

LAYOUT MERCHANDISING AND INVENTORY MANAGEMENT IN RETAIL MARKETING

Abstract

This research study analyses many areas of Decathlon's retail environment and customer experiences, such as store layout planning, recognition of the brand, in-store merchandising influence, shopping problems, and customer impression of self-checkout services. The study's findings show that Decathlon's retail layout planning has a beneficial impact on consumer happiness and repeat visits. However, greater promotion of Decathlon's own brand products is required. The study also emphasizes the importance of aesthetic attractiveness and in-store merchandising for impacting consumer behaviour, which leads to increased sales and engagement. While customers are generally satisfied with Decathlon's stock management, there is room for improvement in terms of self-checkout awareness and consumption. Merchandising is a broad business strategy that involves exhibiting and selling things to customers in order to influence their purchasing decisions and achieve sales targets. To increase visibility and lure potential buyers, it requires careful preparation, efficient promotion, and appealing product presentation. It consists of selecting the suitable products, determining appropriate rates, and attractively packaging items to entice consumers. Merchandising grows beyond simply boosting sales. Decathlon in India always focuses on presenting customers with an enjoyable and engaging shopping experience. This study delivers valuable information that can help Decathlon make decisions to improve retail performance, improve the shopping experience, and attract more loyal customers. The study discusses how Decathlon can improvise its layout merchandising and inventory management for long-term performance in the

Authors

Ms. Aarti Iyer

Marketing Management Student at MET
Institute of PGDM
Bandra, Mumbai, India.
aartiier@gmail.com

Dr. Suvrashis Sarkar

Associate Professor
Marketing Management at MET Institute
of PGDM
Bandra, Mumbai, India.
suvrashissarkar@gmail.com

competitive market by optimizing browse layouts, implementing effective merchandising processes, and strengthening inventory management.

Keywords: Decathlon, Merchandising, Retail, Marketing

I. INTRODUCTION

1. What really is Merchandising?

Merchandising refers to the tactics and processes that organizations employ to effectively present and distribute products to clients, whether in real storefronts or online. This strategy entails product planning, advertising, and presenting with the goal of increasing product visibility and recruiting buyers. Understanding consumer behaviour, market trends, and rivalry is critical for successful merchandising, as it guides product selection, price, and packaging decisions. Strategic product placement in stores and on online platforms is critical for success.

In the retail industry, merchandising entails arranging, promoting, and displaying products in stores or on online platforms. This includes product selection, costing, packaging, and positioning decisions to optimize consumer appeal and income production. A thorough comprehension of customer behaviour, market dynamics, and competitor evaluation is essential for improving the overall shopping experience.

Merchandising extends beyond typical retail to areas such as entertainment, sports, and tourism, where products associated with celebrities, teams, movies, or places are marketed and sold. This includes licensing agreements, branding, and the manufacture of various products such as apparel, accessories, and souvenirs. Overall, merchandising combines marketing strategies, product management, and visual display to increase sales, improve brand awareness, and meet the needs of consumers.

2. What does the term "Visual Merchandising" mean?

Visual merchandising employs elements like floor designs, colour schemes, lighting, displays, and technology to captivate customers and enhance the shopping experience. By strategically using these components, the primary aim is to make a store stand out and increase sales within the retail space. This practice centres on visually presenting and arranging products to maximize their aesthetic appeal, employing design strategies, layouts, and displays in both physical and digital outlets. The overarching goal is to engage customers, convey brand identity, values, and product features through visual storytelling, and ultimately boost revenue. This involves careful product selection, placement, lighting, signage, and displays, while considering factors like product grouping and the use of props.

3. Key Elements:

- Window Display
- Product Display
- Design Mannequins
- Signage and Graphics
- Store layout
- Lighting
- Colour palette
- Promotion and Decoration

- Digital Integration

4. What in Simple Terms is Layout Merchandising?

The organized arrangement of products, displays, and fixtures within an outlet is known to as layout merchandising. It involves arranging the store layout for enhanced customer flow, product visibility, and overall shopping experience. Zoning, aisle design, key areas, and effective product placement are critical concerns. The goal is to establish a productive and visually appealing layout that guides customers and maximizes sales. The goal of layout merchandising is to boost customer engagement, increase exploration, and generate profitable retail outcomes

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF LAYOUT MERCHANDISING

- Increasing Sales
- Improving Brand Image
- upgrading Customer Experience
- Enhancing Customer Engagement
- Improving inventories Management
- Distinguishing from Competitors
- Merchandising Aids Marketing and Promotions

III. HOW DOES MERCHANDISING HELP IN SALES?

- Attract customers with window displays
- Refresh store displays
- Implement the Pyramid Principle and the Rule of Three
- Test using cross-merchandising
- Use colour strategy to stimulate response
- Take note of the price tags
- Signages

IV. INTRODUCTION TO INVENTORY

Retail inventory is a set of products or goods that a store has available for sale to customers. It consists of the supply of many products exhibited and stored in a retail store or online. Retailers retain inventory in order to meet customer demands, fulfill orders, and support their sales efforts. Effective retail inventory management means monitoring stock levels, restocking items as needed, and maintaining a balance between supply and demand to optimize sales and avert stockouts.

1. Types:

- Finished Goods
- Raw Materials
- Work-in-Progress (WIP) inventory
- Resale Merchandise

- Seasonal Inventory
- Perishable Goods
- Consignment Inventory
- Obsolete or Discontinued Inventory

V. INVENTORY MANAGEMENT

Inventory management is the process of managing and maintaining a retail business's inventory levels in order to ensure effective operations and meet client demand. It entails a variety of operations and techniques targeted at optimizing inventories, lowering expenses, and increasing profitability.

1. Techniques:

- Accurate Demand Forecasting
- Conduct routine physical inventory audits
- Optimize Order amount
- ABC Analysis
- Safety Stock Management
- Effective Supplier Management
- Invest in Inventory Management Software or Systems
- Seasonal Inventory Planning
- Data Analysis and KPI Monitoring

2. What is the Significance of Inventory Management?

- Meeting Customer Demand
- Reducing Stockouts and Overstocking
- Cash Flow Optimization
- Cost Control
- Optimization of Sales and Revenue
- Inventory management techniques are streamlined to increase operational efficiency
- Effective planning and decision-making
- Avoiding Obsolescence

VI. INDIA'S SPORTS RETAIL MARKET

India's sports retail market is huge, with substantial growth potential. Sports gear, apparel, equipment, and accessories are in high demand as the country's focus on sports and fitness grows. The growing number of sports leagues and tournaments, as well as the growth of sports infrastructure, all contribute to the market's expansion. Retailers may capitalize on this expanding market by providing a comprehensive choice of high-quality items, catering to a variety of fitness and sports demands, and utilizing digital channels for online sales. The market for sports retail in the country is enormous, driven by a growing interest in sports and a desire to live a healthy and active way of life.

