

Building Successful Retail Strategies - A Case Study Of 'Coupon Store'

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INTRODUCTION

The country's dynamic retail landscape presents a grand opportunity to investors from across the globe, to use India as a strategic business hub. With the changing face of retail, the Indian consumer is in for a rapid transformation.

"As per the Images, F&R Research estimates for India Retail Report, the Indian Retail market stood at ₹ 1,330,000 crore in 2007, with an annual growth of about 10.8 per cent. Of this, the share of organized Retail in 2007 was estimated to be only 5.9 per cent, which was ₹ 78,300 crore. But this modern retail segment grew at the rate of 42.4 per cent in 2007, and is expected to maintain a faster growth rate over the next three years, especially in view of the fact that major global players and Indian corporate houses are seen entering the fray in a big way. Even at the going rate, organized retail is expected to touch ₹ 2,30,000 Cr (at constant prices) by 2010, constituting roughly 13 per cent of the total retail market. The consumer spending is ultimately pushing the economy into a growth-and-liberalisation mode. The Indian market is becoming bolder by the day, with the economy now expected to maintain its growth at over 8-9 per cent, and with average salaries being hiked by about 15 per cent, there will be a lot more consumption¹. In order to be competitive in this ever expanding retail sector, a closer look at "retail strategies" adopted by existing players is absolutely essential."

DEFINITION: RETAIL STRATEGY²

"A retail strategy is a statement identifying the following:

- a. The retailer's target market, it is a market segment, toward which the retailer plans to focus its resources and retail mix.*
- b. The format the retailer plans to use to satisfy the target market's needs. It is the retailer's mix (nature of merchandise and service offered, pricing policy, advertising and promotion program, approach to store design and visual merchandising, and location).*
- c. Competitive advantage, the bases upon which the retailer plans to build a sustainable competitive advantage. It is an advantage over the competition that can be maintained over a long time.³"*

RETAIL MIX & ITS IMPORTANCE IN BUILDING SUCCESSFUL RETAIL STRATEGIES

"It is the set of controllable tactical marketing tools that the firm blends to produce the response it wants in the target market⁴. Apart from merchandising, the retailers provide services like providing right information about the products, cross selling, informing the customers about the store facilities, providing products on credit or discount, creating a comfortable environment for customers and providing good after-sales service."

Table 1 : Marketing Mix For Services⁵

Product	Price	Place	Promotion	People	Physical evidence	Process
Range	Discounts	Location	Advertising	Training	Furnishings	Procedures
Quality	Allowances	Accessibility	Personal selling	Commitment	Color	Mechanization
Brand name	Commissions	Distribution	Sales promotion	Incentives	Ambience	Flow of activities
Service line	Payment terms	Channels	Publicity	Appearance	Noise level	Promptness
Customer's perceived value and quality	Customer's perceived value / price		Public relations	Interpersonal behaviour	Tangible clues	Customer engagement

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MARKETING MIX FOR RETAIL STORES

- 1. Product (Merchandise):** The various decision points in a product mix at a retail store are - product development, product management, features & benefits, branding, packaging and after-sales services.
- 2. Price:** It consists of cost, i.e. procurement of the product and profitability, i.e. the profit margin after calculating the ROI. Value for money as customers do not buy a product, they buy benefits. Pricing has to be competitive to create fast shelf movement. Incentives are given to the sales team against achievement of target & even customers are provided in a mode of schemes to create loyalty & greed to make more purchases. If price of the product is high, then the seller has to maintain the quality of the branded product and it also creates a status symbol for buyers.
- 3. Place (Store Location):** Retail location is about choosing the target market, channel structure, channel management, retailer image, retailer logistics and distribution.
- 4. Promotion:** It is a development of promotional mixes and can be in a form of advertisement management, sales promotion and sales management. Promotion in retail can be also done by public relations and direct marketing.
- 5. People:** People are the key drivers of a retail mix, and it consists of staff capability, efficiency, availability, effectiveness, customer interaction and internal marketing.
- 6. Process:** This element plays a vital role in retail and is a part of the service sector. In retail, retailers cannot afford to lose customers by going out of stock or face issues like product not available. Retailers have to maintain some standardization to maintain the minimum stocks and not letting the shelf to get empty. In retail, retailers have to maintain order processing, database management, service delivery and queuing system.
- 7. Physical Evidence:** To create a good environment in a store, it is very important to take care of proper display of products so that customers should not experience difficulty in tracing the product. Proper planogramme is required in a store to create faster shelf movement. Good merchandising is required. Light wall colour shades are required to give a soothing effect. Soft music and good fragrance create a comfortable effect. Layout or gangway between the shelves should be spacious. Presence of salesmen/salesgirls is required so that he/she can guide the customers in case of queries/ or locating a product.

