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Future Experience of Retailing

零售體驗未來式

*Interview with
Mona Kim
Federico Repetto
Arttu Salovaara*



Mona Kim

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In an on-line retailing era, what do you think the future of shop-retailing would be like?

Both online and offline (physical store environment) offer their own unique possibilities of "experiential" elements and possibilities inherent to each medium. Online enables deep layers of information to exist in a "real-estate" that is fully expandable, and to connect virtually with others who are elsewhere, which is not limited or bound by space or time.

Offline or the brick-and-mortar retailing environment, in spite of its obvious limitations, offers the very physicality, visibility and touchability which the digital sphere cannot offer or transmit to a full extent (at least where we are today in terms of technological possibilities), and thereby is a stronger conduit of human emotions, mood, and response. I believe that we are slowly approaching the road-end of our naive obsession

with everything digital and are starting to crave the importance of actual human and material interaction. In that sense, now, more than ever, there is an opportunity to really push the visual merchandising or in-store experience so that it references back and revisits primal human needs. And take cue from that in order to make the retail experience more memorable, explore a more daring play between offline and online experiences combining technology in a more thoughtful and powerful manner. Here are some examples: the notion of gathering re-interpreted, invented situations or experiences such as using olfactory senses to activate memory or triggering emotions to provide a more sensory context to the products being displayed, create and heighten human interactions through manipulation of spatial design, rethink the classic merchandising schemes and planning to see if time and space within those contexts can be approached in a completely different manner, etc..

Though some of the examples mentioned above clearly clash with the classic understanding of space is money/time is money, which is an unarguable reality from a commercial point of view, a riskier and bolder approach would be to upturn the sense of "shopping time" and transform it into "experience time" which is much more memorable, fulfilling, and perhaps a longer term vision of future trends.

What is the most crucial point of retail space design in this new era?

Experience. But "Experience" in a truly novel sense, not in the run-of-the-mill branding lingo that all agencies copy and paste into their mission statements or company profiles.

What kind of approach would you use to enhance shopping experience in design perspective?

Address the basics and do those well as a first step: healthy air, spatial harmony, a better sensitivity to audio experience (i.e, soundtracks) and lighting.

Explore how to introduce layers of enchantment, no matter how simple they can be: magic of discovery, intimacy, and background context of the products. Identify the appropriate mood to establish based on who the audience is.

Explore smarter ways to merge the online and offline experience, but also reflect upon why and if there is that need.

Invent new ways to relay information or messages as a way to evolve away from the classic point-of-purchase signage which usually do not contribute life to a spatial experience.

在一個網購時代，你覺得未來的店鋪零售將會怎樣？

線上與線下（實體店鋪環境）都有著他們為各自媒介注入獨特“體驗”元素的可能性。線上可以讓存在於實體店的資訊得到全面和深入地展現，與各地的人進行虛擬連接，並且不受時間和空間限制。

線下（實體零售環境）儘管有其明顯的局限性，但它的觸感和真實感是線上網絡環境無法給予和完全複製的（至少我們現今的科技無法做到）。它是一個將人類情感、情緒和反饋貫穿的更有效的溝通渠道。我相信我們在慢慢失去對數碼世界純真的迷戀，並會開始渴望真實的人與物料的互動。在這樣的契機下，現今是推動視覺營銷或店內體驗的好時機，因為能夠重新了解人類的原始需求。而為了使零售體驗更加深刻，線下、線上與科技結合將會有更加大膽的嘗試，會以更有心思和力量的方式進行探索。通過聚集這個概念來重新詮釋或創造場景或體驗，例如用嗅覺感官來勾起記憶或激發情感，賦予展示的產品感官氛圍。透過空間設計操控來營造和突顯人的互動，或是重新思考固有營銷推廣的規條與策劃，探究用完全不同的方式來展現時間與空間。

上述的例子很好地衝擊了空間/時間就是金錢的認識，雖然從商業角度看這是一個無可爭辯的事實。一種更冒險和大膽的方式將會顛覆“購物時間”並將此昇華為“體驗時間”，這種轉變更難忘和更讓人滿足，或許這是未來的發展趨勢。

在這個新時代里什麼是零售空間設計的最重要之處？

體驗，是新奇的“體驗”，但並不是那些被多次抄襲粘貼在公司宗旨和簡介里的平凡標籤術語。

在設計層面上你會如何提升購物體驗？

首先要把基本的事情做好：良好的氛圍，空間協調，更好的聲音體驗（如原聲音樂）和燈光設置。然後探究如何層漸地詮釋吸引點，不論他們有多簡單：如發掘的魅力，親密性，和產品的故事。然後基於消費群體建立適當的氛圍。另一個是探究如何用更聰明的方式去結合線上和線下體驗，但同時又能體現這樣做的需要。最後是創造新的資訊傳播方式，摒棄以往缺乏生活體驗的傳統購物模式。