The market potential for sports retail in India is large and growing. Several variables add to the sector's rising opportunities,

- Increasing Sports
- Sports gear, footwear, and equipment are in high demand as people have become more health and fitness conscious
- Developing Sports Facilities
- E-commerce Boom
- Sports Infrastructure Development

The probable future of sports retailing in India seems bright, thanks to expanding sports participation, e-commerce growth, and a growing health-conscious populace. With more people adopting fitness and sports as a way of life, the need for sportswear, footwear, tools, and accessories is expected to rise. The digital retail scenario will play an important part soon of sporting goods retail, providing consumers with ease and accessibility. Deals with sports teams, athletes, and events, as well as the establishment of sports infrastructures will also fuel the expansion of the Indian sports retail industry.

1. Types of Store Layout:

- Angular
- Boutique
- Diagonal
- Free-flow
- Geometric
- Grid
- Loop, or racetrack
- Multiple, or mixed
- Straight, or spine

2. Decathlon is a specialist retailer that mostly uses an Angular and Grid style structure.

- **Grid Layout:** In India, this layout is commonly utilized in hypermarkets, supermarkets, and grocery stores. It has a planned layout with aisles and fittings arranged in a proper order. It enables optimum utilization of area and simple client navigation.
- **Angular Layout:** In a retail business, an Angular Layout uses sharp angles and edges to create a modern and vibrant atmosphere. This layout style distinguishes itself from typical designs by combining geometric shapes and irregular lines, which encourage visual fascination, lead movement, and differentiate the store's mood.

VII. DECATHLON INDIA

Decathlon's goal in India is to let Indians play greater by paying lesser for their sports gear. It is our aim to attract and develop talent in order to generate possibilities for growth in tandem with the company's progress in India. Decathlon Sports has been active in India for

almost ten years, with its first monetary and carry flagship shop opening in Sarjapur, Bangalore, in May 2009. They have 104 outlets in India till September 15th, 2022, with plans for additional expansion. Decathlon India's headquarters are in Bangalore.

They rapidly grew their stores in Mumbai, Hyderabad, and Chandigarh, which received a positive reaction. Decathlon quickly made a profit in India. Furthermore, the corporation regards India as a critical area to build their business, citing India as the largest global market as a result of stores. Decathlon stores are typically enormous, spanning over 4000 square feet. The other sporting goods stores are modest in comparison. Not just has Decathlon provided professional chances for sports lovers in India, but it has also contributed to define the country's sporting ecosystem have 20 brands which cover 70 sports. The prices of the products are also reasonable. Decathlon has the capacity to offer weekend entertainment alternatives by offering indoor sport activities in its massive showrooms. Decathlon's major purpose is to make sports accessible to everyone on the planet because they believe sports have the potential to change the world. As a firm, they hope to assist, inspire, and guide people through various sporting activities.

With the increase in sports participation among India's youth, thanks to programs such as "the khelo India youth games," Decathlon has begun to regard India as its most promising growth market. Because India is a cost cautious market, it sells high-quality goods at reasonable prices. Because Indians want to touch and sample objects before purchasing them, the store allows customers to try out various items without being interrupted by workers. Decathlon has also created numerous gaming courts on the property where competitions are held throughout the year, attracting a young demographic.

The Decathlon online shopping app is a simple platform that enables sports fans to browse and buy a variety of athletic items and equipment. Users may simply find the things they require thanks to a large catalog and personalized recommendations. The app provides tracking of orders, feedback from customers, and a quick click-and-collect service, increasing Decathlon consumers' overall buying experience. It is an invaluable resource to both experienced athletes and leisure athletes. Decathlon provides a large range of sporting goods for every sport, covering apparel, footwear, equipment, and extras, allowing athletes and sports fans to discover everything they require under the same roof.

1. Why Decathlon Hires Young Professionals Because of the Following Important Points,

- Energy and excitement
- Affordability
- Flexibility and availability
- Current trend familiarity
- Digital proficiency
- New ideas and perspectives
- Adaptability
- Cultural fit
- Inclusion and diversity
- Talent pipeline

VIII. DECATHLON'S "MAKE IN INDIA" SPORTS INITIATIVE

The "Make in India" sport emphasis of Decathlon is based on creating and promoting locally produced sports products. The company recognized India's potential as a manufacturing center and invested in developing manufacturing facilities in the nation. Decathlon hopes to help the government with its "Make in India" effort, help spur the advancement of the Indian economy, as well as generate job opportunities by manufacturing items locally.

Decathlon's "Make in India" sports mission also includes encouraging and backing Indian sports. To foster and advertise indigenous sports, the brand actively engages with local sports organizations, federations, and athletes. This includes supporting local sporting events, assisting Indian athletes with training and equipment, and participating in grassroots growth initiatives to cultivate talent at the ground level.

Decathlon promotes the growth and advancement of Indian sports as well as the country's robust sports ecosystem by promoting its "Make in India" sports awareness, which also helps the country's manufacturing industry expand.

1. Pricing methods

- **Marketing Strategy:** They use an everyday low pricing strategy, that implies that their prices are consistent and competitive. Customers appreciate this approach because they realize they can purchase low-cost items at Decathlon all year.
- **Low-Cost Pricing:** Decathlon prioritizes low operational costs, allowing them to provide products at lower rates than many of its competitors. Customers can benefit from cost savings by using economies of scale and effective supply chain management.
- **Private Label Brands:** Decathlon relies significantly on its own private-label names, which company designs, manufactures, and distributes under its own brand names. They may maintain better pricing control and provide items at more competitive prices by eliminating the requirement for third-party brands.
- **Product Combination:** Decathlon frequently offers reduced packages of related products. Customers are encouraged to buy complimentary items at the same time, raising the average value of orders and fostering cross-selling.
- **Promotions and Sales during the Season:** Decathlon organizes seasonal deals and promotions in order to increase foot traffic and internet traffic. These sales events provide discount & special deals on goods, enticing price-conscious buyers and increasing sales during specific times of the year.
- **Privately Labeled Brands:** Decathlon places a strong emphasis on its own personal-label names, which it designs, manufactures, and sells under its own brand names. By eliminating the need for third-party branding, they may be able to retain better pricing controls and provide things at more competitive costs.