RETAIL STRATEGY AT COUPONS - AN APPAREL STORE AT BANGALORE - A CASE STUDY

The Retail Industry in India has come forth as one of the most dynamic and fast paced industries with several players entering the market. It is gradually inching its way towards becoming the next boom industry. The total concept and idea of shopping has undergone an attention drawing change in terms of format and consumer buying behavior, ushering in a revolution in shopping in India. Modern retailing has entered into the Retail market in India as is observed in the form of bustling shopping centers, multi-storied malls and the huge complexes that offer shopping, entertainment and food, all under one roof. In order to understand the retail strategies implemented, an in-depth case study of one of the popular apparel store chains in Bangalore is chosen by the researcher, named "Coupon".

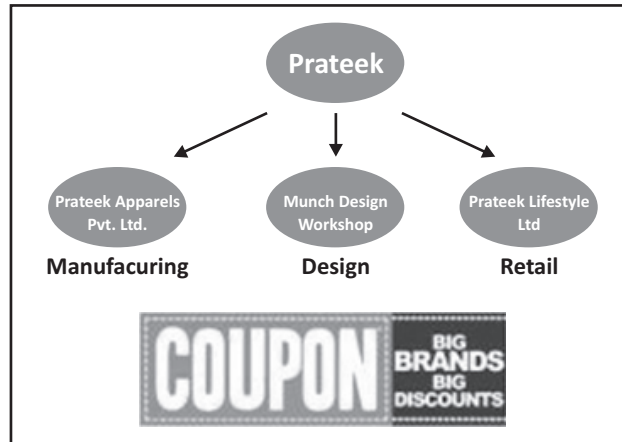
METHODOLOGY

The *Coupon* store at Hosur Road, Bangalore has been used as a case study to understand the detailed retail mix used by apparel stores in general. The learning with this live study has been of great importance. From knowing the target markets being focused by the retailers, store's strategies to set up and maintain the retail outlet, and also the various means by which large chunk of customers can be attracted to the outlet is studied in detail as part of this study. It's not just about making new customers, but also about maintaining customer loyalty with respect to the existing lot of customers of the retail outlet. The most essential aspect of having a successful and profitable business in the retail sector is to understand the customer behavior of the catchment area being focused upon, design the strategies related to the needs, and thus enjoying the great mind share and market share within the focused market.

✿ **Company Overview**⁶: *"Prateek is a unique business group established to provide concept to delivery solutions to India's fast growing domestic retail market. From design to manufacturing to retail, Prateek provides the entire gamut of solutions required to offer consumers the best products at the best prices."*

✿ **Vision** : To become the Indian market leader in the discount and other niche chosen formats by the year 2012.

Figure 1 : Organization Structure of Prateek Group



✿ **Mission** : Prateek's mission is to emerge as the key player in the Indian retail market and be the market leader in its chosen areas of business to create value for the consumer, stakeholders, promoters and employees of the organization.

✿ **Coupon - A Profile**

✿ **Coupon** stores are a chain of large format VALUE LIFESTYLE malls which provide national and international brands at a discount.

✿ **Coupon** malls are family destinations. Sized between 10000-50,000 sq.ft. Each store offers apparel, home, gifts, cosmetics, footwear and luggage set in a customer friendly layout.

✿ **Coupon** offers discounts ranging from 10%-60% on merchandise across all product categories, 365 days a year.

✿ **Coupon** stores are located in premium areas and are designed to give an international feel to the shopping experience.

✿ **Coupon** was launched in June 2007 in Bangalore.



Figure 2 : Coupon Store at Koromangala

WHY GO FOR A DISCOUNT MODEL?

"Indian Retail is in expansion mode with retailers enhancing their presence. AT Kearney, GRDI positions India at the verge of retail maturity and suggests that discount formats will grow dramatically in the next 5 years⁷. In such a rapidly changing space surplus, stock outs and season out merchandise increase in number regularly. This market accounts for almost 23% of the total lifestyle retail market."

