 3: 20 - 34.

Diamond, J. & Diamond, E. (2003), *Contemporary Visual Merchandising Environmental Design*, 3rd Ed., Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Diamond, J. & Dianmond, E. (2007), *Contemporary Visual Merchandising and Environmental Design*, New Jersey: Pearson Education.

Eisenhardt, K., M. & Graebner, M., E. (2007), "Theory building from cases: Opportunities and challenges", *Academy of Management Journal*, 50: 25 - 32.

Fiore A. M., Yah X. & Yoh, E. (2000), "Effects of the product display and environmental fragrancing on approach responses and pleasurable experiences", *Psychology & Marketing*, 17: 27- 42.

Han, Y. K., Morgan, G. A., Kotsiopulos, A. & Kang-Park, J. (1991), "Impulse buying behavior of apparel purchasers", *Clothing and Textile Research Journal*, 9: 15 - 21.

Hoch, S. J. & Deighton, J. A. (1989), "Managing what consumers learn from experience", *Journal of Marketing*, 53: 1 - 20.

Kotler, P. (1973), "Atmospherics as a marketing tool", *Journal of Retailing*, 49: 48 - 64.

Hoyer, W. D. (1984), "An examination of consumer decision making for a common repeat purchase product", *Journal of Consumer Research*, 11: 822 - 829.

Law, D., Wong, C. & Yip, J. (2010), "How does visual merchandising affect consumer affective response?", *European Journal of Marketing*, 46: 112 - 133.

Jarboe, G. R. & McDaniel, C. D. (1987), "A profile of browser s in regional shopping malls", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 15: 46 - 53.

Jones, M. A., Reynolds, K. E., Weun, S. & Beatty, S. E. (2003), "The product-specific nature of impulse buying tendency", *Journal of Business Research*, 56: 505 - 512.

Kim, J. (2013), "A study on the effect that V.M.D. (Visual Merchandising Design) in store has on purchasing products", *International Journal of Smart Home*, 7: 217 - 223.

Levy, M. & Weitz, B. (2007), *Retailing Management*, 6th Ed., Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill/Irwin.

Park, E. J. & Kim, E. Y. (2008), "Effects of consumer tendencies and positive emotion on impulse buying and behavior for apparel", *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles*, 32: 980 - 990.

Quartier, K., Vanrie, J. & Van Cleempoel, K. (2009), "The interaction between interpreted space, mood and behavior in retail environments: A conceptual research model", *Proceedings of IASDR09, Design: Rigor and relevance*, 18-22 October 2009, Seoul, Korea.

Raghubir, P. & Valenzuela, A. (2006), "Center-of-inattention: Position biases in decision-making", *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 99: 66 - 80.

Rook, D. W. (1987), "The buying impulse", *Journal of Consumer Research*, 14: 189 - 199.

Rook, D.W. & Fisher, R. J. (1995), "Normative influences on impulsive buying behavior", *Journal of Consumer Research*, 22: 305 - 313.

Shaw, J. I., Bergen, J. E., Brown, C. A. & Gallagher, M. E. (2000), "Centrality preferences in choices among similar options", *Journal of General Psychology*, 127: 157 - 164.

Stern, H. (1962), "The significance of impulse buying today", *Journal of Marketing*, 26: 59 - 63.

Terblanche, N. S. (1999), "The perceived benefits derived from visits to a super-regional shopping centre: An exploratory study", *South Africa Journal of Business Management*, 30: 141 - 146.

Underhill, P. (1999), *Why We Buy*, New York: Simon & Schuster.

Youn, S. & Faber, R. J. (2000), "Impulse buying: Its relation to personality traits and cues", *Advances in Consumer Research*, 27: 179 - 185.