

Role of Knit Factory Merchandiser for Efficient Supply Chain Management

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ABSTRACT: Retailers face many challenges: time-to-market reductions are necessary due to shorter and shorter product life cycles, greater product variety causing more fluctuation in demand calls for high responsiveness in supply chains and the ever increasing need for shorter lead time continues. That is why, efficient supply chain management is now the demand of time. For efficient supply chain management, factory merchandiser has to play an important role. A factory merchandiser is responsible for delivering goods to the retailers "end on time and for that he has to be more efficient and responsive.

Keywords: Merchandiser, Supply Chain Management.

I. INTRODUCTION

A garment merchandiser has to interact with so many departments during merchandising his product. The merchandiser's role is to oversee the order right from the time the order is received from the buyer till calculating the account profitability and shipment. A garments merchandiser in order to complete the order coordinates with buyer, various departments within the organization, suppliers, and job worker's logistics outside the company. A garment merchandiser acts as a link with the buyer, various departments within the company and allied companies that help the garment merchandiser to execute the order. Allied company's means embroidery, printing, fabric, accessories companies and job worker [factories for stitching]. These need not be in house, they can be out-sourced. It is essential for the garment merchandiser to understand the input expected out of him to prove an asset to the company and make him successful in the carrier front.

II. EVALUATION OF MERCHANDISER IN GARMENT

The concept of term "Merchandising" can be traced dated back from the early historic period when the emergence of the trade between the countries. There are numerous notes about the existence and evolution of trade between the bigger civilizations in those periods like Greek, Roman, Indian, Chinese, and Egypt. But during those days the meaning of the term merchandising confined merely to exchange of materials or commodities which were availed from nature or produced from nature and they were not manufactured for specific purpose or specific customers. There was exchange of materials which fulfills the basic needs of living like commodities, live stocks, textiles and luxurious items like gold diamonds, precious stones etc... Earlier days the production of goods was home based and family oriented which were not mass produced. In the industrial period, home production was replaced by factory system and hand operations were replaced by machines. Mass productions were followed by large-scale consumption. The term "Merchandising" got its significance after the industrial revolution that emerged during the 20th century after World War 2 and particularly during the period when there was a dramatic shift from Custom Made Tailoring to Ready Made Garments. During this period there was great demand for product development. Merchandising evolved as a bridge between the design and sales to fill the needs. It got its further momentum when the market concept which give more impotence to the customer needs, emerged in the industry. The period between 1960 and the early 2000 saw dramatic changes in the structure, focus and content of apparel companies particularly in U.S. During 1970's there was a remarkable

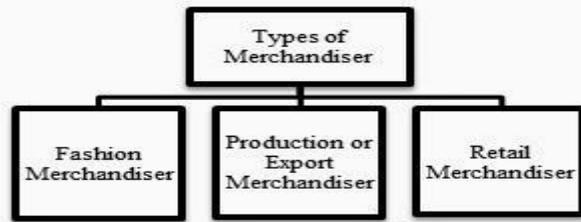
growth surge to the apparel industry which continued through the 1980 and 1990. United States played a major role in the evolution of merchandising in apparel industry.

The necessity of merchandising lies essential due to the following factors

1. Dramatic growth,
2. Complicated raw material & process,
3. Complex network,
4. Advent of new styles,
5. Reduced Product Life Cycle,
6. Textile innovations,
7. Computer applications,
8. Global transition

To achieve this level of different control while developing, executing and delivering a product line that meet the rapidly changing needs of target market, it requires a very special management professional which considered being a “Merchandising profession”.

2.1 Types Of Merchandisers

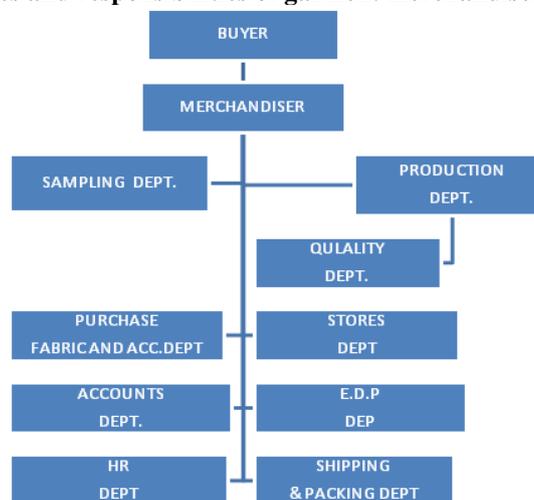


Types of Merchandiser

2.1.1 Fashion Merchandiser

Fashion merchandising involves all the activities starting from the fashion forecasting, design and product development till to retail sales and this also include production merchandising and retail merchandising. This will be taken care by the buyer’s part. Fashion merchandise includes items of retail merchandise which have decorative value either with or without also having functional value. Fashion merchandise includes mostly item of apparel since they can all be decorative and functional. Fashion merchandising refers to all the planning and activities involved in bringing the right fashion merchandising at the right place at the right time with right quantity at the right price and with right sales promotion. The fashion apparel world exists between the designer and the retail customer. The field of fashion merchandising exists to service the designer –customer relationship.