Figure 3 : Coupon Store at Hosur



Figure 4 : Market Lifestyle Retail Share



INDUSTRY OVERVIEW -COMPETITORS IN DISCOUNT RETAILING: BANGALORE RETAIL OVERVIEW⁸

"Bangalore Retail business sector is a very large industry. This is both in terms of establishments and employees. In

India, every year the Retail Industry generates ₹ 12,000 Crores in terms of retail sales. The Retail Sector is also one amongst the largest worldwide business zones. ”


The retailing industry in Bangalore is come into big Shopping Malls, and huge departmental stores and retail chains like Big Bazaar, Shoppers Stop, and Metro. The employment opportunities in Bangalore Retail are highly increased, and have nice financial rewards also. The big names in the Retail Marketing like Shoppers Stop, Pantaloon Retail, Lifestyle, Koutons, Bata, and Liberty are ready to invest huge money in the Bangalore Retail Industry. In the next two years, thousands of jobs will be generated in this Bangalore Retail sector. Integrated retailing like retail cum entertainment is booming at a great pace in the Bangalore city. Growth in the field of online shopping is also an important factor, that helps in enhancing the business in the Bangalore Retail Sector.

a. Target Market : People who are looking for discounts. Basically kids, youth & middle aged people. They follow a demographic segmentation.

b. Customer loyalty : They have a good customer loyalty program, according to which they offer loyalty points on purchase. But still, it is not working because the researcher could hardly find any customers.

c. Customer Service : The researcher observed that services rendered by the sales staff were not very satisfactory because the staff did not come to greet the customers, the customers had to call them to get information. There were around 10-12 persons on each floor. The knowledge level of the sales people was not up to the mark, as they were not able to give the complete information.

Table 2 : Following Are The Key Players Operating In Discounted Retail Format & Are The Major Competitors For *Coupon*

Name of format	No. of current stores	Expansion by 2010	Investment stated
Coupon 	5 LFS (40K to 50K sqft)	25 Stores	₹ 500 Cr
Brand Factory 	6 (Avg. 40K to 70K sqft)	55 stores	₹ 400 Cr
Megamart 	75 stores of 2K to 3K sqft. & 3 LFS of 50K sqft	200 plus small stores and 30 large stores of 40K to 70K sq ft	₹ 400 Cr plus
Promart	1	12 stores (Avg 15 to 20k sq ft)	₹ 45 Cr
The Loot 	20	175 stores (3k to 15k sq ft)	₹ 100+ Cr



Brand Factory Store (Fig. 5)



Coupon Store (Fig. 6)



Megamart Store (Fig. 7)



The Loot store (Fig. 8)

RETAIL MIX AT *COUPON* - A CLOSER LOOK

✿ Retail Mix : Product Mix: Brand Portfolio of Coupon

It has more than 180 leading brands. The store had almost all leading national brands on their shelf offering good discounts.

✿ Private Label Mix of Coupon and Positioning

✿ Men's Formal

✿ **Black Coffee** - 100% premium cotton formal shirts at value price, for mid to premium segment buyers, price starts from ₹ 599.

a) Men's Casual

✿ **Mark Taylor**: Cotton rich shirts at value price, For value conscious mid & lower segment buyers, price starts from ₹ 199

b) Men's Youth

✿ **Highlander**: Value priced jeans, shirts & t-shirts, For mid & premium segment buyers, Price Range starts from ₹ 299.

✿ **Locomotive**: Premium quality jeans, shirts & t-shirts, Targeted for premium segment young buyers, Price Range starts from ₹ 899.

c) Women's Ethnic

✿ **Folklore**: Premium quality Indian suits with surface ornamentation, For value conscious mid & premium segment buyers, Starts from ₹ 399.

✿ **Vishudh** : Premium quality suits & dress materials, For mid & premium segment buyers, Range starts from ₹ 299.

d) Women's Semi-formal

✿ **Black Coffee** : 100% premium cotton formal shirts at value price, For mid to premium segment buyers, Starts from ₹ 599.

e) Women's Youth:

✿ **Highlander**: Value priced jeans, shirts & t-shirts, For mid & premium segment buyers, Range starts from ₹ 399.

