



BUS 400: Internship

Internship Report

On

Correlation between Sales and Renovation of the stores

Prepared For:

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May 08, 2019

To,
Mr. Mahmudul Haq
Assistant Professor
BRAC Business School

Subject: Regarding submission of Report on the “Correlation between Sales and Renovation of the stores of Apex Footwear LTD.”

Dear Sir,

I am formally submitting our Report on “Apex Footwear Limited”. I have tried within the best of my abilities, to incorporate the use of relevant knowledge required.

There may be some errors, but for the most part, I have undertaken this comparative analysis with the utmost care and concern. I hope this report meets the required standard of this course, and I am looking forward to the feedback you would be kind enough to provide me with, on this assignment.

Thank you for bestowing me with this opportunity to put the practical knowledge into test, and have it interpreted.

Yours Sincerely,

Izma Mashia
15104108
BRAC Business School

Letter of Endorsement

That is to certify that Izma Mashia, a student of BRAC Business School, ID: 15104108, Major in Finance and Minor in Marketing, has successfully completed her “Internship program” entitled “Correlation between Sales and Renovation of the stores” at Apex Footwear Limited under my observation as the partial fulfillment for the award of the BBA degree.

She has listened to my suggestions, has made required changes and has executed according to my instructions and has tried her best to do that resourcefully. I suppose this program will help her with building her career. I wish her the best future and hope she gains prosperity in life.

Signature

.....

Mr. Mahmudul Haq
Assistant Professor
BRAC Business School

BRAC University
66, Mohakhali,
Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh

Acknowledgement

This is an expression of the deepest appreciation to all those who provided with the possibility to complete this report. Firstly, being a student of BRAC University, gave me the honorable opportunity to represent my university as a Marketing Intern at Apex Footwear LTD. It gave me a chance to be a medium, connecting and communicating between the two.

A special gratitude extended to the respected course supervisor, Mr. Mahmudul Haq, who has had unquivering contribution in stimulating ideas, providing proper guidance, giving suggestions and encouragement, helped to coordinate the report.

Additionally, this report would not have been possible without the experience at Apex Footwear LTD. The entire marketing team has been extremely warm as well as pragmatic when it comes to work. Lastly, the exposure and hands-on experience has been the most exhilarating, it has helped us step into the reality.

Executive Summary

The report is based on the survey conducted, with the sample size customers of Apex Footwear LTD. residing in Dhaka city. The main motive was to analyze and interpret the data to find if there was any factors of the Store design and the need to renovate related to Consumer Purchasing Behavior to drive the sales.

From the gathered data from survey it was found that factors of store outlay like ventilation or air conditioning, free flowing walking space, sitting area or trail rooms and signage, have a direct correlation with the consumer buying behavior. If the consumers do not have adequate number of these elements, it may affect their purchasing decision which in return could potentially reduce sales.

Additionally, factors like music played in the background, decoration of store for festivals and interior designing also affect the buying patterns. However, these factors vary with an individual's taste or likings as well as demographic factors such as gender, age and(/or) income.

Apart from these, there were statements that were collectively analyzed where the visual appeal of the exterior of the store such as window display, store front, danglers hanging from ceiling and the entrance and exit doors played an important role. Even if consumers do not put into much thought, but this attracts and leaves a mark in hindsight.

Other factors like efficiently using the floor or the space in a store to best display the range of products, which products to place, how and where to place it can change the game for retail business.

Lastly, the not strongly branding the 14 brands carried by Apex as well as not having consistency nor uniformity in the styling of the brand Apex, as a footwear brand across all their retail stores show they have a lot of room to thrive, if they use an integrated taskforce with the help of the Visual Merchandising team and the Marketing team.

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Organizational Overview

Apex Footwear Limited designs, produces, retails, and exports footwear products in Bangladesh, Japan, Europe, and North America. They offer mainly different types of shoes like sandals, heels, flats, sneakers, thongs, pumps, formal shoes, boots, canvas, etc. Additionally, they also produce wallets, sunglasses, belts, different types of bags and accessories for men, women, and children. The organization offers its items under the brands Apex, Venturini, Mouchie, Nino Rossi, Maverick, Sprint, Twinkler, Fly, Cross, Police, Clarks, Dr. Mauch, Sandra Rosa, and School Smart. As of June 30, 2018, it worked through a system of 252 retail outlets, 217 wholesale dealers, and 347 retail dealers. The organization was in the past known as Apex Adelchi Footwear Limited. However, they changed the name to Apex Footwear Limited in December 2013. Apex Footwear Limited was established in 1990 and is situated in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Brands carried by Apex



Clarks, Police and Cross: These are the foreign brands that Apex has brought and they are all luxury goods, extremely high priced and or premium quality. Clarks is available only in a few exclusive stores where they have limited stocks of various types of shoes. Whereas there are bags, sunglasses carried by Police and as for Cross, they have a few ladies bags.

Venturini: This is a home-grown brand that provides premium genuine leather formal shoes and sandals for men. They can very expensive.

Moochie: The exclusive women's collection is carried by Moochie. Their products are pricey and they most have heels, stilettos and pencil heels.

Maverick: For the outdoorsy, adventurous people, Maverick comes out with robust design meant for extreme situations which come at a high price.

Apex: The mass market of men is their own brand, Apex where they have the wider variety such formal shoes, sandals, thongs, etc. They come is different fabric and materials like suede, nubuck, genuine as well as artificial leather.

Sprint: This brand caters to the athletic, sporty or the runners and joggers. Their product come in a wider range in price point which means there is something for everything.

Dr. Mauch: People with heart disease, diabetes or discomfort while walking would rather opt for Dr. Mauch since they manufacture sandals for both genders especially based on such needs.

Nino Rossi: To cater to the mass market for women's shoes in different designs, size of the heels and price point they have Nino Rossi.

Sandra Rosa: for the youthful girls Sandra Rosa designs casual everyday wear which is more on the affordable side.

Twinkler: It is the brand carrying shoes, sandals, heels, flats, sneakers, etc. for children.

School Smart: Basic school shoes are made for the children.

Fly: It carries their lowest priced goods and cater to the needs of men, and it is extremely budget friendly.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Store Design or Layout mainly is the way a company's way of sending a message and communicating to represent themselves in consumer's minds. It has two parts where the exterior of a store layout includes the location, the window or (/and) the store fronts, the kind of door used for the entrance, the decorative banners or posters outside the store, and danglers hanging from the ceiling. However, the interior gets down to the nitty gritty details of the store layout such as branding, signage and directions, visual merchandising, colors and themes used, display style of the product, ease of navigating through the store.

1.1: Rationale of the study

Most retail stores operating throughout Bangladesh have one ultimate goal that is to increase their turnover rates. To do just that organizations focus on certain push and pull factors such as store fronts, what they are displaying, how they are displaying the products, the selection of their products, warehouses, inventory storage, renovation of store layout, interior designing, and location among others, to drive higher sales. The reasoning to this study is to find if there is any correlation between sales and factors store layouts.

1.2: Statement of the problems

Bangladesh has tons of opportunities since the cost of man power and manufacturing is lower than most countries. However, the lack of learning or training centers for graphic designers, visual merchandisers have slowed us to thrive in Brand-building.