- **Product Mixture:** Decathlon frequently provides discounted bundles of related products. Customers are urged to purchase complementary items at the exact same time, increasing the average order value and encouraging cross-selling.
- **Sales and Promotions during the Season:** Decathlon organizes seasonal sales and promotions to boost foot traffic and web traffic. During certain seasons of the year, these sale events provide discounts and special deals on specific goods, tempting price-conscious shoppers and increasing sales.

Decathlon's LPBV (Low Price Best Value) area is strategically situated at the start of each aisle, offering products with lowest cost and best value. Customers are drawn to this part at the start of each aisle, which encourages them to investigate the goods inside the shop. Decathlon never sells a product at MRP; they first determine the selling price and then publish the MRP, thus assuring the company receives the greatest bargain. Their costs adapt to current demand with the help of the Cubin app, ensuring outstanding savings on items on sale and clearances.

2. Sales Strategies

- **Multibuy Offers:** Decathlon employs various sales methods for revenue growth, prominently featuring multibuy offers. These mutually beneficial deals generate significant profits for Decathlon while providing customers with savings. These offers not only bolster sales but also entice customers by offering complimentary or discounted items. Importantly, this technique aids Decathlon in maintaining inventory control, giving the brand a competitive edge.
- **Cubin App for Clearance Sales:** The Cubin app streamlines Decathlon's management of clearance sales through effective categorization of unsold products under levels 7 or 8. Decathlon's store coach determines clearance prices while regular sale prices are set by the company. Seasonal discounts further attract customers, covering a range of products from swimwear and cricket bats in summer to umbrellas and rain gear in the monsoon, and jackets and body warmers in winter.
- **S+1 (Sales +1) Strategy:** Decathlon employs the S+1 strategy, strategically placing low-priced products adjacent to higher-priced items, often priced between Rs. 99 and Rs. 149. This technique aims to boost sales by encouraging customers to add these lower-priced items to their cart after purchasing a higher-priced item, considering it an attractive value proposition.
- **Online Incentives:** To promote online sales and enhance customer loyalty, Decathlon offers enticing online app deals such as Rs. 500 off on purchases over Rs. 2500 and free delivery. This approach not only enhances profitability but also fosters trust in the brand while consistently delivering value and discounts to customers.
- **Employee Engagement in Promotion:** Decathlon leverages social media applications and its own app to promote its brand online. Additionally, Decathlon's employees actively contribute to the promotion by sharing information on their social media profiles, aiming to augment brand recognition and attract potential customers.

While conventional promotional activities are effective, the brand's online marketing efforts could be further enhanced.

- **Offline Promotion through Banners:** Decathlon strategically displays banners at key locations, such as highways, bus stations, and occasionally on buses, for offline promotion. This strategy maximizes brand visibility across various regions. Moreover, in malls, specific products are thoughtfully positioned in high-traffic areas to capture pedestrians' attention and compel them to explore the store's merchandise.
- **Customer Engagement through In-Store Events:** Decathlon enhances customer involvement by organizing in-store events like yoga, basketball, and push-up challenges, typically held on weekends. Winners of these events receive discount vouchers redeemable on the same day, stimulating immediate sales. These engagement efforts play a crucial role in customer acquisition and retention.
- **Out-of-Store Events:** Decathlon extends its engagement efforts beyond the store with events like skating and yoga. For instance, a 10km marathon is scheduled for August 13th, complete with cash awards and in-store redeemable coupons for winners. Such events draw large crowds, some of which are lured into the store premises to collect their certificates. This strategic approach maximizes the potential for sales by engaging prospective customers within the store environment.

3. Decathlon Merchandising Methods

- **Collaborative Decision-Making:** Decathlon involves design and brand teams, shop coaches, interns, and sport leaders in product range selection through a WhatsApp poll and subsequent meetings, resulting in collective decisions.
- **Store Interior Design:** Sport coaches and leaders are empowered to design store interiors using Computer Authorized Design (CAD) plans, optimizing display locations, arrangements, and apparel pairings.
- **Product Placement by Sport Team:** Decathlon's sport team decides products showcased on mannequins and Target Gondolas (TG) for impactful display, highlighting relevant and appealing items.
- **Color Block Merchandising:** Decathlon uses color block merchandising, grouping similar-colored sports products for visually attractive displays that enhance product discovery and create an organized shopping experience.
- **Client Safety Focus:** Prioritizing customer safety, Decathlon conducts Basic Safety Unit (BSU) tests for each aisle to ensure adherence to safety guidelines and a secure shopping environment.
- **Product Check (SCF):** Decathlon's Satisfied Customer Factor (SCF) evaluation before weekends covers stock, safety, positioning, visibility, cleanliness, and arrangement to maintain productivity and customer satisfaction, especially during peak periods.

IX. INVENTORY AND DELIVERY SYSTEM OF DECATHLON

The store inventory is taken either following closing time or prior to the store opens. To carry out this counting, the business employs a handy handheld device known as a "racket," which is linked to a phone. The racket scans each item as it passes through the products, and the inventory figures are automatically modified in the Cubin app, expediting the stock management procedure. This inventory audit takes place every month for 7 to 9 days. If a product is discovered to be missing or is unable to be located throughout the inventory count, the store performs a comprehensive manual search throughout the whole store to find the item. Every effort is taken to locate the missing merchandise, but if it cannot be located, the store records it as a loss. To ensure effective inventory control, the store sets a maximum permissible inventory loss of 15% per category or product cluster

The Decathlon stores in India get its supply delivery every day at 9:30 a.m. The store team gets right to work, ensuring that all the supplied product is arranged in its proper spot prior to the store begins for business at 11 a.m. The shipped boxes of received goods are carefully recorded and scanned during this procedure to match them with the outbound supply, assuring correctness in inventory records. The scanning procedure is managed by the Daily Manager and is carried out using the Cubin app. The Daily Manager's critical function is to ensure that there are not any negative differences in stocks and that the supply delivery process is completed efficiently.