f) Home Furnishing

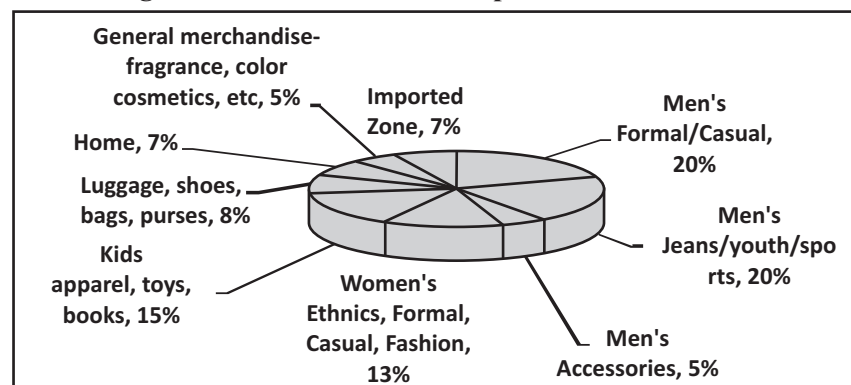
✿ **Coupon**

g) **Female and Kids Merchandise**: It is laid on the left hand side of the entrance, just after the accessories display. Brands that had been on display were - Vishudh, Rucchi, Ayati, Aikya, Aurelia, Oomanee, Kurtawala. The kurti's had been put up in two manners. One set was displayed on the racks of the respective brand and the other set was displayed on the stand. The ones placed on the rack were assorted on the basis of the body size required, whereas the kurti's displayed on the stands had a mix of all sizes. For all the brands in the kurti's section, the size of the clothing varied from XS to XXL.



Figure 9 : Logos of Private Labels

Figure 10 : Product Mix At Coupon - At A Glance



✿ **Retail Mix: Price**: There were discount offers and promotional offers, one of the two, available on all the brands of

the kurtis being stated earlier. Some of the specific were:-

a) Aikya- buy 1 @30% off, Buy 2, get 1 free.; **b) Aurelia**- buy 1 @ 20% off; ; **c) Oomanee**- buy 1 , get 1 free, Buy 2, get 3 free. **d) Kurtawala**- flat 25% off.

✿ **Trouser's Section:** Brands offered at coupons are- Miss Players, Provogue. All the trousers of both the brands were placed on the rack, one brand on each side of the rack. Discount offered on both the brands was a flat 50% off.

✿ Mannequin with the display of the trousers was kept opposite to the rack itself.

✿ **Jeans Section:** There are 11 brands of jeans offered at the coupons. They are:-

A. Monte carlo; **B.** Miss players; **C.** Lee ; **D.** Wrangler; **E.** Levis

F. Pepe; **G.** Benetton; **H.** Sand dunes; **I.** Upper class; **J.** Jealous

K. Tokyo talkies.

It's the denim x-zone, to concentrate on the denims. The jeans from all the brands are mixed and kept together on the racks. They are assorted on the basis of the abdomen size and the style offered. Eg: 28", 30", etc and also on the basis of 'slim fit', 'straight fit', 'slim straight fit' etc.



**Figure 11: Rack Display
Of Branded Jeans**

DISCOUNT OFFERS

Lee and wrangler jeans at Coupons are currently offering discounts of 25% on the purchase of 1 jeans and 40% discount on the purchase of the second pair of jeans. Earlier, at Coupons, the jeans were sold on the 'end of season's sale' basis that was open to the customers, 365 days a year, at 70% off (max) on all the jeans brands. Some of the brands have been removed from the shelf because of their poor shelf movement.

According to the information gathered from Mr. Fazil Ahmend, the jeans section salesperson, the jeans offered to the customers fell in the price range of ₹ 1500/- to ₹ 3000/- the section experiences increased sales on the weekends. Though, the jeans are not sold on margin. The floor person is in-charge of keeping the manager of Coupons informed about the inventory. This happens once in a month, from where, the order is placed to the respective merchandiser or the Head Office. Other Merchandise include, Tops and t-shirts, with brands like, Raves- flat @ ₹ 249, Evolution- flat 30% off, Tokyo talkies- flat 25% off, No code- flat 35% off., Trendy world-new arrivals @ MRP ₹ 49/- to ₹ 589/- , Highlander- ₹ 699/-, Monte Carlo- flat 50% off.

✿ **Footwear:** The footwear section is next to the tops/t-shirt section. Coupons has the in-house brand of footwear's, 'vishudh', for women, with the price range of ₹ 199/-, ₹ 149/-, ₹ 279/-, ₹ 699/-, etc. The other brand of footwear for women is Femme, offering sandals and sports shoes starting at ₹ 399/-.

✿ **Suits And Sarees Section:** Coupons has a vast collection of suits and sarees. They have numerous racks and shelf display of suit material, the cloth and semi-stitched both. The cotton, half- stitched suit materials are kept on the separate rack. Coupons also has a different display of 'mix n match' dress materials.

The major brand of suit and sarees is Prafful, offering varieties of cloth material like, cotton, semi-cotton, silk, georgette, shiffon, crape, synthetic, printed, embroidery, etc. The discounts offered on them is 60% off. The suit material brand named 'Aspire' offers a flat discount @ 25%. 'Akana' offers the discount of flat 10%.