2.2 Flow chart of various roles and responsibilities of garment merchandiser



3.1 Role of Merchandiser with Buyer and Sampling Department:

The merchandise in the initial stages of order receipt and conformation coordinates with the buyer and sampling department for various approvals.

3.2 Role of Merchandiser with Buyer:

A garment merchandiser receives the techpack from the buyer [enquiry]. He has to work with various departments and prepare a validity report and a feasible quote. The quote will be intimated to the buyer, price is negotiated and confirmed. The purchaser order is then sent by the buyer along with the LC. At the various stages of samples, prints embroideries and accessories are sent to the buyer for approval. Once the entire approval phase is over goods are produced and shipped.

3.3 Role of Merchandiser with Sampling department:

Here garments merchandiser arranges for approval of the first sample it may be in just one size, pre-production sample may be in jumping size or entire size set, embroidery, print approval and placement approvals are also finalized in the sampling stage. The measurement chart is also checked and confirmed upon any increase in measurement will lead to an up charge. The paper pattern is also completed with all revisions asked by the Buyer. The fabric [Knit downs, bit looms and first taka] and accessories are approved at this stage.

3.4 Role of Merchandiser with Purchase Department

Purchase department is divided into two departments such as fabric and accessories. Working procedure of both departments have discussed in the below:

3.5 Working procedure with fabric department

A garment merchandiser receives the fabric requirement from the buyer. The parameters to keep in mind are the content, fabric count and construction, weight /G.S.M, design of the fabric, fabric quality, colour etc. The buyer will send an image of the fabric design to the garment merchandiser and it is replicated by the fabric manager along with the suppliers into actual. Garment merchandiser coordinated with the fabric manager for bit looms and knit downs, then it is sent to the buyer for approval. On receipt of approval, the first take of around 10-15 meters or 3kgs -5kgs of knit down is asked from the fabric supplier as the case maybe. The pre-production size set is sent to the buyer with all actual print, embroidery and accessories. Once the bit loom or knit downs are approved the price is negotiated and bulk order is placed. The optimum width/dia required is ascertained in co-ordination with the lectra and production department. In case of dyeing of fabrics again the buyer's standard should be kept in mind. In Germany Azo dyes are forbidden. If the quantities are too small for manufacturing the stock lots can be offered. Sourcing, Pricing, Right and Timely deliveries is the main goal of the fabric manager and the garment merchandiser. Generally an excess of 5% is ordered than the actual required quantity but this can vary organization to organization and the size of the order.

3.6 Working procedure with accessories department:

Garment merchandiser receives details of trimmings and accessories required from the buyer. The parameters to keep in mind are content, dimension, colour, size, logo etc. e.g. some buyer want nickel-free metallic accessories. If the items as required by the buyer are not available in the market then options can be proposed to the buyer. Once the trimmings and accessories are approved the price is negotiated and bulk order is placed. Sourcing, Right and Timely deliveries are the main goal of the accessories manager and the garment merchandiser. Generally an extra 3% is ordered than the actual required quantity but this can vary organization to organization and the size of the order.

3.7 Role of garment merchandiser with store department:

A copy of the purchase order with all details for fabric, trimmings and accessories are given to the stores .Once the goods are in-house, the store manager will send a sample to the garment merchandiser and the respective manager for approval, on receipt of approval of the same the goods will be in-warded. Here the store manager has to tally the quantity ordered against the quantity received along with price. Any deviation will have to be reported to the fabric or trimmings and accessories manager. Garment merchandiser sends the sample of the bulk fabric and accessories to the buyer for approval. With the help of the purchase order the stores understand what quantities are to be dispatched. At the end of the order all balance accessories should reach the stores.

3.8 Role of Merchandiser with Testing Department:

Testing is generally out sourced there are companies like Texanlab in India that are sometimes nominated by the buyer. Some huge companies conduct basic tests in house. Fabric, trimmings and accessories are tested as per the parameters given by the buyer. The buyer lays down tolerance range for acceptance of goods.

Testing of Fabric:

Fabric test are conducted at various stages as per the requirement of the buyer. Fabric is tested for strength, width, length, shrinkage, thickness, count, colour fastness etc

Testing of Fibre:

Fiber is tested for strength, maturity, trash content elasticity, length, fineness

Testing of Yarn:

Yarn is tested for strength, count, twist, yarn hairiness, yarn crimps, rigidity

Testing of Accessories:

Accessories are tested for content, colour fastness any other required by the buyer.