The main problem is that the number of consumers that purchase the products in stores are not nearly close to the number of consumers that visit the respective store.

Additionally, despite having a Customer Relation Management, they have not focused on what they can do from their end to meet the requirements of a consumer making a purchasing decision. Nor have they put their data to any effective use as of August, 2018 since they have launched their Loyalty Program- Apex Rewards.

Furthermore, the process of a complaint filed by both consumer and employees from store visits need to be processed and given a quick solution regarding the store layout.

Having a Research and Development unit and not using it to have studies to collect data that could help generate more revenue has been an issue.

1.4: Scope and delimitation of the study

Scope of this study is how they can generate high rate of turnover, what factors affect the sales and concentration on those as well as eliminate any unnecessary factors they do not concern whether a consumer will make the purchase in the store.

The study has been narrowed down to only the store layout factors that is related with the purchasing decision of a consumer. Also, the study is based on the population of the consumers visiting the stores in Dhaka city.

1.3: Objectives of the report

The motive of this study is to figure out what is causing the barrier from having higher number of purchases made by consumers. This will help with how they can overcome the factors with store layout that may affect the sales.

1.5: Research Questions

The initial questions set for conducting the study were much larger in number to have a better understanding. However, keeping the consumer's patience in mind, the number of questions that have been finalized after reviewing with my supervisor has come down to 30. These were the most relevant questions set for the study to be taken by the consumers.

Sl. No.	Questions
1	I always visit Apex stores whenever I go to a shopping mall to look at their items
2	The window display determines if I go inside the store or not
3	Having posters/banners of ongoing discount or offers push me to buy their items
4	Window displays should have new arrivals
5	Window displays should have sale/discounted products
6	I only visit store with playing area for children
7	Clustering too many products look messy on the center tables
8	I want to see as many items in stock as possible
9	Stores have proper banners /board to indicate the brand
10	I know all the brands that Apex carries
11	If a store does not have proper walking space to move freely, I will not visit it again
12	If a store does not have Ventilation/Air conditioner I will not visit it again
13	If a store does not have adequate sitting area for shoe/apparel trial I will not visit it again
14	The kind of music playing in the store sets the vibe for shopping
15	The store must be decorated according to the festive occasion
16	I can easily find shoes based on my needs in Apex stores

17	I know which brand carries what category of item in Apex
18	I do not see expensive shoes in smaller Apex stores
19	Smaller stores do not have the best collection on display
20	I only visit stores that have parking facility
21	I only visit stores that are closer to my house
22	The signs hanging from the ceiling help directing me in stores
23	Product pictures on the display stands on center tables creates ease of shopping
24	I only buy shoes from Apex; other products are not displayed properly for viewing
25	I always look at the bags, apparel and accessories in Apex
26	Assistance is not needed since all products are placed systematically
27	The interior of the store looks cheap
28	If I see damaged lights/cardboard/posters, it does not interest to buy shoes from the store
29	I would only visit stores that have shoes for all family members(men, women, kids, elderly)
30	I visit a particular store repeatedly rather than visiting different store locations

Other than these questions, there was an optional question to state the income, gender and age.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

There were previous articles and slide presentation of what store layouts are, and what are factors in general that affect it.

Although, there has not been study or reports on how the elements of store layout can affect the sales or buying patterns of a consumer. Since store layout come from a company's end and sales are made by consumer end, therefore, it was a study to check if these two are somehow connected, and if so, how does it affect each other.

However, from the previous studies and information gathered, the factors of a store layout were defined and categorized. Store layout is the design created by the organization as a blueprint of where they place what and how they choose to portray it so that the consumer can navigate and see what the organization has to give and it is easily communicated with the consumers. There are two divisions of a store design, Exterior and Interior.

Store Exterior.

- Place of location.
- Marques.
- Store Entrance.
- Widow Display.
- Door Types.
- Walkways.
- Size of the Building.
- Colors and Materials.
- Theft Prevention.



Store Interiors.

- Envelope.
- Internal.
- Methods of Displays.
- Signage.
- Visual Merchandising.

Additionally, each organization chooses what type of layout they want for their shop. There are 4 types, namely- Free Flow, Grid, Loop and Spine Layout to choose from.

And lastly the factors that affect the store design and layout were:

- i. Total space available
- ii. Type of product offered by the store
- iii. Number of departments in the store
- iv. Volume and variety ratio in the product line carried
- v. Mode of operation
- vi. Inventory level
- vii. Degree of change in operation
- viii. Movement required in store locating, picking and storing products or flow of material
- ix. Target customer and the average number of customers visiting the store

Chapter 3: Methodology of the study

3.1 Methods of research used

Type of research: exploratory research

When a research with a non-conclusive evidence is conducted, and has high level of uncertainty then it is conducted with exploratory research method. For the chosen study to find correlation between factors of store layout and sales, this particular research seemed fitting.

Research method: survey research technique

The selected research method for this project was predetermined, the instructions were to do a survey. Conducting an online survey is one of the most common ways now, since it is not only inexpensive, efficient and accurate but also because it is quick. However, since the study was based on consumer all over Dhaka that visit or have visited the stores, the survey was done in-person while visiting randomly picked stores situated in Dhaka. The consumer to take the survey were also, chosen randomly.

3.2 Respondents and sampling procedures

Sample

As another requirement of this research, we were to gather the intakes from the consumers of Apex Footwear LTD. In Dhaka city. The number of sample size had to be equal to, or more than 30.

The number of respondents for our research was 33.

These 33 respondents are a representation of Dhaka city.

Sample procedure: probability technique

Since the survey was done through survey technique, each consumer picked randomly got each one of them had an equal chance of filling out the questionnaire. Additionally, the sample population was known, therefore we chose probability technique.

3.3 Research instruments for questionnaire

Nominal, Ordinal and Interval

To make the questions, a mix of mainly 3 types of research instruments were used which are the nominal, ordinal and interval.

The simple attitude scale was used minimally as a nominal question when the answers to the question were in answers form of 'either this', 'or that'.

For understanding the income range of an individual, interval scale was used.

Lastly, ordinal questions in Likert scale was used in various questions since it is a popular instrument and it helps a respondent choose their answer based on the 6-point of how strongly they agree or disagree to a statement or notion.