X. LITERATURE REVIEW

- 1. Marketing and Retail Strategy of Decathlon by Akshay M Chandra (Sept, 2021):** Decathlon's marketing and retail strategy centred around the phrase "Sports for all, all for sport," emphasizing quality and affordability. They provide a large choice of items for over 70 sports across retail channels, with product information, including prices and reviews, displayed on surrounding shelves. Their web marketing includes video commercials and initiatives such as "Make in India." Decathlon collaborates, develops, and markets itself as a brand. They provide value to their customers while emphasizing cost to avoid being viewed as a high-end company. Decathlon improves the customer experience with self-checkout areas and creates sport-specific digital communities to boost offline reach. They should cover athlete experiences in social media advertisements to further engage customers.
- 2. A Study on Visual Merchandising in Decathlon by Pradeep G (Dec, 2021):** Consumers in today's digitally savvy world expect convenience when buying. While they enjoy an easy and quick method of shopping, the urge to physically engage with things is still important. As a result, product accessibility is critical for effective sales. Visual merchandising is important in this aspect since it acts as a silent salesperson. Its significance has expanded as trends shift, as it drives consumer decision-making. Visual merchandising provides benefits such as a competitive advantage, brand image building, improved sales performance, and greater footfall. According to research, factors such as mannequin displays, signage, window displays, and shop cleanliness have a significant impact on consumers' purchasing behaviour.
- 3. A Case of Sports Retailer Decathlon India by Manikandan Mkm (Dec,2016):** The study examines India's sports retail industry and the increasing demand in sports as a

career. Decathlon, a well-known French sports retailer, is targeting the Indian market to address the growing demand for high-quality sports equipment. They provided a diverse choice of high-quality and reasonably priced products, establishing themselves as an all-in-one destination for sport players and professionals. Decathlon's strategic approach stressed value and meticulous planning, which helped the company acquire a diverse consumer base. They also spent money on marketing efforts that highlighted sports and healthy living in order to establish a strong brand presence. Decathlon's successful foray in India's sports retail industry demonstrated the company's ability to adapt to shifting consumer expectations and tastes.

4. **Stock Management and Flow Training by Shagun Poddar (Sept, 2019):** Stock control and flow instruction at the national level includes inventory movements, RFID monitoring, stock keeping, and stock issue resolution. It also features sales and trend predictions for better inventory management. Concurrently, product training, delivered by sports professionals at the city and national levels, focuses on learning sports equipment, product characteristics, and competitor comparisons. The purpose is to provide staff with the knowledge required for effective inventory management and comprehension of sporting goods in the retail industry.
5. **Store Layout – Decathlon by Ada Gryzewska (May, 2018):** Decathlon is an active sports organization with more than 85 sports and several try-out zones. They classify their items into various groups such as Yoga, aerobic, Pilates, and so on. The business features a pleasant and inclusive atmosphere, which aligns with their statement "All for sport, sport for all." Instead of arranging things by kind, they organize them by sporting disciplines. Complimentary things are scattered around the store, as well as have an enormous product selection. Customers are told to freely enjoy the products, with the necessary details provided on the packaging. Decathlon is known for selling high-quality goods at low prices.
6. **The Dual Management of Innovation by the Decathlon Group by Dieter Hillairet, Guillaume Richard, Patrick Bouchet. (Jan, 2009):** These include technical and non-technological variables contribute to the success of sports brand innovation. The Decathlon Group's business plan is based on "passion-brands" and the efficient utilization of resources and core capabilities. The four guiding concepts of innovation management are creativity, design leadership, management of knowledge, and R&D. Through overseeing power, the corporation develops an innovative culture of flexibility that is monitored disorder while remaining aligned with general objectives. Decathlon's twin innovation and creativity systems resulted in the rapid development of two revolutionary products: Quechua (self-folding hiking tent) and Tribord (surfing wetsuit). Thorough research and development, testing, and an efficient idea management system all led to their great success.
7. **The Decathlon effect: How a French retailer is moving India beyond cricket by Anil K Sood and Debleena Majumdar (Aug,2022):** Decathlon has seen a tremendous change from unregulated to regulated retail industry in India. Its popularity can be attributed to fully stocked stores with abundant parking and practice spaces, which create a one-of-a-kind consumer experience with an athletic ambiance. The epidemic promoted growth by increasing health-consciousness, which resulted in higher sales of wellness products and sporting equipment. Decathlon's success has been attributed to its emphasis

on product diversity, customer service, and transparent pricing. Decathlon has a shot for even more development and success in the future if it keeps adapting to consumer tastes, reduce costs, and remain competitive.

XI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Objective of the Study:

- To understand the importance of store layout planning
- To understand Decathlon's brand awareness
- To understand the problems faced while shopping
- To understand the impact of in-store merchandising
- To understand the awareness of self-checkout counters

2. **Research Method:** To satisfy the objective of this research Exploratory and Descriptive research methodology was used on customers of Decathlon store - both offline and online in Mumbai. The scope of this research was limited to the city of Mumbai and Navi Mumbai for understanding visual merchandising and inventory management. A structured questionnaire was used as a tool for primary data collection. The context of Decathlon's research project on 'layout merchandising and inventory,' key data was gathered via an online survey by means of Google Forms. This method includes gathering firsthand data from the respondents, letting them to share their thoughts and experiences with Decathlon's store layout, merchandising, and management of inventory. The online survey functioned as a well-organized survey, allowing for the collection of ordered and standardized data for easy analysis and useful conclusions. While collecting primary data is more costly and time-consuming than collecting secondary data, it was judged important in this situation to get unique insights and comments directly from Decathlon's clients. This strategy proven to be the best for studying the linkages between store layout, merchandising, and inventory, and for gathering vital data to drive Decathlon's retail initiatives and improve the entire consumer experience. A structured questionnaire was employed as the primary data collection method from Decathlon customers. A questionnaire was created to get their opinions on various elements of their Decathlon experiences. It was distributed to Decathlon customers in order to get feedback and insights. The structured nature of the questionnaire meant that data was collected in an organized and uniform manner, facilitating analysis, and deriving meaningful inferences from the results. This strategy enabled direct connection with the target population and gave valuable personal information about their ideas, preferences, and Decathlon experiences.

3. **Sample Size:** The sample comprises **104** respondents. The 104 respondents are residents from different areas in Mumbai and Navi Mumbai that participated in the questionnaire survey by filling out an online survey form.

4. **Sample Method:** Systematic Random sampling was used for this research study. Selection is given an equal chance and opportunity. Since systematic random sampling was used, customers of Decathlon had a fair chance of getting selected for the survey.