Coupons follows the strategy that if it has a non-moving product in the suit and sarees section, then it is returned to the vendor. In the case of inventory shortage, the vendor of the particular brand is informed, who pays a visit to coupons, makes a note of the 'PR number' written on the bar-code of the dress material and takes the required order from the store. The consignment is delivered by the vendor within 15 - 25 days. Specifically for the sarees, various brands offer their products by providing various discount offers, like, Charms Prafful- buy 1 @ 35% off, Vishudh- in the price range of ₹ 199/- to ₹ 3100/-, Neha buy 1 @ 30% off, Buy 2 @ 40% off.



Figure 12 : Product Display At Kid Section In Coupon

✿ **Kids Section:** According to the store manager, the major revenue of the store is generated from this section. Kids section alone contributes ₹ 90000 per week sales on an average.

a. Footwear section: Coupons has the kid's footwear section with the continuation of the women footwear section. The brands offered for kids are Lilliput, etc. where the sports shoes, slippers and sandals are kept in an un-arranged manner.

b. Kids wear: The various brands offered here are, Gini and Johnny (has company owned employee), Levis, Palm tree, Cosmo's zone, Globe, Catmoss (has company-owned employee), Ant, Zapp, E-trend, Zyxa etc. There are casuals and formal clothes offered at almost all the brands stated above. They are displayed on different racks and stands for girls and boys, but are not assorted according to the size. Rather, they are arranged in the sequence of age, starting from babies to 16 years of age for Catmoss, whereas, palm tree has the collection for the kids falling in the age of 6 years to 16 years. The stock replacement is done every week, and the inventory is managed from the merchandiser to the vendor, who delivers the goods between 15 days-30 days.

RETAIL MIX: PLACE: A LOCATION ANALYSIS OF COUPON

Coupon is already there in Bangalore and as an expansion plan, the city of Bangalore was selected for launch of another mall due to the following reasons:

a. Buying Power: The average per capita income of Bangalore is more than many of the metros, as a result, it increases the buying power of the people.

b. Fashion Conscious People: Bangalore is gradually turning into a fashion hub, and as a result, the demand for branded apparel is increasing and this is the right time to enter into the market.

c. Limited Players: There are comparatively a few players in the discount retail sector, and hence possess a good opportunity for such formats.

d. High growth are available for young to maturing market.

Hosur road branch's location strategy failed in the long run because, initially, they selected the location because it was close to both electronic city and madivala as well as the moving traffic of the hosur road, hence it could attract all the crowd but later, due to the coming up of the flyover and the far away u- turn deviated the target audience from going to the mall. The branch manager also said that after the flyover and the u - turn opened to the public, the sales dropped drastically. And henceforth, their location strategy failed. Now, they are coming up with new strategies to attract the crowds once again, hence, they are planning to make it a shopping hub by bringing in a food court, entertainment zones, etc. to make the shopping experience better.

RETAIL MIX: PROMOTIONS: IMC (INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION): PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES

✿ **Objective of IMC**

a. Launch Coupon Mall with a lot of noise, pomp & show.

b. Set up an image of Brands, Value and Fashion in the minds of the people.

c. Communicate through all mediums so that COUPON becomes a new shopping destination.

✿ **Promotional Activities**

i. Road Shows; **ii.** Human Banners; **iii.** Radio; **iv.** News paper Ads; **v.** Movie Hall ads; **vi.** Tie-ups

✿ **Road Shows**

✿ A Caravan of 3 Tata Ace vehicles running together at the important areas.

✿ Having a troop of 1 lady emcee and 2 boys and a photographer.

✿ They will hold quiz contests at popular places, where the target audience can be captured.

✿ **Human Banners** : A Troop of a king and 3 boys at important traffic junction displaying the offers at Coupon.

✿ **Banners & Hoardings** : 1000 Banners and Hoardings in the selected catchment areas.

✿ **Radio Ads**

✿ Ads in "Radio Mirchi" for 1 month

- ✿ Ads only from 7:30 am till 11:00 am and from 5 pm till 8 pm.

- ✿ **Ads in “HI-CHANNEL”**

- ✿ **Hi -Channel:** It is the local Bangalore music channel. A very popular channel among the youth, which plays songs from Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada movies.

- ✿ 1 month scroll advertisement

Figure 13: Movable Advertisement Display



Figure 14: Human Banner Display



Hoarding Display (Fig. 15)



- ✿ **Press Ads**

- ✿ 4 Ads in Deccan Chronicle in 1st month on launch.

- ✿ Only on Saturdays.

- ✿ At a strategic position in the Newspaper .

