



Hi! I am Kate and I work as a **Merchandising Manager**.

I keep updated with the latest merchandising trends, and identify suitable tools and resources that would help the team determine price and products best suited for the targeted consumers.

OVERVIEW OF IMPACT TO THE ROLE

Level of Impact

HIGH

Time Horizon

Immediate

Mid-term

Long-term

Key Trends driving Impact

Consumer of the Future

New Retail Model

Automation & Data

Future-proofed Supply Chain

Highly Impacted Retail Archetypes

Fashion & Sporting Goods

Department Stores

Non-brand owners



DETAILED LOOK INTO IMPACT ON THE ROLE

Category of Impact	Types of impact to the role
Technology Implementation	Displacement by Technology
	Augmented by Technology: Role incorporates real-time data and artificial intelligence tools to guide strategies on product category and target setting.
Job Reconfiguration	Complemented by Technology
	Job Enlargement: Role is responsible for mapping workflows and user journeys to identify opportunities make more efficient, data-driven and responsive merchandising decisions Job Enrichment: Role harmonises customers, technology and actionable data insights to direct the curation and segmentation of merchandise selections.

Skills to Grow

Customer Behaviour Analysis

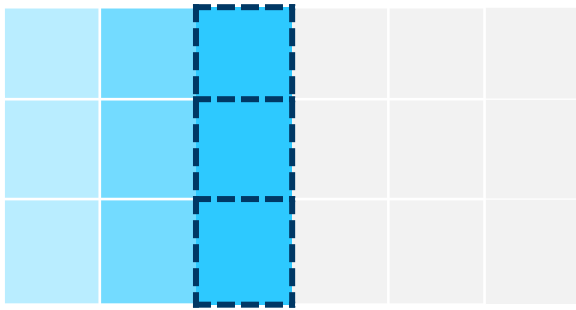
Proficiency level 4

Data Analytics

Proficiency level 4

Merchandise Performance Analysis

Proficiency level 4



New Skills Required

Automated Inventory Control

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Application

Emerging Technology

While the skill level remains, the Merchandising Manager will be increasingly expected to apply these skills in their role:

- Customer Behaviour Analysis:** Establish a data-driven customer behaviour analysis model and framework, and devise parameters to identify the various characteristics of customer segments, making informed decisions with insights acquired.
- Data Analytics, Merchandise Performance Analysis:** Develops processes to analyse performance of merchandise, evaluate trends of profitability and adjust the range of merchandise. He/she needs to develop and drive product mix assessments against merchandise budgets and sales target with statistical modelling and data-mining techniques

*Skills and proficiency levels are identified based on Skills Framework for Retail



THE ROLE TODAY

The Merchandising Manager oversees the implementation of merchandising strategies as well as the development of the private label or house brand products. This includes developing strategic partnerships, managing product assortment, driving product development and budget management. A merchandising manager is expected to regularly review market and industry trends to drive appeal of merchandises to target customers.

THE ROLE TOMORROW



The Merchandising Manager will concentrate time and creative efforts on differentiating their products and services, and innovating ways to alleviate the Merchandising Executive's role in routine merchandising tasks. The Merchandising Manager will also review processes and strategies to drive curated experiences for the consumers, creating a justified merchandise structure across sales channels to provide a complete range of products available.

Changes in critical work function

Critical Work Function	Key Drivers of Change	Implications on Tasks
Drive Merchandising Strategies	<p><u>Availability of real-time data to predict changing customer demands:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">As the pace of changing customer expectations accelerates, customer behaviour profiles and purchasing behaviours are morphing quicker than merchandising teams can comprehend and act on to meaningful change. Merchandising analytics can provide the impactful insights needed to make crucial merchandising decisions (e.g. dynamic pricing, product gaps) to meet real consumer demand.Long-term business planning can also leverage the wealth of data available, making specific forecasts on consumer demand with multiple factors (e.g. seasonality) considered.Customers are aware of environmentally and socially sustainable products, and there is an increasing demand for brands to be transparent about their product sources.	<p><u>Augmented by Technology:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">With artificial intelligence and availability of real time data, the Merchandising Manager can utilise internal and external insights to guide top-down business plans on product category strategy and target setting. <p><u>Job Enrichment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Merchandising Manager will serve as a critical fulcrum to harmonise customers, technology and actionable data insights to direct the curation and segmentation of merchandise selections. This will enable retailers to personalise product offerings effectively based on multiple contextual factors (e.g. sustainability of products, seasonality).
Drive Category Management and Product Assortment	<p><u>Rise of merchandising technologies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Advanced planning systems to automate historical analytics and generate predictive scenarios.Dynamic systems with web-scraping and predictive impact analytics could automate pricing and promotions. <p><u>Rise in digital and social platforms:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The competitive e-commerce landscape demands Merchandisers to provide a seamless shopping experience with customised product recommendations for their customers.	<p><u>Job Enlargement:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Online and offline sales platforms have become integrated, and retailers are focusing on delivering a consistent omni-channel experience for its consumers.The Merchandising Manager is expected to make informed decisions on types and quantity of products displayed on the various sales platforms, based on product-specific purchasing behaviours and demand. The Merchandising Manager will be responsible for mapping workflows and user journeys to identify opportunities make more efficient, data-driven and responsive merchandising decisions.

A closer look at how tasks would be impacted:

Critical Work Function	Existing task...	...Envisioning the new tasks
Drive Merchandising Strategies	Analyse customer insights, market trends and business environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate outcomes of innovative merchandising analytics tools to generate in-depth insights on past performance, merchandising trends, customer behaviour, and key customer segments.
	Develop overall merchandising strategies and determine operational implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop merchandising strategies and KPIs, based on evolving market trends, which enable technology to identify a curated list of products optimised for product relevance. Review retail technology solutions (i.e. AR, VR) that help consumers better understand and visualise the product offered prior to making a purchase, to enhance overall customer experience.
	Drive visual merchandising strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead the implementation of technology (e.g. AR Technology & Smart Algorithms) across visual merchandising strategies, collaborating with other teams to enhance physical retail experiences and create new opportunities for e-commerce visual merchandising. Establish visual merchandising principles and strategies that guide the development of visuals that are relevant across online and offline channels.
Drive Category Management and Product Assortment	Manage product sourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the effectiveness of automated inventory control systems to analyse real-time inventory levels, and implement relevant improvement plans. Identify opportunities for software integration plans for routine merchandising tasks to increase efficiency, based on data-driven insights derived from merchandising analytics tools and techniques such as workflow or process mapping. Collaborate with respective teams (e.g. supply chain, strategy) to identify products with a sustainable product value chain (e.g. supply chain and manufacturing), increasing the brand's commitment to social and environmental sustainability.
	Assess product categories, product assortment and product performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish key metrics to measure product performance (e.g. usage, retention and engagement) Evaluate the effectiveness of key metrics on product analytics tools, ensuring products sourced are cost effective and profitable. Communicate results of key metrics through real-time, interactive and centralised data visualisations, ensuring results analysis are distributed accurately and efficiently across teams.

Upskilling of existing skills

- Customer Behaviour Analysis
- Merchandising Performance Analysis
- Data Analytics
- Infographics and Data Visualisation
- Merchandise Buying

New skills for the role

- Automated Inventory Control[^]
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) Application
- Emerging Technology
- Adaptability*
- Creative Thinking*

^{*}Critical Core Skills

[^]Skills not in any Skills Framework