3.4 Collection of data

Primary data

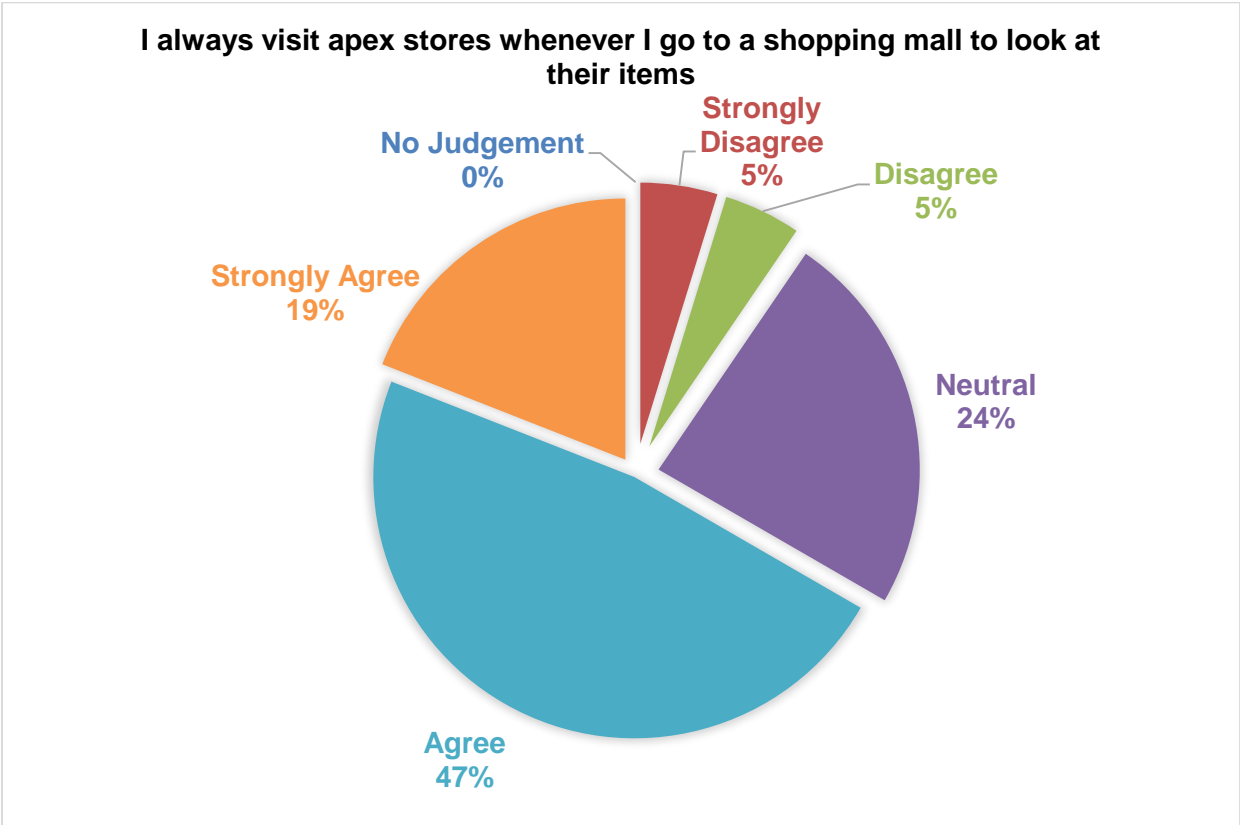
Primary data means the raw data that is collected, and since this research was based on the online survey, it is a source of primary data. Additionally, it can be used in further related studies in the future.

Prior to more than a month ahead of the submission date, the survey was made, and it was taken to randomly picked Apex stores situated in Dhaka. Over the next 3-4 weeks, there were 33 responses to the survey.

Chapter 4: Analysis and Interpretation of the Data

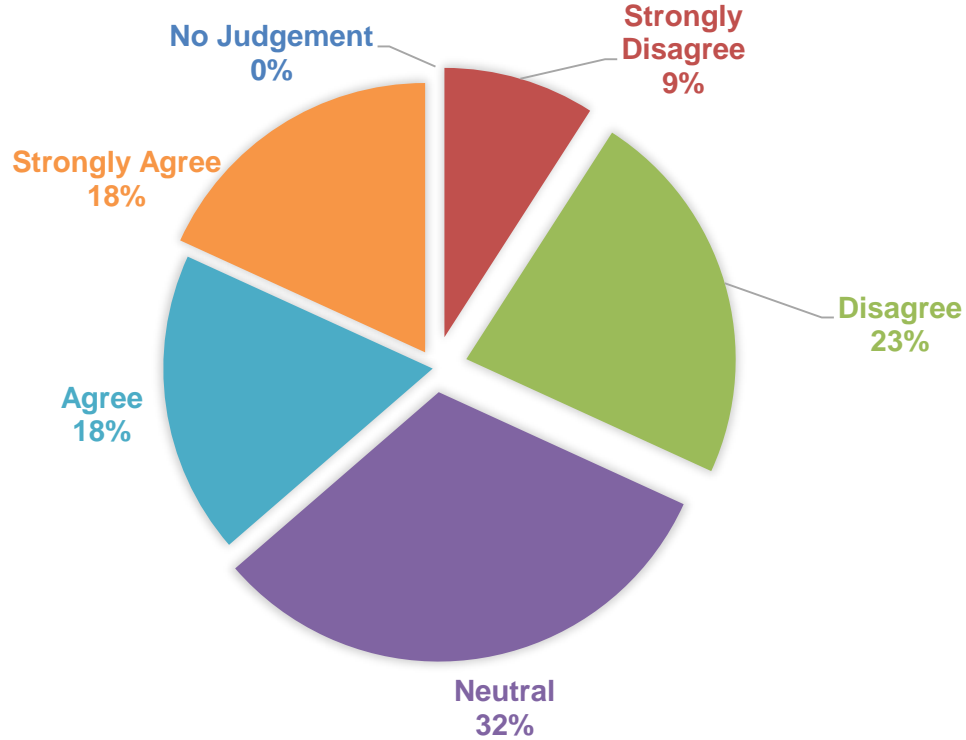
The following interpretations were based on the responses made by the survey respondents for each statement. Each statement was to be marked in a 6-point Likert scale starting with 0= No Judgement or Remarks, 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree and 5= Strongly Agree.

The charts depict the visual representations. Some of the statements were rearranged and then combined to reach an analytical reasoning.



Most of the respondents said that they usually would visit the Apex stores whether the purchase is planned, for window shopping or even if it is to compare the products with its competing brands.

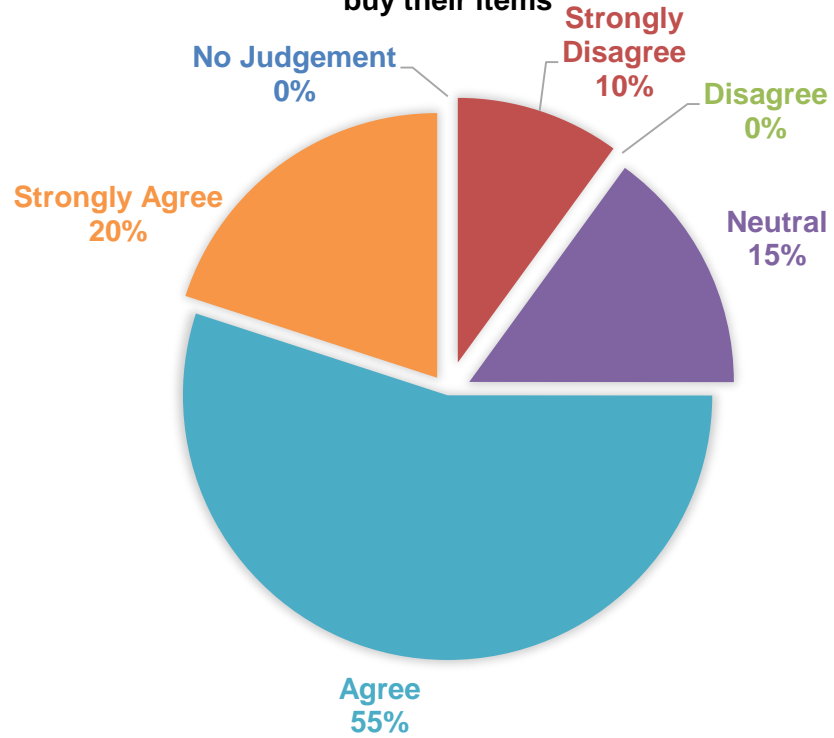
The window display determines if I go inside the store or not



