

AN INVESTIGATION OF EMERGING ISSUES IN THE
RETAIL DESIGN INDUSTRY AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR
CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN TERTIARY INTERIOR
DESIGN EDUCATION AND PRACTICE

Master of Design by Research

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CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP/ORIGINALITY

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

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Table of Contents

Abstract		8
Introduction		9
Chapter 1: Emerging Issues in the Retail Industry		16
1.1	Retail as a Marketing Application	17
1.2	Branding – Development and Evolution of the Brand Concept	20
1.2.1	The Brand Power Shift	25
1.3	Marketing, Atmospherics and Meaning	31
1.4	Retail Design Methodology	35
1.5	Chapter Summation	49
Chapter 2: The Challenges for Educators and Practitioners of Emerging Issues in Retail Design		51
2.1	The Identity Challenge: What is Interior Design	52
2.2	The Legacy of Historical Models of Design Education	61
2.3	The Significance of the Relationship Between the Design Schools (Academy) and the Interior Design Professiong	70
2.4	Chapter Summation	77
Chapter 3. An Investigation of Design Attitudes and Needs in The Australian Retail Industry		78
3.1	Introduction	79
3.2	Research Methodology	79
3.3	The Semi-Structured Telephone Interviews	80
3.4	The Questionnaire Survey	93
3.4.1	Retail as a Marketing Application	95

Table of Contents – Continued

3.4.2	The Role of Brand	105
3.4.3	The Future of Retail Design Services	110
3.4.4	Further Emerging Issues in The Australian Retail Industry	116
3.4.5	Specialised Skills required by Retail Designers	118
3.5	Chapter Summation	120
Chapter 4. Conclusion: Strategies for Resolving The Challenges		123
Appendices		131
Appendix A	Letter of Introduction & Consent Form	132
Appendix B	Issues Explored in the Semi-Structured Questionnaire	135
Appendix C	Semi Structured Interview – Subject A	137
Appendix D	Semi Structured Interview – Subject B	142
Appendix E	Semi Structured Interview – Subject C	147
Appendix F	Semi Structured Interview – Subject D	152
Appendix G	Semi Structured Interview – Subject E	158
Appendix H	Questionnaire Survey	163
Appendix I	Data Analysis File	171
Appendix J	Selection Criteria Data	173
Reference List		178

Figures

Chapter 1. Emerging Issues in the Retail Industry

Figure 1.1	Evolution of National Retailing Power	26
Figure 1.2	De Drie Hoven Nursing Home	33
Figure 1.3	PAD Model – Outline of the Proposed Framework	39
Figure 1.4	Retail Categorisation and its Consequences	42
Figure 1.5	Marketing Segmentation Bases	47

Chapter 2. Influences on the Development of Current Educational Models in Interior Design

Figure 2.1	Interior Design Graduates 1987	69
Figure 2.2	Interior Design Graduates 2004	70
Figure 2.3	Skills and Attributes – Designers	75

Chapter 3. An Investigation of Design Attitudes and Needs in The Australian Retail Industry

Figure 3.1	Retail Typology – Representation	95
Figure 3.2	Retail Typologies – Frequencies	96
Figure 3.3	Professional Background – Frequencies	97
Figure 3.4	Professional Background and Retail Typologies – Crosstabulation	98
Figure 3.5	Is Marketing Becoming more Influential within Retail Organisations - Frequencies	98
Figure 3.6	Retail Brand – Store Representation	99
Figure 3.7	Business Ownership and Retail Store Location	99
Figure 3.8	Business Ownership and Professional Background – Business	100
Figure 3.9	Retail Business Ownership and Professional Background – Marketing	100
Figure 3.10	Retail Business Ownership and Professional Background - Design & Architecture	100

Figures – Continued

Figure 3.11	Retail Business Ownership and Professional Background – Property & Construction	100
Figure 3.12	Retail Business Ownership and Professional Background – Retail	101
Figure 3.13	Has Retail Become an Application of Marketing	102
Figure 3.14	Current Channel Utilisation by Retail Typology – Crosstabulation	103
Figure 3.15	Future Projected Channel Usage – Crosstabulation	103
Figure 3.16	Currently Utilised Channels – Frequencies	104
Figure 3.17	Future Projected Channel Usage – Frequencies	104
Figure 3.18	Has the Internet Broken Down Domestic Boundaries	105
Figure 3.19	Brand Expression within the Retail Environment – Crosstabulation	106
Figure 3.20	Brand expression within the Retail Environment - Frequencies	107
Figure 3.21	Critical in Brand Representation – Frequencies	109
Figure 3.22	Professional Background and Factors Critical in Brand Representation –Crosstabulation	109
Figure 3.23	Retail Typology and Critical Brand Representation – Crosstabulation	110
Figure 3.24	Type of Firm Utilised	111
Figure 3.25	Firm Typologies – The Design of Retail Environments - Numerical Nomination	112
Figure 3.26	Firm Utilisation by Retail Typology – Crosstabulation	113
Figure 3.27	Existing Firm Service Offer – Numerical Nomination	114
Figure 3.28	Future Service Offer Requirements – Numerical Nomination	114

Abstract

This thesis explores the implications for interior design practitioners and educators of emerging issues in the retail industry. Because of the changing nature and significance in the retail industry of marketing, brand, communications, and consumer behaviour, retail designers are facing a range of new challenges, and are finding that they require new skills and new areas of knowledge. The emerging issues in the retail industry have implications also for interior design educators and curriculum developers, as retail design is generally considered to be a specialised field within the discipline of interior design.

The methodology adopted in the thesis includes an exploration of emerging issues in the retail industry through a review of available literature, followed by two investigations that explore the attitudes and needs of the retail industry in relation to interior design. The critical analysis of results from the investigation reveals the challenges facing interior design practitioners and educators and, in the concluding chapter, some strategies for meeting these challenges are suggested.

The methodology of 'participant observation' is employed in the thesis because of the author's twenty years of experience as an interior designer working in the retail industry, and additional experience as a lecturer in interior design at the university level.