- ✿ **Slides In Movie Halls**

For 1 month, slides in following movie halls in all shows:

- ✿ PVR, Innovative multiplex, Forum, Galaxy, Forum value

- ✿ **Gift Voucher Tie Ups**

- ✿ Tie up with the famous Biryani house for giving gift vouchers to their customers. It has a blend of middle class and high class customers.

- ✿ Tie up with 2 top clubs at Secundrabad (Deccan club and The new club). The customers are all upper middle class and upper class.

- ✿ **Store Activities**

- ✿ **Outside The Mall**

- ✿ Stage set up and a lady emcee conducting games outside the mall.

- ✿ Inflated Coupon Shopping Bag.

- ✿ **Inside The Mall**

- ✿ The Coupon Staff wearing crowns.

- ✿ Every week, the customer with the highest bill value will be given a special gift.

- ✿ In store, emcee to announce the offers and winners and keep announcing the existing highest bill value.

- ✿ Promotional offers of other floors are promoted at other floors.

- ✿ **Customer Loyalty**

Coupons has adopted the best loyalty programme to retain their customers. It was calculated on the basis of points secured by the customer. For every hundred rupees of purchase, they will give one point. Based on total accumulated points, the customer will get different benefits.

Figure 16 and 17 : Display Ads In Deccan Chronicle

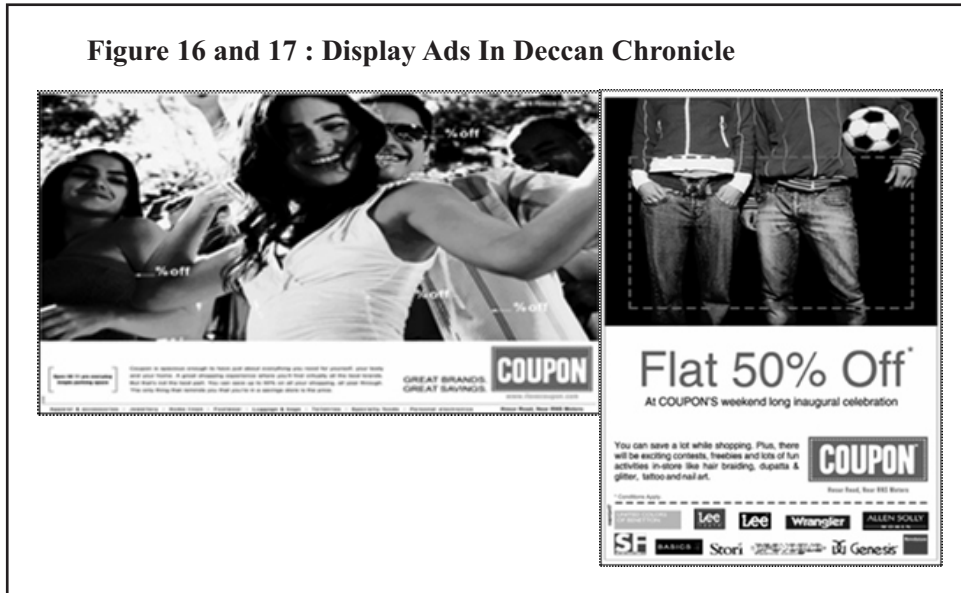


Table 3: Loyalty Bonus Point Scheme

Total points secured	Benefits to customer
100 points	Free shopping for ₹ 199
200 points	Free shopping for ₹ 399
300 points	Free shopping for ₹ 549
400 points	Free shopping for ₹ 699
500 points	Free shopping for ₹ 999

Table 4: Free Product On Purchase

Billing amount	Benefits to customer
Bill amount of ₹ 3000	2 LOCOMATVE T SHIRTS FREE
Bill amount of ₹ 6000	1 LOCOMATVE JEANS FREE
Bill amount of ₹ 10000	1 LEVIS JEANS FREE

❖ **Billing Offers:** During weekends, they came up with bulk billing offer. The more you bill, the more benefits you get.

❖ **Coupons Use Push Strategy.** Their main intention is to move more quantity than value.

The following are the observations on offers.

1. Buy first one at actual price, the second one at 50% discount.
2. Buy one @ ₹ 300. Buy two @ ₹ 500.
3. Buy one, get one free.
4. Even in their customer loyalty program, they give apparel free instead of price discount.
5. During the week end, they have many offers like on bulk purchase of ₹ 3000, they will get one T shirt free. On purchase of ₹ 10000, they will get Levis jeans worth of ₹ 2000 free.