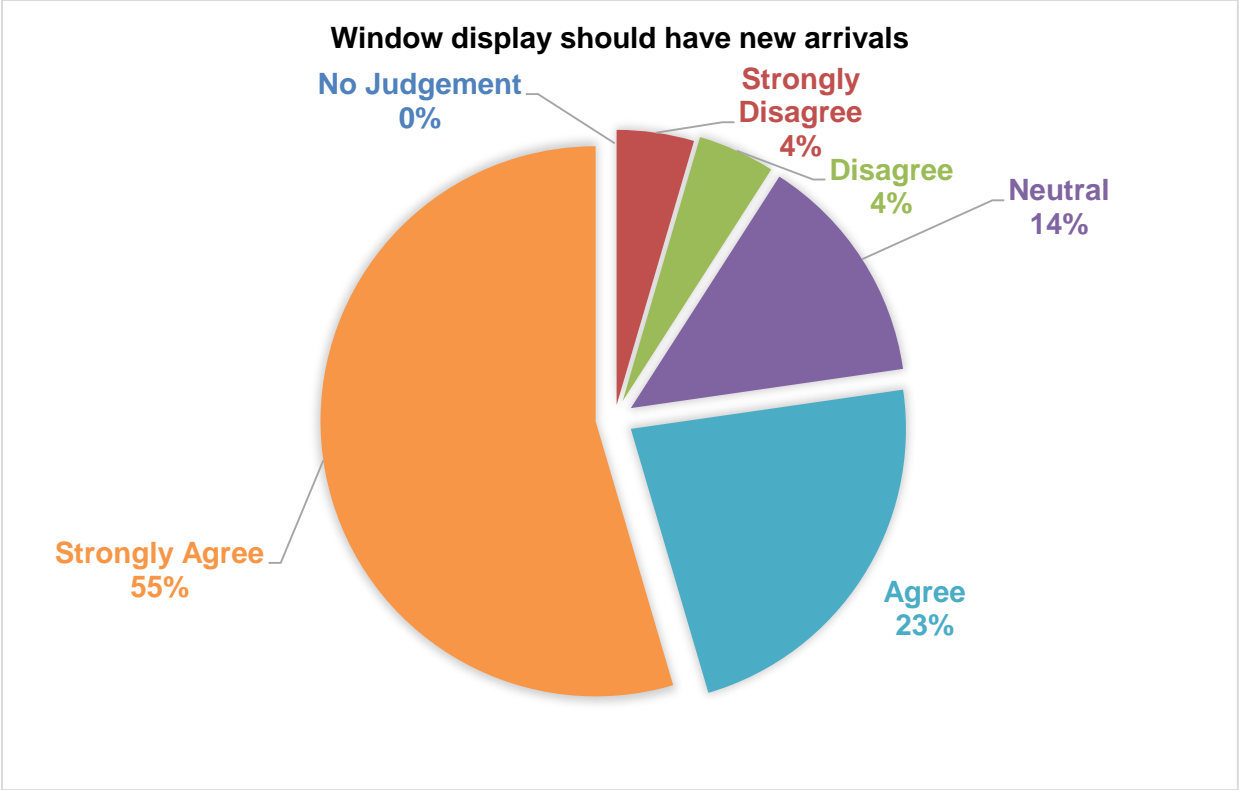
What is displayed on the window or store front of the Apex stores matter to some, however most would like to think it does not. Interestingly enough, the results of the survey in the end would conclude that it does have a role to play whether a customer walks into the store or not.

Most new or irregular customer might think that it does not matter but it is what draws their first attention. However, when it comes to regular or loyal customers, it may not matter to them because they would enter and explore regardless of what is on display.

Having posters/banners of ongoing discount or offers push me to buy their items

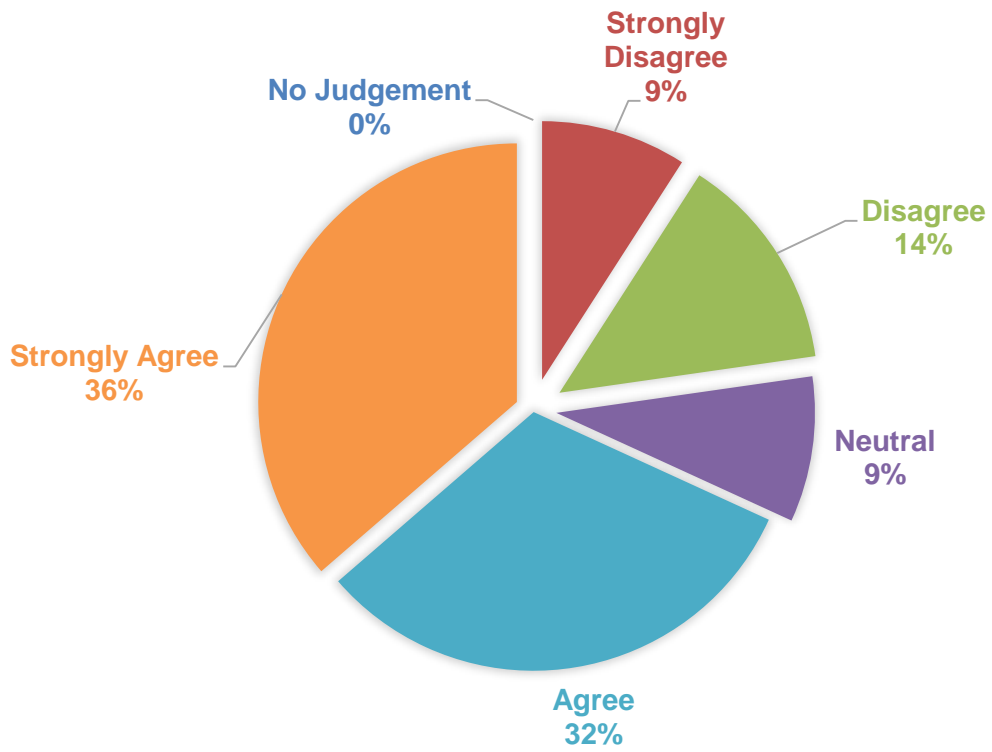


People with a comparatively lower income range, who are price sensitive felt that having a visual display of the ongoing offer or discounts play as a deciding factor in making the purchase.