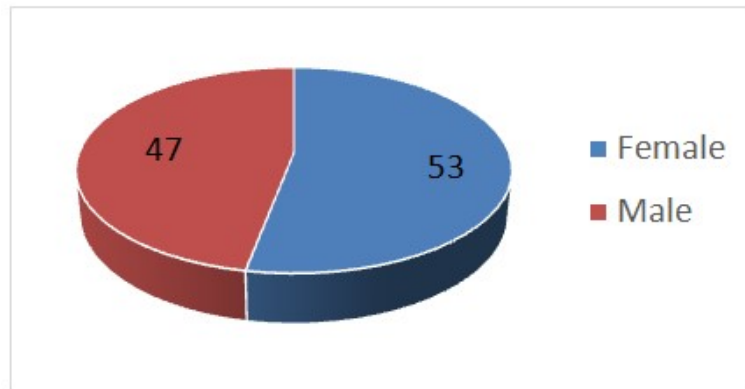
5. Data Collection Method

- Survey method
- Instrument used to carry out the survey: questionnaire

XII. DATA ANALYSIS

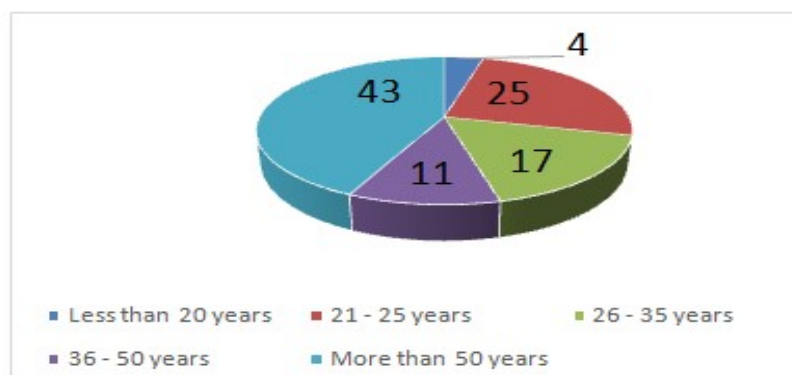
Bar graphs and pie charts have been used for data visualization.

1. Gender



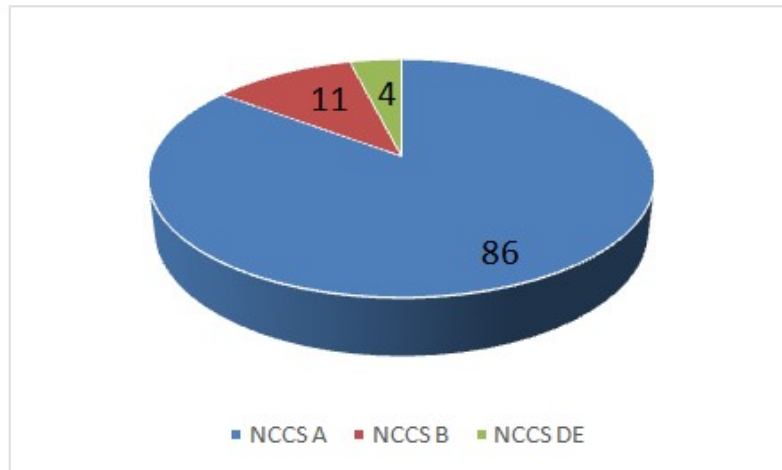
Interpretation: The survey was carried out using the Random Sampling method. This poll included 104 Decathlon customers, with 53% being female and 47% being male. These respondents are further classified based on their age, income level, education level, and so on.

2. Age



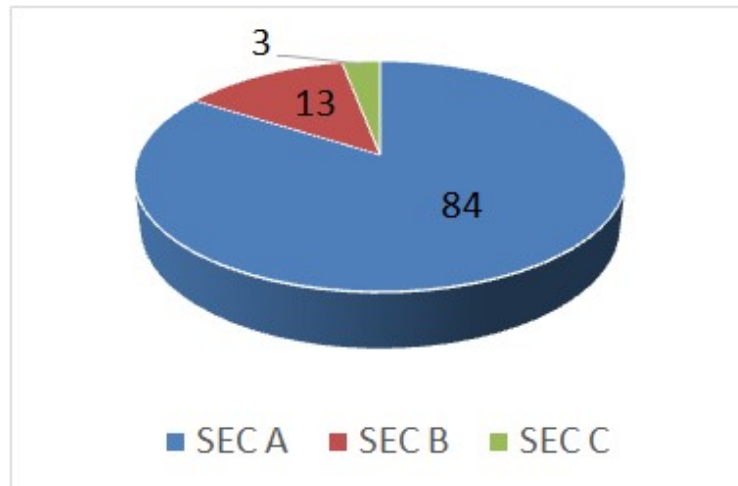
Interpretation: We can deduce from the data that the age group over 50 accounts for a sizable portion of the sample. Furthermore, although being a smaller age group, those aged 21 to 25 account for a significant portion of the market.

3. NCCS



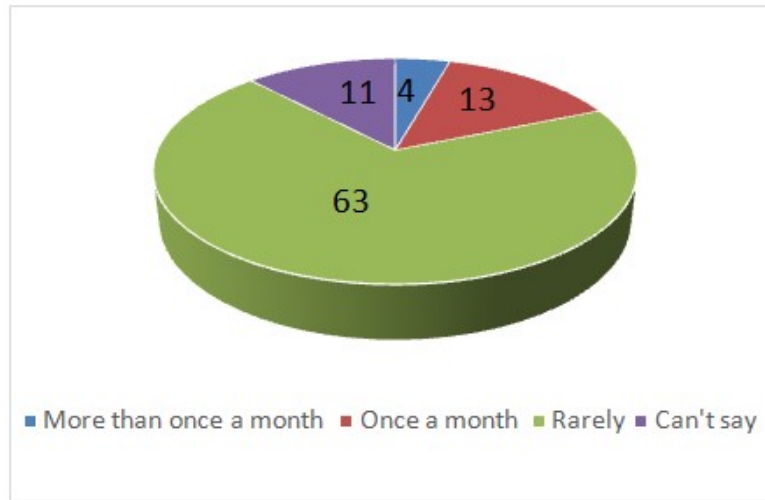
Interpretation: NCCS is an abbreviation for New Consumer Classification System. It categorizes consumers according to their purchasing power, with NCCS A representing high purchasing power and NCCS DE representing poor purchasing power. The NCCS is represented by 86% of respondents. A sector in which the respondents have a lot of money.

4. SEC



Interpretation: In research, SEC stands for Socio-Economic Class. It determines and classifies households mostly based on their education and occupation, with SEC A indicating a high socioeconomic class and SEC CDE indicating a poor socioeconomic class. Most responders, 84%, are in SEC A, which means they are highly qualified and have a decent social status. Only 13% are classified as SEC B, while the remaining 3% are classified as SEC C.

