

a visit to...

Gopalan Mall/ Total mall

Mysore road

Introduction

As students got down from Bolero which their college hired for typography module, what came to them as a surprise, the mall they were addressing to as "Total Mall" since morning was in fact known as "Gopalan Mall". "Total" was the anchor store for the mall. Despite the bold typeface, the four story building, situated on a busy road doesn't seem to have much of existence as there was hardly anyone to shop. All students could see were their batchmates and some security guards.

Typography & Context

The first visual encounter was quite tempting, as extreme left and right had Mc Donald's and Café Coffee day. The reason it caught attention first, was the view-able height (the proportion of height of the building to the front floor area was considerably more, due to which one notice the lower height characters first) and also the familiarity of brand. Mc Donald's was noticed first, the reason being since childhood we have been taught to read/write from left to right.

Typography: Retail space

Between, the main objective of the tour was to study and understand how typography is affecting retail environment. How does it help increasing space productivity and the very influence it's creating on customer's subconscious? For this; analysis of typefaces, text placement, Size, colours, text visibility and how it is treated was made.

In a retail space like mall, customer doesn't always have familiarity with space, merchandise and directions. So it becomes very important to guide him/her through the space in a hassle free fashion. Text or the information as the most important tool for communication helps channelize and control customer's movement in any busy space. Its lack may result in chaos and customer

For instance, Total (Gopalan mall), after all the security check, as one enters immediately gets exposed to a hall full of merchandise and some sign boards which are aligned parallel to customer's view. In such a situation the customer may get confused as to what to see and what to ignore and as a result he/she may miss out on important sign/direction boards and moves straight into the chaotic display. More to this, most of the sign/direction board had thin black text on white background, which against a white ceiling/wall didn't stand out much. Making a way through the haphazard product display, a discount of "Flat 40% off", a sans-serif font was spotted out on one of the central gondolas, firstly because the type was big and bold (right in face) to grab attention and also it was right at eye level since most of the gondolas were smaller heights. The other places, written text was in different typefaces (black & white A4 bond prints), giving an impression of imperfection and temporary display. The unorganized display often was a result of construction scenario.

Ground floor, because of the monotone everywhere looked the same. Product differentiation was majorly due to signage and difference in type style, colour remaining same all across. First and Second floor, all the sign boards for each category was colour coded so as to avoid confusion and save time. Also here the gondola heights were bigger due to which one can only see up to a limited distance, so here ceiling hung sign boards were actually a help to find the desired item.