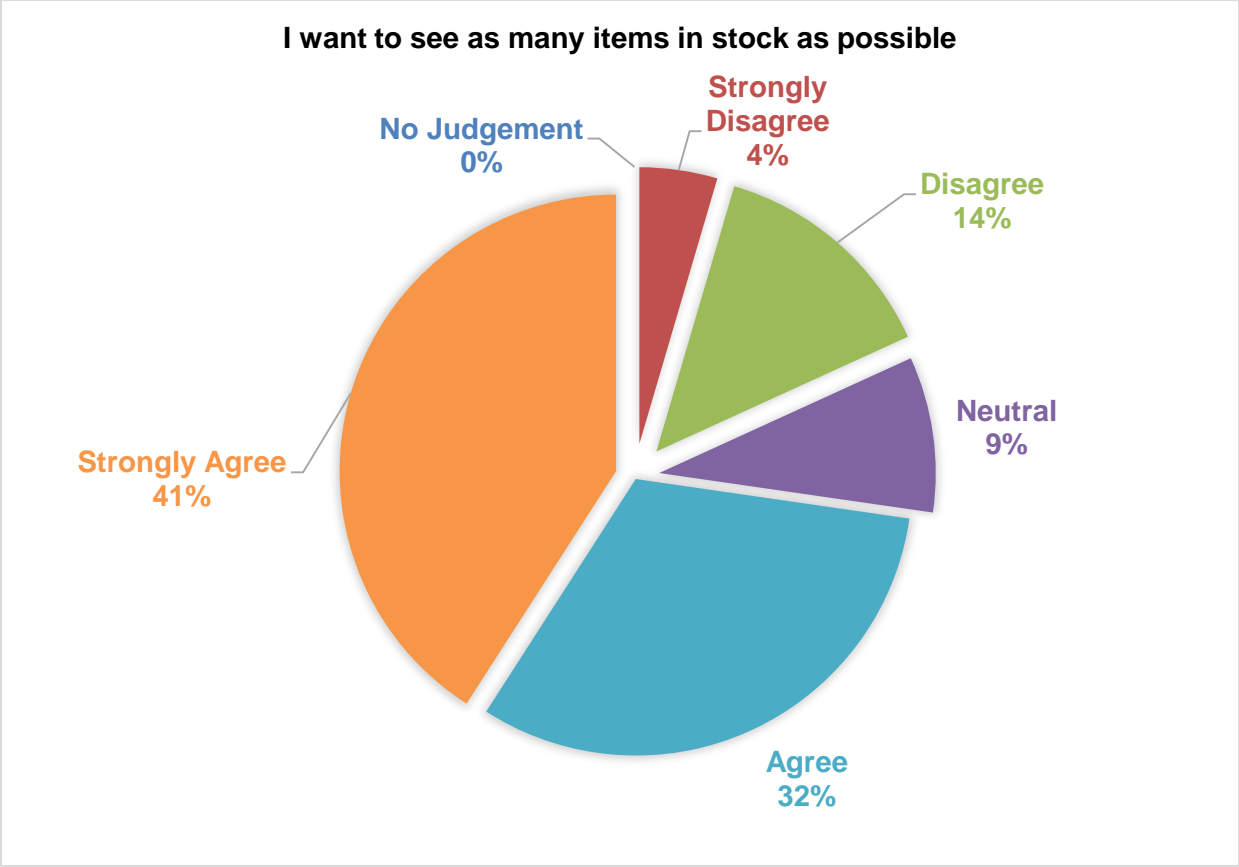


The reasoning behind most respondent choosing reacting positively to this statement is because they would want to see newer collection and follow with the current trend. These are also the respondents who are fashion conscious and do appreciate the extrinsic factors such as the interior of the store as well as intrinsic factor like the location of the store, or how their shopping experience is.

Window display should have sale/discounted products



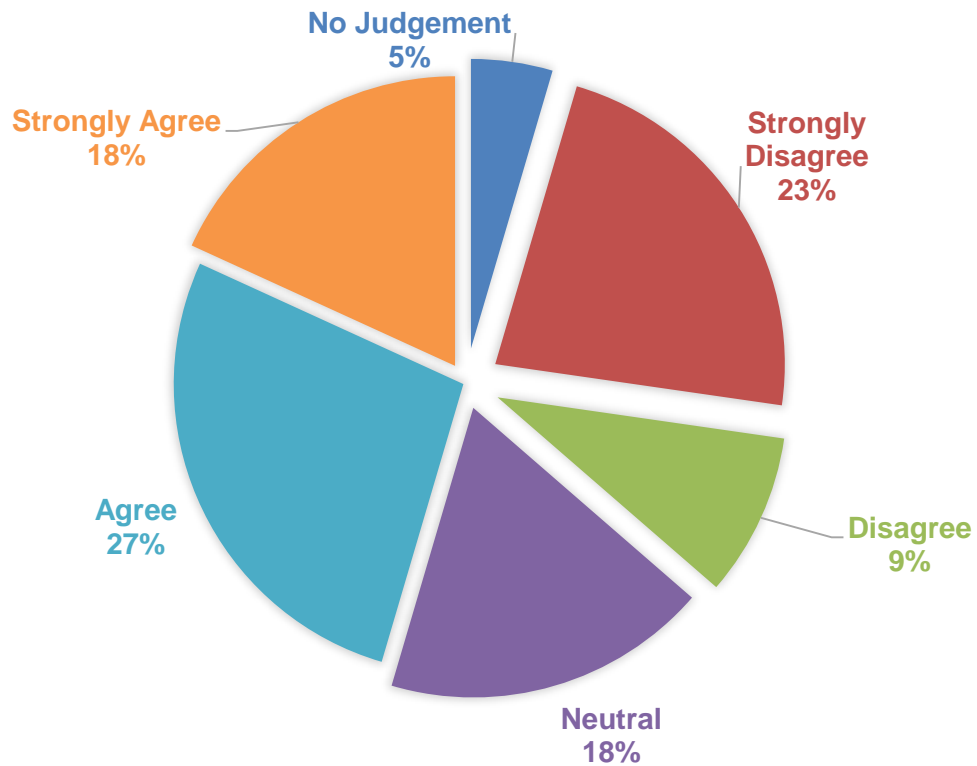
Similar to a previously asked question, price sensitive customer would opt to see discounted or products on sale.



Majority respondents reacted positively, which can be related with the previous questions that they want to see as many products available in the store as possible.

