

## **Shopping in 5-D**

In the marketing of fashion brands, the shopping experience is as important as the merchandise. In fact, the 'exclusive brand store' is the face of fashion brands and companies are making huge investments in this area. It is also a fact, that fashion products are amongst the most shopped for categories and winning the shopper is prime on the agenda. In Shopper Marketing of fashion brands, sensory seduction of shoppers becomes mission critical. The brand store becomes the zone for creating and delivering what I call '5-D Shopping', the new mantra for sensory fashion marketing.

### **Fashion Everywhere**

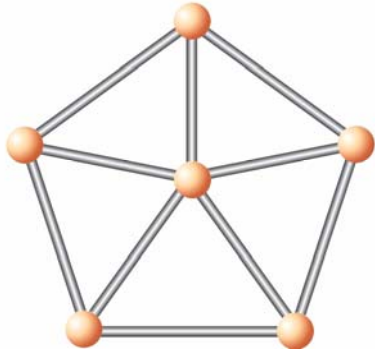
Fashion began with apparel and accessories like watches, footwear, eyewear, jewelry. But today fashion pervades the lives of people much beyond. From cell phones to laptops to home electronics; from cars to bikes to vacations, from pens to luggage to furniture; across things we 'wear'. What's more, fashion is influencing even what we eat and drink! Tiramisu, Sushi and Tequila are all fashion statements. So is HAAGEN DAZS ice-cream. It's the age of 'badge-brands'. When defining the scope of what constitutes fashion shopping, our shoppers' imagination is the only limit.

### **Fashion for Everyone**

Fashion is not confined only to luxury brands anymore. It has cut across segments. The advent of 'mastige' brands that offer 'champagne on a beer budget' have brought fashion down from its ivory tower. The likes of SWATCH, IKEA, MOTORAZR, I-POD, STARBUCKS, EAZYCRUISE.COM have changed the paradigm by making fashion affordable. We live in a fashion-democratic society and the fashion victims in us are shopping in droves.

### **Shopping in Vogue**

Fashion consciousness is making shoppers seek greater sensory gratification than ever before, as fashion is ignited by the senses. We rapidly need to move beyond the conventional 2-dimensional engagement of shoppers, to a more holistic 5-dimensional one. A '5-D shopping experience' that explodes all the 5 senses- taste, smell, touch, sound and sight. And the best place to make this come alive is the brand store! The URBAN YOGA Store is a fine example of leveraging all the senses to entice the shopper. Someone rightly said, "Tell me and I'll forget. Show me and I might remember. Involve me and I'll understand." Turbo-charging your shoppers' senses will make them scream for more!



## 5-D SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

### **A Moving Experience**

By its very definition, fashion is fickle. 'What's in' and 'what's out' lists keep changing faster than the seasons. Oscar Wilde said, "Fashion is so ugly, no wonder it changes every six months." While we change and innovate with merchandise to catch the pulse of our consumers, what about our store experience? More often than not, the store remains in a time warp while our shoppers are on overdrive. The brand store must be a moving target. It must lead the shoppers' fashions, rather than follow them.

### **Different Strokes for Different Folks**

Fashion is getting fragmented. Shoppers' tastes have become more eclectic and they are connecting with different 'looks'. Choices range from the sartorial to the bohemian. Ethnic is chic and retro is in. Shoppers are becoming experiential. The in-store experience needs to capture and live the 'brand spirit' for the shopper. Be it the rugged, Wild West style of LEVIS or the ethnic chic of FAB INDIA; the eco-friendly, natural texture of BODY SHOP or the electric energy of PROVOGUE; the sartorial elegance of ARROW or the minimalist lines of MAGPIE. A luxury car has a smell (Eau de ROLLS ROYCE) and a sound (the way the door clicks). The APPLE I-MAC looks good enough to eat! (Its in-store poster read, "Yummy"). Sensory engagement now needs to heighten the aura of the brand. It needs to go beyond the table stakes of informing and educating, to 'inspiring' the shopper into buying. Treat the store as your brand's theatre, where shoppers are looking for a sizzling performance.

In the end, if fashion is the god the store is its cathedral.

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