RETAIL MIX: PHYSICAL EVIDENCE: STORE DESIGN & VISUAL MERCHANDISING

❖ **Ground floor** has been given on franchise to BATA and Reebok. It also has food stalls for its customers. So that customers can have a full time shopping experience. They came up with a concept called third party renting. They will share their space with multinational brands like Reebok, Bata and food courts and other companies in the premises. This will make the company attract more customers by enabling third party show rooms, franchisees and hotels, food courts in their premises. Coupons intention is to transform their shopping concept to multiple family destinations.

❖ **Physical Evidence and Ambience:** It was quite good with low customer footfall. The floor had 2 LCD television sets at the two ends of the floor, and the music was always being played. Trial rooms and washrooms are located on the extreme opposite ends of the floor.

a) The first thing placed after reaching the first floor is the announcement board. All the available offers open to the customers are announced from there, keeping the customer fully informed about all the discounts and offers available on the apparels, footwear's or accessories in the coupons.

b) The next is the cash counter to the right hand side of the entrance. It has 2 functioning counters open for the customers.

c) Opposite to the cash counter i.e. on the left hand side of the entrance, the women accessories have been displayed for the ease of the customers. Along with it, the CD's, watches from Qn Q and sterling silver jewellery from Lucer have been displayed on the left hand side of the entrance.

d) Mannequins of females and children are displayed with the latest trends of clothes.

e) In coupon store, men's section is on two floors. Second floor has major chunk of formals and third floor is for casuals and youth focused apparels.

✿ **Merchandise Management:** A detail analysis of coupon merchandising management shows that they have allotted staple category at the entrance. Staple category can be predicted easily and need not maintain huge inventory every time.

1. Formal shirts.

2. Formal pants

3. Inner garments and night wear.

✿ **Arrangement Process:**

They have used two methods for formal shirts arrangement.

1. Arrangement based on size.(High priority)

2. Arrangement based on color.

✿ **Complementary Merchandise:** Complementary merchandise is something, which will be complementary to other categories like formal belts and ties to the formal dresses. Coupons follows complementary merchandise in both formal and casual wear. It contains all leading menswear brands like Peter England, Indigo Nation, John Miller, Wills Lifestyle, Belmonte, Vimal, Arrow, Thomas Scott, Reid & Taylor. It also has some lesser-known brands like Genesis & Venfield, Solmeo. It has both shirts and trousers of the above-said brands of all possible sizes. The Third floor is dedicated to the mens' casual wear; this floor also has the men's footwear section, which is placed adjacent to the entrance. It also has a Brut perfume stall at the beginning of the floor near the cash counter. It houses all leading brands like Lee, Levis, Pepe Jeans, Wrangler Proline, Duke, Flying Machine.

✿ **Casuals:** They have used wall ends for casual apparel display and for jeans, they used shelf stands for display. This will enable the customers to have a flash look on apparel and at the same time, it is easy to pick up things. They arranged the casuals in the form of similar pattern first and similar color shades. They have arranged based on size. Coupons allotted different places for different sizes.

✿ **Shoes:** They have selected wall for shoes to have good showcase display, which can be visible properly from the entrance. They have allotted wall for sportswear and used display stands for formal wear. Very next to sportswear, they have allotted little place to sports apparel like tracks and shorts. It also houses both formal and sports shoes of leading brands like Puma, Nike, Lee Cooper, and Adidas. However, one of the racks of the shoes was found to be totally empty. Complimentary merchandise like Socks and shoe polish, shoe paint, shoe brush is very next to the formal shoes' division.

✿ **Impulse Buying:** Very next to the billing counter, they have used for evening wear gowns/ garments which can take less purchase decision time. There will be common colors and no scope for patterns and limited styles. This will be best place for instant decision makers. They can buy just before billing also. They used the same strategy for deodorants and perfumes.

✿ **Dressing room:** In general, a trial room should be visible from any corner of the floor. Coupons had their dressing room at the middle end corner of the floor. This is visible from any part of the floor.

✿ **SKU:** Coupon maintains buffering stock in the backup stock room. In order to display more brands, they placed only minimum of five shirts for single pattern, size and color. This will help them for inventory control. This will avoid

shrinkage.

✿ **Brand name display:** Coupons have made a clear division for brand display among private labels and multinational brands. They have placed multinational brands at catchy locations, i.e. very opposite to the entrance, which can attract customer's attention. Private labels have been placed very opposite to the multinational brands. Private label needed push strategy, hence, they used many offer boards and pricing boards at a bigger size. They have allotted enough space for each brand. This will enable the company to advertise more on brand name. Casual shirts and T-shirts are put on the hanger racks, which are easy to pick.