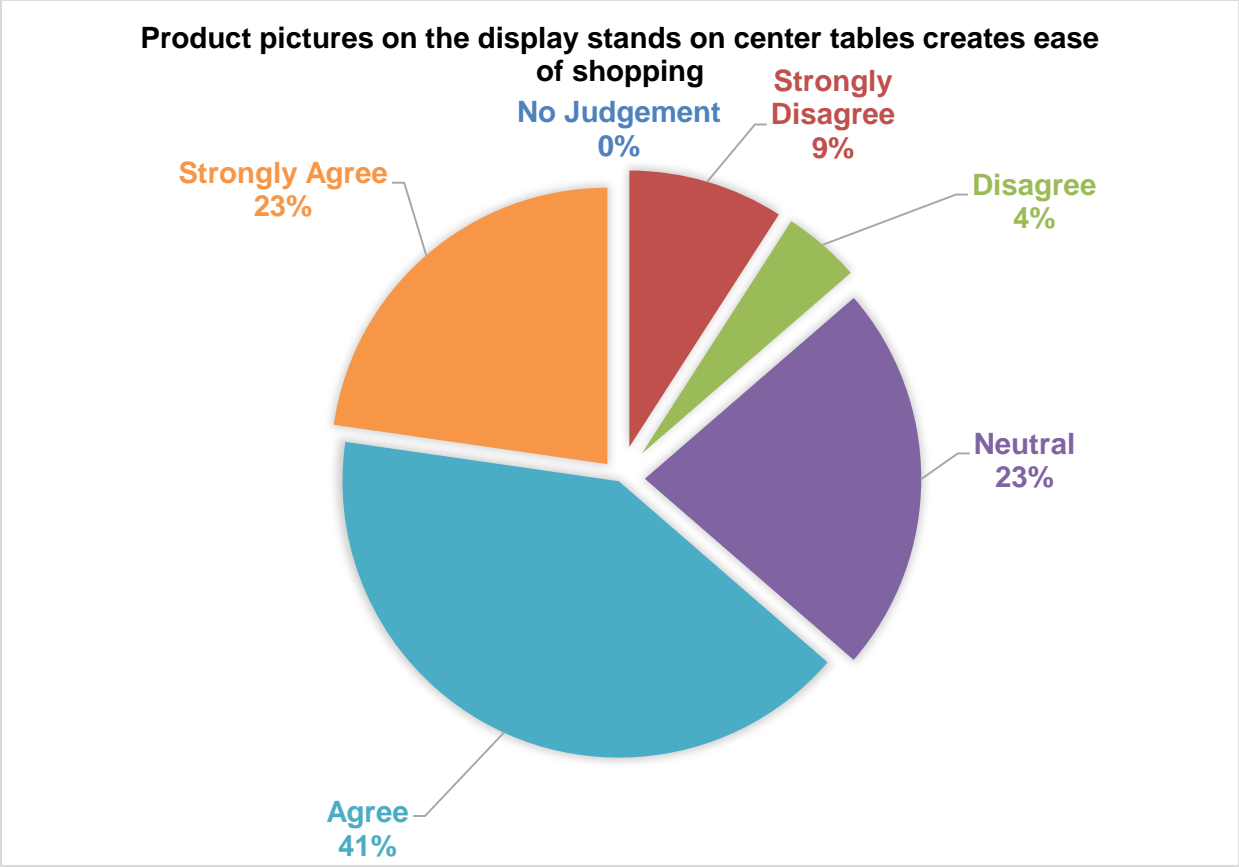
Interpretation: Since, the store front is the first thing a customer sees it plays a huge role in deciding if there is a possibility of visiting or(/and) purchasing. From the results gathered, it is evident that customers want to see new arrivals as well as be aware of discounts and offers that they can incentivize. They want to make a purchasing decision after they have explored all their probable options which means most of them want to see all the collection in store.

Clustering too many products look messy on the center tables



Contradicting to a previous result to a question where customers want to see as many products as possible, here most of them also do agree that the too many products are clustered together and looks unappealing and quite untidy.

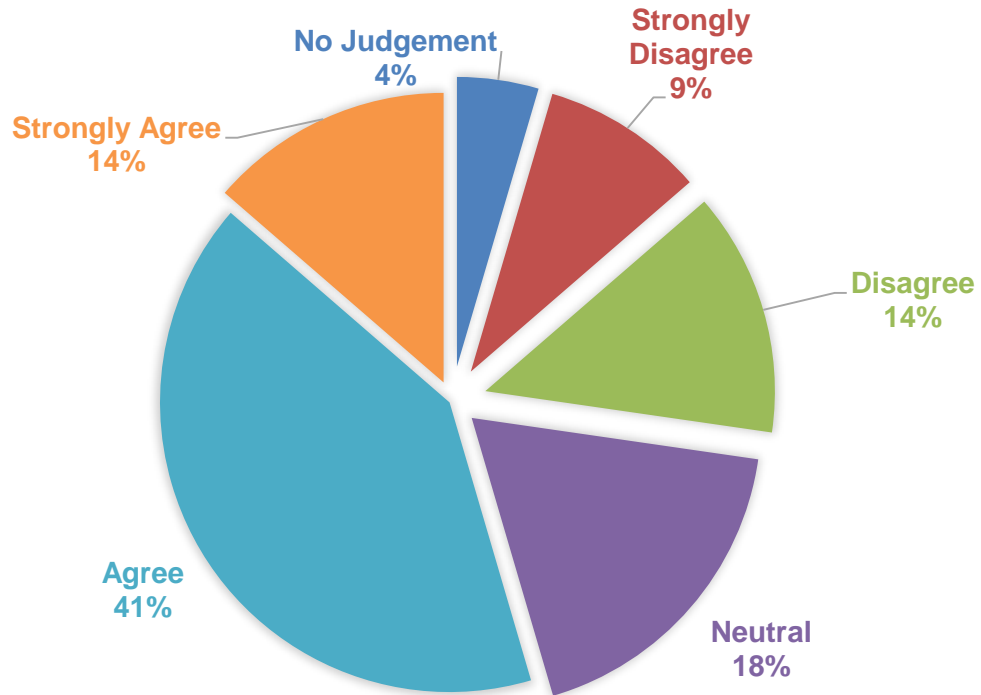
However, this could mean that customers feel that either the stores are small or Apex is not managing their space well when it comes to placement of products.



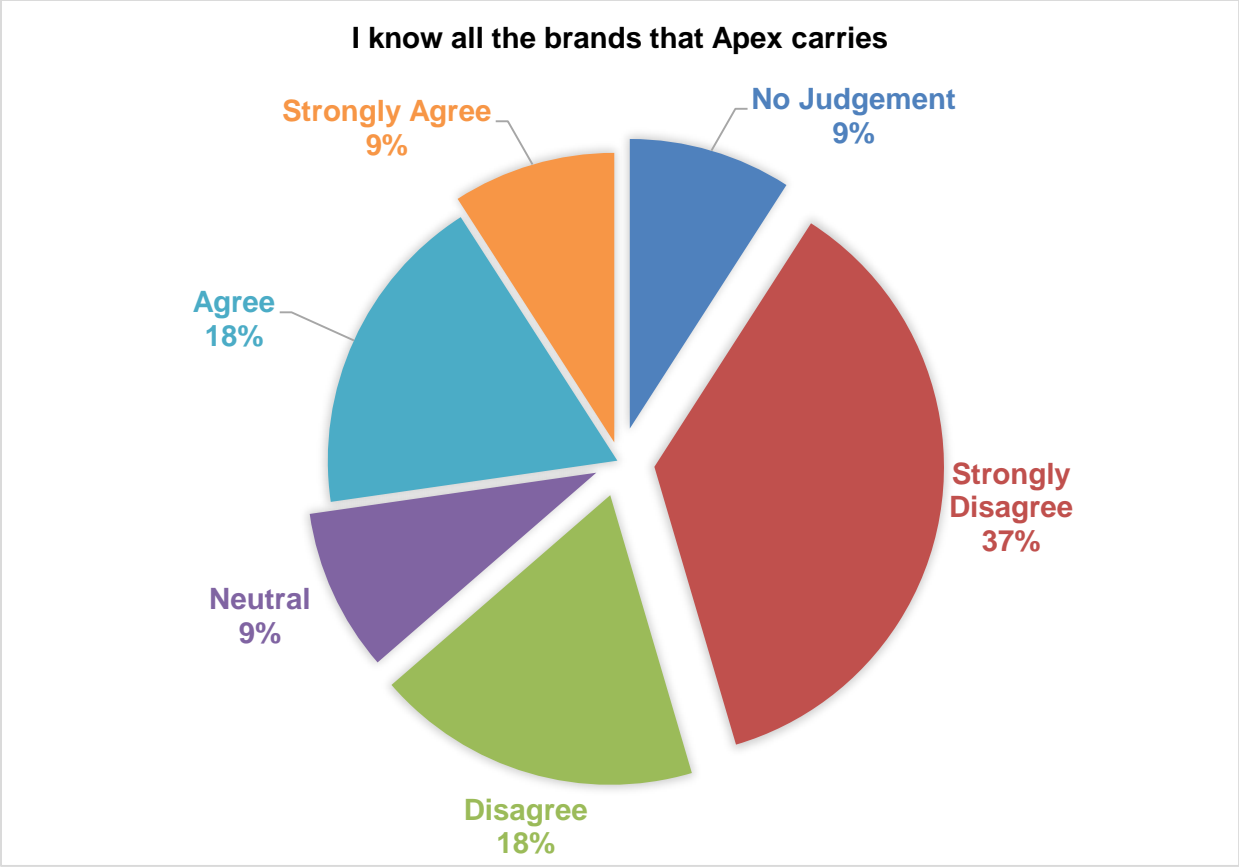
Most people do take notice of the pictures placed throughout the stores, they feel it helps them to see a variety of products and get a feel of what is available and if those are similar to their taste or sense of fashion.