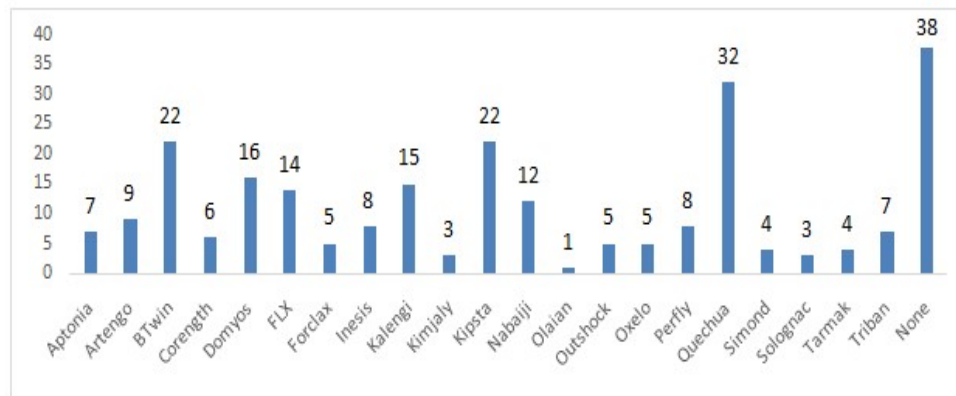
5. Since When are Consumers Shopping From Decathlon



Interpretation: Most of them, 63%, rarely go shopping at Decathlon. Only 4% shop at Decathlon more than once a month, and 13% shop at least once a month.

We may conclude that individuals do not see and consider Decathlon as their go-to brand for product buying.

6. Brand Awareness



Interpretation: Decathlon sells its own brand products. The general public is not aware of the situation.

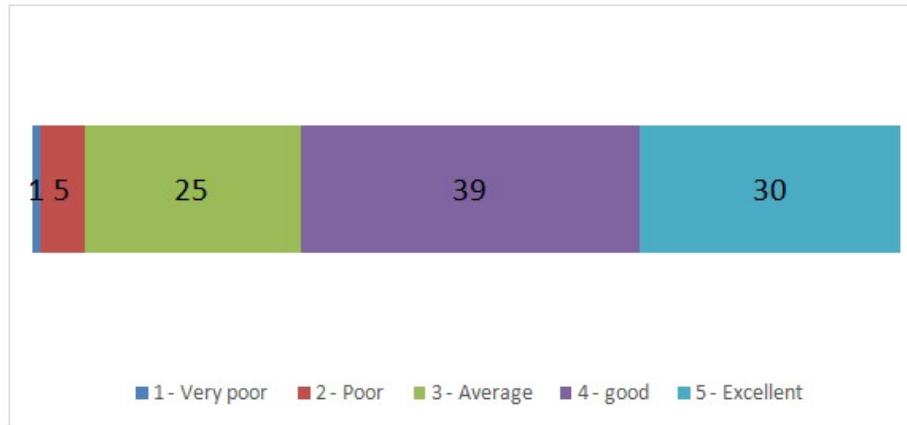
The most well-known brands are Quechua, BTwin, and Kipsta.

Domyos, FLX, and Kalengi are more well-known brands.

38%, which contributes to the majority not knowing even one brand.

Decathlon, although being a well-known brand, still has a lot of work to do in terms of promoting its own brands.

7. Rating on Layout Planning



Interpretation: Decathlon adheres to the Grid Layout framework. 30% adore the overall layout and design of the store, 39% like the design, and 31% dislike the layout planning and believe that revisions and improvements can be made. As a result, we can see that most of the sample, 69%, believes the layouts throughout Decathlon are well-planned.

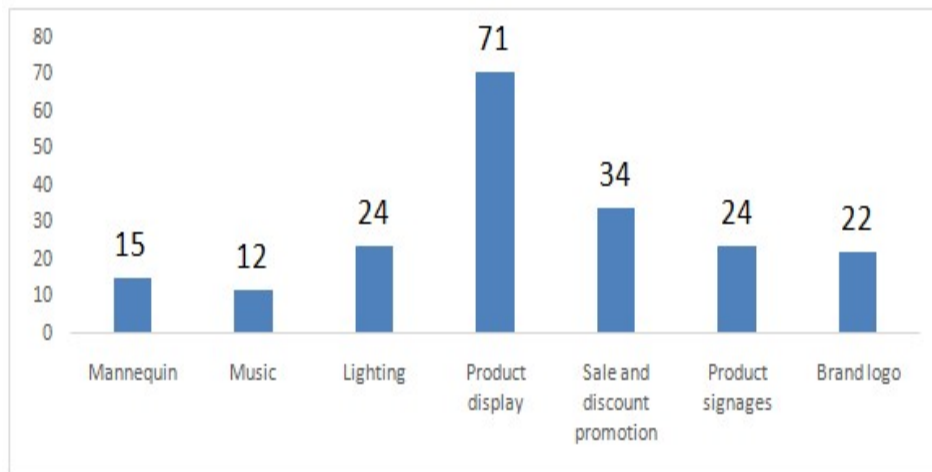
8. Problems Faced While Shopping



Interpretation: Half of the respondents, or 51% of 104, had no problems while shopping at the Decathlon store.

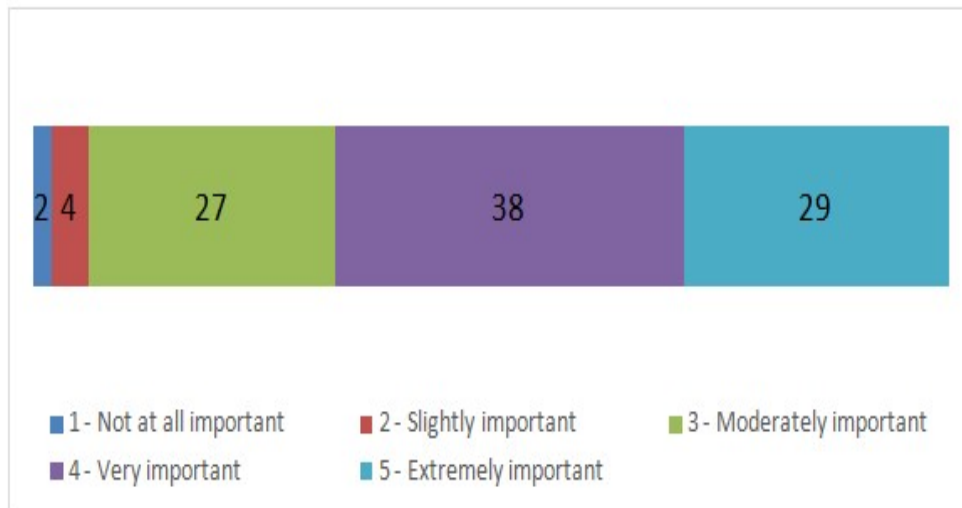
The most significant difficulty that shoppers encountered while shopping was excessive prices and a limited selection of products. Decathlon should strive to enhance the diversity of items and maybe instead of lowering the price give deals on purchases over a particular amount or create more multi-buy options, which would be profitable for both the firm and the consumers.