RETAIL MIX: PEOPLE: HUMAN RESOURCE

As far as work culture is concerned, they don't have a strong work culture. They don't have any additional discount schemes for their employees. The employees also have to buy the products at the customer price. All dressed in uniforms- black trousers and orange t-shirts, both for male and female staff.

RETAIL MIX: PROCESS

Billing Counter

- a. 2 systems out of the 3 are put to use.
- b. The billing is done through the systems only, wherein, the data is maintained directly at the head office.
- c. In case of excess rush, the customers are allowed to get the billing done from the vacant counters of the other floors.
- d. Maximum billing is made for the kids-wear or kids footwear (USP of sales at coupons).

Table 5: Coupon - A SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
✿ Unique Business Format	✿ Location due to new flyover and no U Turn
✿ Quickly scalable	✿ Supply Chain Management
✿ Quality of products	✿ Availability of size and colors
✿ In-store experience	✿ As goods are bought out, pressure on working capital is high
✿ Virgin market	✿ Pricing strategy is still to be tested in tier II and Tier III markets
✿ Out rate purchases (These are merchandise purchased from a brand/manufacture at a very high discount on MRP in bulk quantity)	✿ As entry barriers are lower, competition can emerge quickly

Opportunities	Threats
✿ High growth Area for young to maturing markets	✿ Supply Chain management
✿ Limited players- virgin market	✿ Requires robust business model to sustain discount
✿ Low Prices	
✿ Perceptible value	
✿ High turnaround of goods	
✿ Quickly scalable model	

Customer Feedback: A random survey was done by the researcher to get customer's attitude and opinion of coupons' retail strategies. Majority of them, being value and bargain customers, seemed to be happy with the discounts and price offers available in the store. However, variety of the merchandise and overall merchandise display seems to bother some others. Most of the customers seemed to be from the neighborhoods. Therefore, accessibility and affordability of the store seems to be a great attraction.

CONCLUSION

Importance of successful implementation for retail strategies is evident in the case study of Coupon. Some of the crucial mix on which Coupon is building a successful long term brand is price and product. Pricing plays a very

Table 6: Retail Mix At Coupon - In A Nutshell

Strategy elements	What it is	At coupon retail store
Product	Range, Quality, Brand name, Service line, Quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✿ 180 leading brands, wide variety of merchandise, targeted to Men, Women and Kids. ✿ Product mix ranging from ethnic, formal, casual, fashion, Jeans, accessories, Kids apparel, toys, books, luggage, shoes, bags, general merchandise, cosmetics etc.
Price	Discounts, Consumer Schemes Allowances, Commissions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✿ Quantity discounts on all merchandise ranging from 25% to 50% ✿ National brands up to 25% ✿ Private labels up to 50%
Place	Location, Accessibility, Distribution, Channels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✿ Strategically flawed location due to a new flyover and no U Turn ✿ TG from 5 Kilometers radius
Promotion	Advertising, Personal selling, Sales promotion, Publicity, Public relations.	✿ Integrated Communication, Localized content, Major media are Print, Radio, OOH media like hoardings, Road Shows, movie theatres, Tie-in promotions, in-store promotions etc.
People	Training, Commitment, Incentives, Appearance, Interpersonal behavior.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✿ Induction programme, category training, Monetary Incentives for performance. ✿ However, work culture is not conducive
Physical evidence	Furnishings, Color, Ambience, Noise level, Tangible clues.	✿ 4 floors with well laid out plannogramme, In- store promotions. Inadequate merchandise variety, entertainment zones, food courts, Kids Zone
Process	Procedures, Mechanization, Flow of activities, Promptness, Customer engagement.	✿ Efficient crowd management system through multiple counters, Customer engagement programmes at floor levels, Loyalty cards and special benefits for members

important role at Coupons, and the store has been doing fairly well as a '*discount based*' retail outlet format. Though the retail store can still improve its product strategy to better suit its target group, through better display, merchandise selection etc, the offers and discounts at Coupon makes it an instant hit to the bargain prone customers. Kids, Youth and Women, the primary target groups can be attracted further by developing custom plans and promotional efforts. Multi brand discount model store with a family destination place would attract more customers and can increase foot fall. Prices should be able to attract middle and low income groups, and this would help Coupon to cater to all segments including youth population. The strategic tie-ups with third parties like famous hotels and companies will benefit the company by attracting more customers. Multi brand stores would be leader in the current retail format. Clothing textiles and fashion accessories has 38% share in the entire modern retailing, which has a lot scope for growth and investment.

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