Interpretation: These results can help with the placement of products. Not all products need to be on display, the ones that are on the pictures are already getting exposure, they can rather use that space to view other products which are not portrayed in pictures. Furthermore, each product may have a color variation, in that case instead of viewing all colors, rather placing the popular color and using the space efficiently for other products of different designs will show a better use of the space and have a greater scope of viewing larger number of products.

Stores have proper banners/boards to indicate the brand

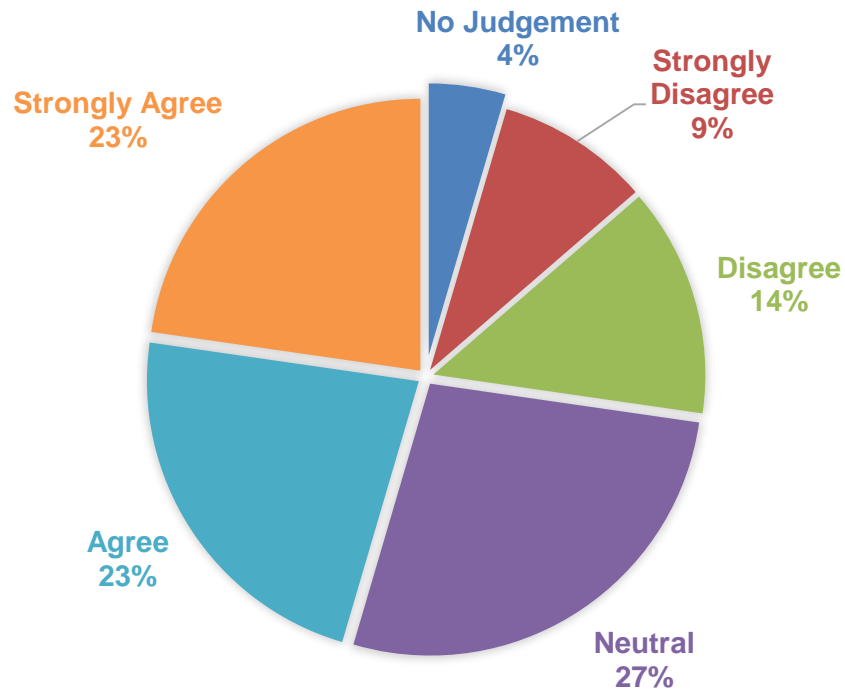


Customers have mostly agreed to the representation of the brands that Apex carries. Apex currently carries a number of 14 brands including Apex, Venturini, Moochie, Sandra Rosa, Nino Rossi, Police, Twinkler, School Smart, Sprint, Fly, Dr. Mauch, Cross, Clarks and Maverick.



Despite majority of the customers saying that they feel Apex has adequate branding in stores for the brands they carry, the customers do not feel they know all the brands.

I know which brand carries what category of item in Apex

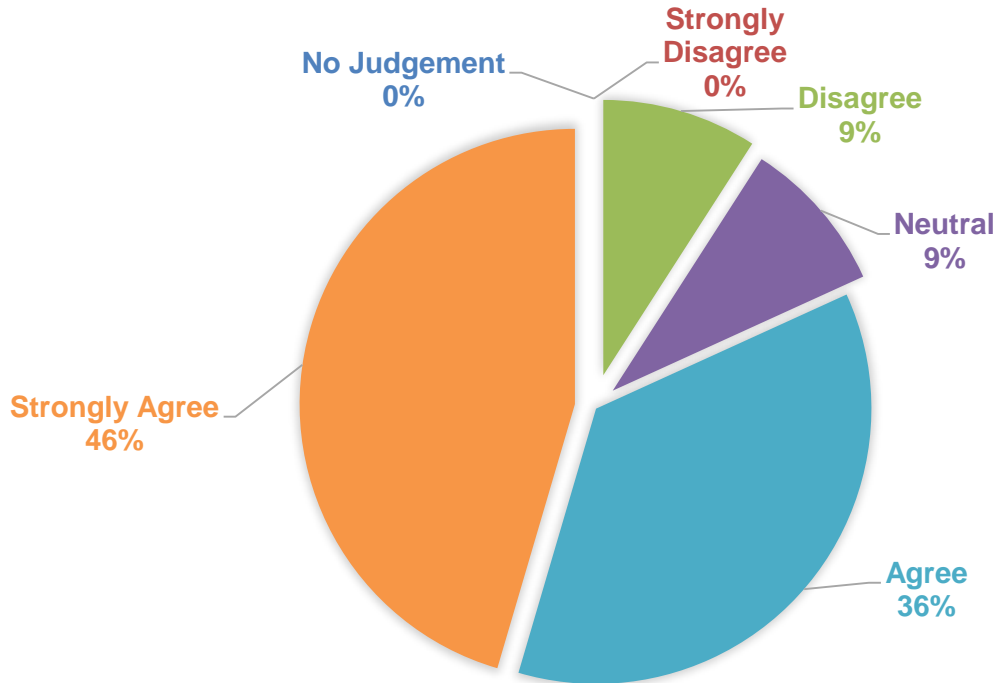


This question had conflicting results, since with the previous two questions show that the customers do not know the brands properly. If a customer does not know the brand, it is likely that they will not be familiar with their brand image or the category of their product line.