3.9 Role of garment merchandiser with EDP [Electronic Data Processing] department:

A garment merchandiser should be in synch will and all departments regarding the process of each order. The EDP department feeds this data so that at a click one get information on the status of the order and the functioning of various departments. Also if the performance is within the time frame available. There are many software packages available e.g. SAP for this work.

3.10 Role of garment merchandiser with HR Department:

A garment merchandiser should inform the HR [Human Resource] in case of manpower, godowns, local transport requirement, local permits, manpower movements required.

3.11 Role of Merchandiser with Production Department:

The merchandiser on the receipt of the order will intimate the production department. Garments production department will plan whether to produce in-house or to outsource through other job workers. Production samples are submitted to the garments merchandiser for buyers approval in sizes mentioned in the LC. Garments merchandiser coordinates daily with the production department on the progress of the order and clarification of doubts if any. It is the duty of garments merchandiser to follow-up the patterns, fabric approved sample for bulk production and accessories and all of those should reach the designated factory in time. After the order is completed, garments merchandiser tallies as per inward, outward and what was consumed and what is left is exact as per planned. In case of shortages and excess utilization or rejects have to be justified in the validity report and balance goods are sent to the stores by the garments merchandiser and the garments production department. Generally the buyer accepts 3% extra of the total good ordered while others do not accept extra quantities.

3.12 11.1 Quality Department:

A garment merchandiser should be aware of the company goals and quality standards along with the quality standards acceptable limit to each buyer. The Production Manager along with his production team and quality checkers maintains the quality standards. On the basis of the style and volume the production manager will install check points to maintain quality levels.

3.13 Role of garment merchandiser with packing department:

A garment merchandiser co-ordinates with the packing department to pack the goods as per the style, ratio and carton quality and size, marking details received by the buyer .e.g. if the buyer wants goods packed in individual poly-bags or individually packed and then ratio packed in a master poly-bag etc. It is very important for the garment merchandiser to understand the importance of adhering to packing details received from the buyer . The storage and labour cost is foreign countries is very high. Where and how to store the goods is replanned by the buyer in order to have effective space utilization. According to the order received packing details are given, so that it becomes easy to remove the designated the carton and dispatch where there is a requirement.

3.14 Role of garment merchandiser with commercial department:

A garment merchandiser should provide a copy of all the purchase order raised against a particular order to the accounts department in order to co-ordinate with all departments, garment merchandiser, supplier for excess, shortage or variance of price etc. Bank transfers, L/C negotiation, allocation of funds are done by the accounts department. The accounts department negotiates the bank for payment depending on the type of L/C. Once the order is completed the documents as required by the buyer are submitted to the bank and payments are received.

3.15 Role of garment merchandiser with shipping department:

A garment merchandiser co-ordinates with the shipping department for vessel booking, transport etc and completion of documents for shipping the order on completion of the order all documents are submitted to the accounts department for realizing of funds from the buyer.

3.16 Contract profitability:

At the end of the order the garment merchandiser will compare the actual and budgeted cost to ascertain contract profitability. It is on this basis that the performance of the merchandiser is assessed along with time and action planned and executed.

III. SCOPE OF MERCHANDISER IN FASHION INDUSTRY

4.1. Educational Requirements of Merchandiser:

A degree in fashion merchandising is usually an intricate blend of Textile, fashion and business. Many traditional colleges and universities, as well as art schools, offer targeted textile, fashion merchandising degree programs. Some individuals may prefer to specialize in specific areas of textile, fashion merchandising, like marketing or buying, while others may prefer to do it all. Some retail stores also offer special fashion merchandising training programs in lieu of a degree.

4.2. Salary Information of Merchandiser:

Salary of local merchandiser is in range of 20,000-40,000 Rs. The average salary for fashion merchandiser, according to Simplyhired.com, is \$47,000. First-time retail workers make from \$7 to \$11 an hour. As a person goes on to become a manager, the salary will increase to about \$16 per hour, as of 2009. Shipping, purchasing and fashion distribution workers will pull in an annual salary of \$25,000 to \$60,000. Those working for top-level fashion stores will take home from \$70,000 to \$100,000.

4.3. Experience:

Aside from working in clothing retail stores, interested fashion merchandisers are advised to take college courses to further their eye for fashion and to combine that aspect with astute business knowledge. People who wish to advance at a rapid pace should have a good grasp of the fashion as well as business side of merchandising. Typical classes offered to a potential fashion merchandiser include the history of fashion, business-oriented courses and consumer research studies. To obtain an executive position, those interested will have a much better chance of getting hired with a master's degree in business combined with a fashion-based curriculum.

IV. CONCLUSION

On this paper we have conclude that the merchandising is a growing up as well as important department for the garment industry. It has very good scope in present as well as in future& also has greater opportunities.

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