

VM-RD

VISUAL MERCHANDISING & RETAIL DESIGN



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Committing to VM

TLV, a sister concern of Foley Designs, now keenly looking at focusing their offerings in Visual Merchandising services, specifically for the Indian retail market. VM&RD catches up with Michael Foley, Managing Director to find out more on TLV's plans and strategy involved in offering this service to the Indian retailer.



Michael Foley
Managing Director
Foley Designs

With a vision to 'build smart solutions' for everyday experiences, TLV has been creating lifestyle products under brand 'ELA' and offering services such as environment /spaces design, visual merchandising, installations, packaging, gifting, project implementation and management.

Focusing their offering on Visual Merchandising services, TLV is targeting at offering design services for facades, windows and brand touch points in large retail environments like malls and big box retail formats.

"We want to look at how we can enhance a brand or product through various short lived transient experiences that are geared around VM. Malls are an area we want to target, since most brands already have their in-house VM teams," Michael explains.

While one side the Indian retail sector still considers visual merchandising as the last mile for a brand experience, on the other slim budgets are allocated to visual merchandising to deliver business objectives. Michael elaborates, "I think it's a question of how to prove this works for the brand, in turn enhancing the returns. So we are thinking of working on lower costs, where we don't compromise the entire budget but have fewer but visible and engaging elements. Costs would automatically go up if you require something substantial."

Michael believes that the main issue why VM is often not taken as a serious tool that can deliver

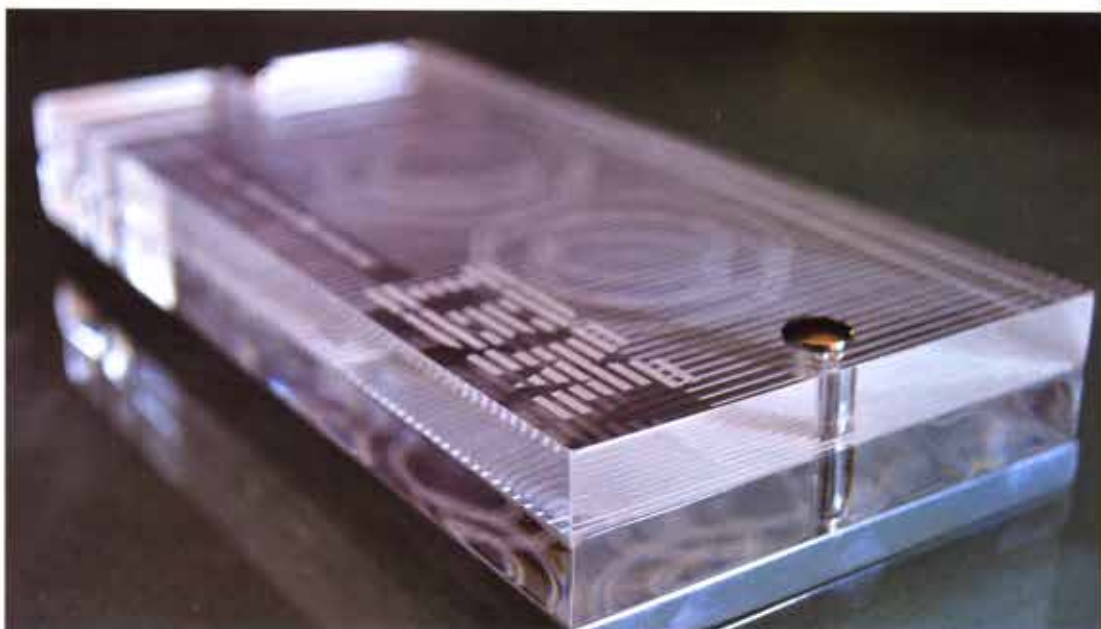


business objectives is the lack of quantitative measuring techniques that can establish its success. "We at TLV would like to develop tools to prove retailers from a business perspective that it works for them. We don't want people to take VM lightly," Michael adds.

With a couple of very visible brands, like Fastrack and Orion Mall in Bangalore, on their drawing board they are looking to demonstrate the power impact of the use of visual merchandising. "Visual merchandising

was always like a fringe benefit with Foley Designs. But now we have started out projects where we are looking at making VM more visible. We will be able to prove that with an upcoming project in a month," says Michael.

With 6 people on the board of TLV and 35 on Foley Designs, the collaboration with complementing skills help take on integrated brand design projects.



"We are at a very early stage now, but we would like VM to be a vertical itself for TLV in the future. I would like to build VM as a service which can be applied anywhere. I also believe that we have enough practice, expertise and understanding since we come from a well-oiled organization to run an effective visual merchandising project. Versatility is our

strength, which is extremely critical in the VM field," Michael comments.

Founded in 2010, TLV's core team includes Michael Foley, India's leading product designer; Zubin Mathew, specialist in banking and financial services and Tabita Mathew, who has an experience of over 15 years in

handling process and project management in the aviation industry.

While many firms in the country offer Visual Merchandising solutions for the retail sector, TLV plans to stand out in the way they can interpret a project and execute the same in an effective manner. "It's very important on



how sensitive we are to a brand's requirement and not just thrusting our idea on them. We need to consider the leverages or constraints, and then build a concept around this to create something out of the world. Here understanding multiple areas and how we can adapt them to VM are critical," Michael explains.

With the integrated approach of TLV and Foley Design, the combined offering of a 'one stop shop' offering design consultancy and conversion of the same, is a more complete offering that could effectively integrate a brand design needs across channels and mediums •

Chanda Kumar