9. Most Noticed In-Store Features



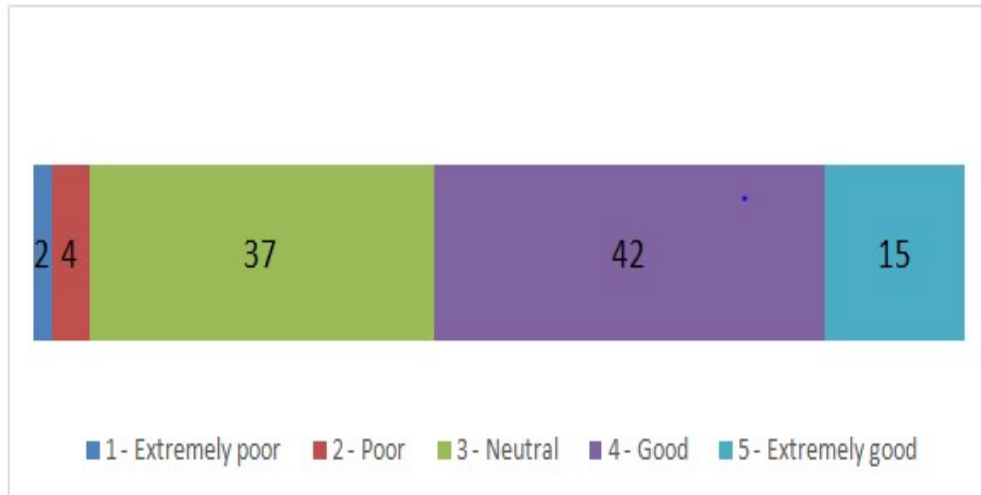
Interpretation: Visual appeal is particularly significant in retail marketing. The way a product is displayed to buyers is directly proportionate to its sales. The more appealing the product, the more likely it will be sold. This is supported by a poll, which found that 71% of customers believe product presentation is the most noticeable element within any store. Discounts and promotions, product signage, and illumination are other observable aspects in each store that influence client walk-ins.

10. Importance of In-Store Merchandising and Mannequin Display



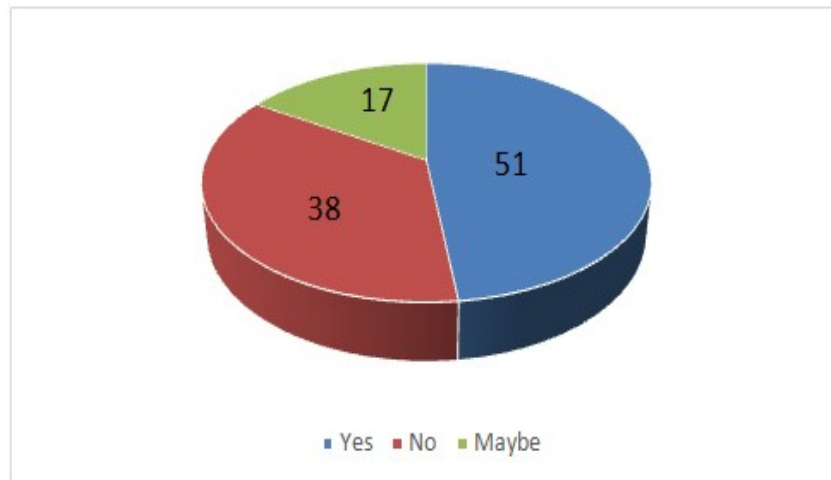
Interpretation: In addition to the previous question and inference, we can observe that 67% of respondents believe that in-store merchandising and mannequin display is very important to attract maximum customers since the more appealing and exquisite the store is, the more people there are and thus, the higher the sales.

11. Rating on Decathlon’s Stock Management



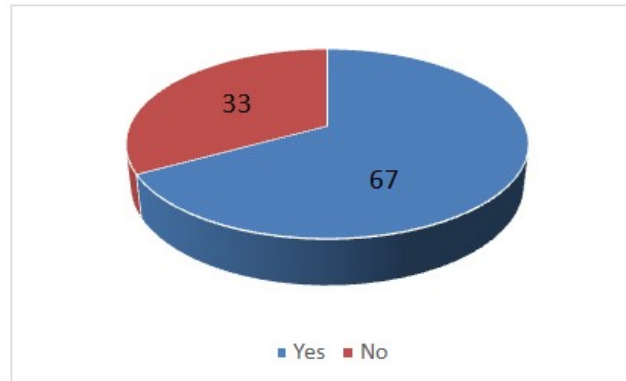
Interpretation: 57% of all respondents believe Decathlon's inventory and stock handling is satisfactory, which implies the product they wish to buy is available in the shop and they have never left unhappy. However, 37% of respondents believe it is neutral, which suggests that the size or products they desired were not available in the store at times. 6% are dissatisfied with the stock management of Decathlon stores, which could be due to differences in stock management from region to region and store to store.

12. Self Cehck-Out Service Awareness



Interpretation: Half of Decathlon customers are aware of the self-service checkout option. The remaining 50% of the respondents are either oblivious or unsure whether they are aware of it. 38% of respondents are unaware of this service. Promoting services is just as vital as promoting items when it comes to raising awareness. Decathlon must try to raise awareness of this newly introduced service on their social media pages as well as in their physical locations.

13. Self Cehck-Out Service Users

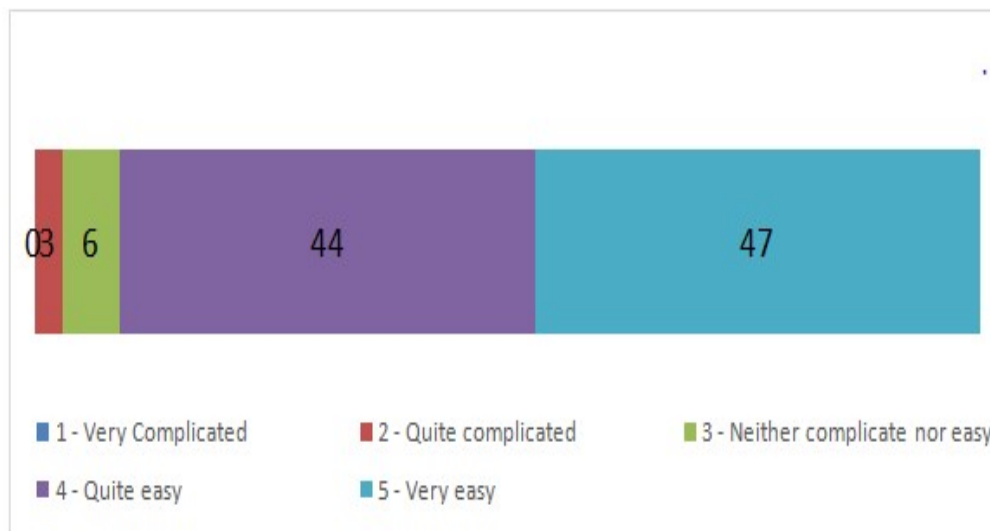


Interpretation: 67% of the 51 responders who are aware of the self-checkout option have utilized it.

Despite being aware of the service, 37% have not used it.

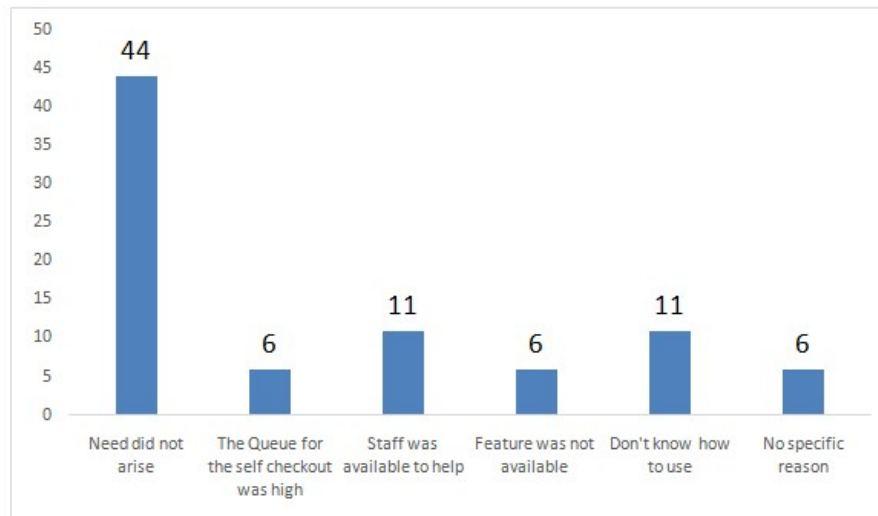
I attempted to go into the subject to determine why respondents are not utilizing the service and whether those who are using it are satisfied with it. The solutions can be found in the charts below. Despite awareness, few respondents chose not to use the self-checkout option.

14. Self Cehck-Out Service User's Satisfaction



Interpretation: Out of 51 respondents, 34 have utilized the self-checkout service, with 47% highly satisfied and 44% satisfied. As a result, 91% of the aware and user respondents are satisfied with the self-checkout system. 9% are dissatisfied with the service; this could be due to overcrowding at the counters or a technological issue. This is a pure assumption.

15. Reasons for Not Using Self Check-Out Service



Interpretation: Even though 18 of the 54 respondents were aware of the service, they had not used it. The main reason was that they felt compelled to use it. Customers have always been prevented from using the self-checkout service due to a lack of employee experience and availability.

All Decathlon stores must take the initiative to teach consumers on how to utilize the self-checkout service so that the store's salespeople can focus more on sales and less on the POS counters.

XIII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Primary research containing a consumer bias
- insufficient knowledge
- insufficient sample size
- Fails to examine all external factors
- Data availability constraints
- There is a time constraint.

XIV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this comprehensive research study delves deeply into various aspects of Decathlon's retail environment and customer interactions, offering valuable insights into critical factors such as store layout planning, brand recognition, the pivotal role of in-store merchandising, shopping challenges, and customer perceptions of self-checkout services. The findings highlight the positive outcomes of Decathlon's meticulous approach to retail layout planning, which not only enhances customer satisfaction and encourages repeat business but also underscores the importance of intensifying the promotion of the brand's proprietary products. The study underscores the substantial impact of aesthetic appeal and strategic in-store merchandising in shaping consumer behaviour, resulting in heightened engagement and enhanced sales performance.

While Decathlon generally excels in managing customer satisfaction regarding stock management, the study also points to opportunities for refining self-checkout awareness and adoption. The concept of merchandising is thoroughly explored, unveiling its multifaceted role that transcends mere sales enhancement. Throughout the study, Decathlon's unwavering dedication to crafting an immersive and delightful shopping experience remains a prominent theme.

The research offers valuable insights to guide Decathlon in making informed decisions aimed at improving retail efficiency, elevating the shopping journey, and fostering an even more devoted customer base. Recommendations encompass the fine-tuning of layout merchandising and inventory management strategies, with the goal of securing sustainable competitiveness in an ever-evolving market. The study exemplifies how Decathlon can achieve these objectives by optimizing browsing layouts, implementing effective merchandising processes, and reinforcing inventory management practices.

Against the backdrop of India's sports retail landscape, Decathlon emerges as a key player. Amidst the rising wave of sports participation, fitness awareness, and the expansion of sports infrastructure, Decathlon's diverse product range, reasonable pricing, and steadfast commitment to delivering a holistic sporting experience position it favourably. The adept utilization of varied store layouts, including angular and grid styles, empowers Decathlon to cater proficiently to diverse customer preferences and needs.

Decathlon's strategy of recruiting young professionals stands out, reflecting their dynamism, adaptability, digital prowess, and fresh perspectives. This approach aligns seamlessly with their commitment to providing engaging customer interactions, staying abreast of industry trends, and embracing technological advancements. Simultaneously, the recruitment of young professionals nurtures a talent pipeline, fostering Decathlon's ongoing growth and innovation.

In essence, this study casts illuminating insights on Decathlon's strategic initiatives aimed at optimizing its retail environment, enriching customer interactions, and solidifying its position in India's competitive sports retail landscape. Through meticulous layout merchandising, innovative inventory management, and an unwavering dedication to delivering exceptional customer experiences, Decathlon continues to thrive as a prominent destination for sports enthusiasts and consumers seeking high-quality products, immersive shopping, and a comprehensive sporting journey.

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