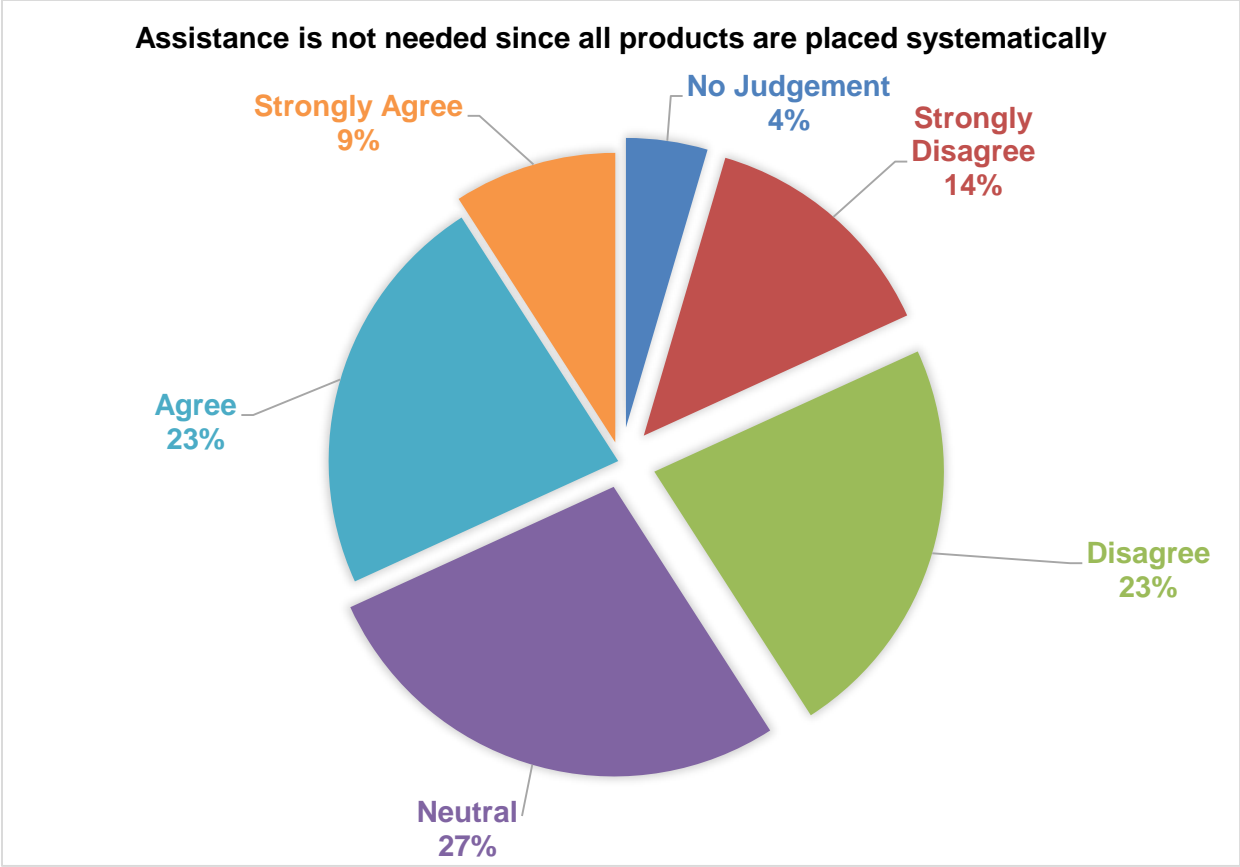
However, here the customers have mostly agreed to saying that they know which brand carries what category of product.

Interpretation: This information can be summed up with saying that while customers do not know every brand carried by Apex, they know a few. And among those few, they know what type products they can find there. For example, it is distinct that Apex has one sporty brand which is Sprint, or that they have a premium men's brand Venturini. Therefore, customer have limited knowledge about the brands, and these people are loyalists.

I can easily find shoes based on my needs in Apex stores

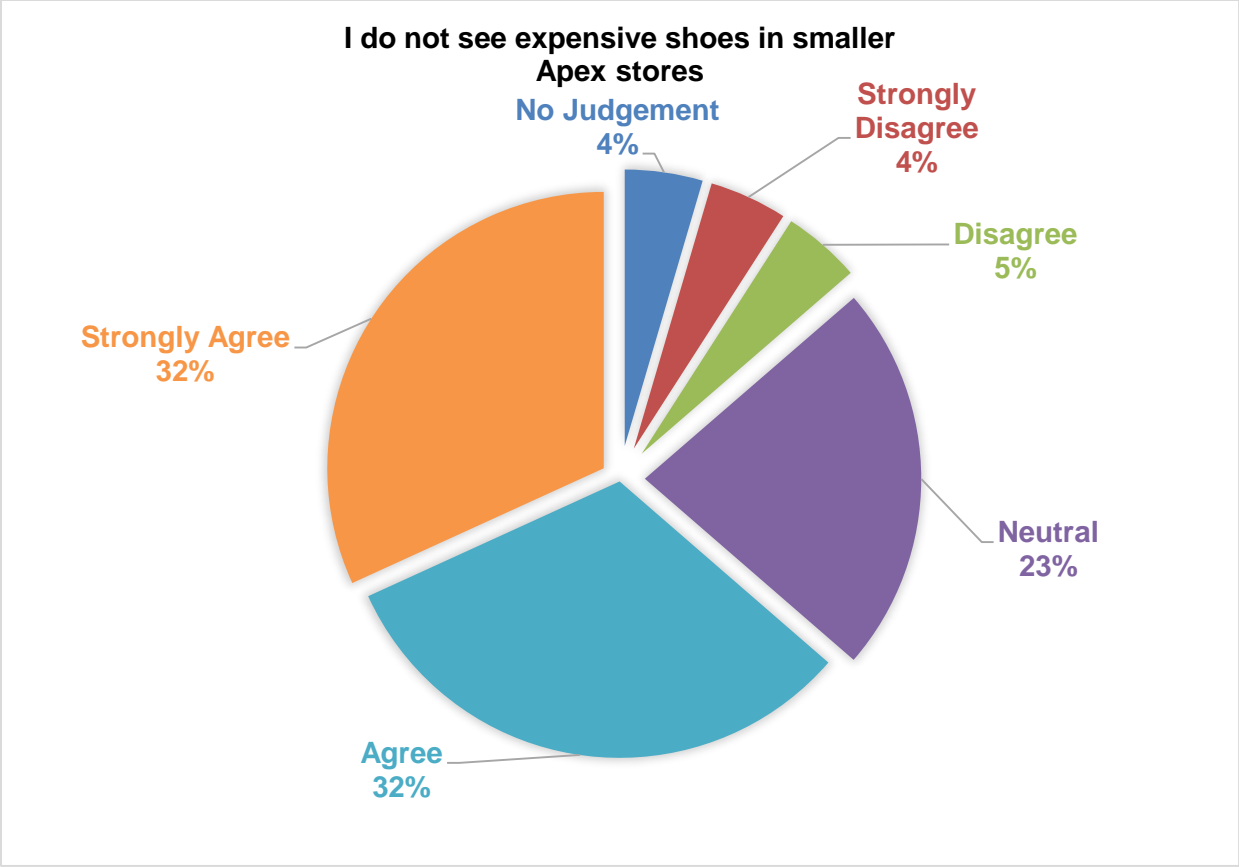


Most respondent feel that the products are placed with respect to their designated brands, which help them to easily surf from one brand to another, or directly visit the brands that cater to their needs.

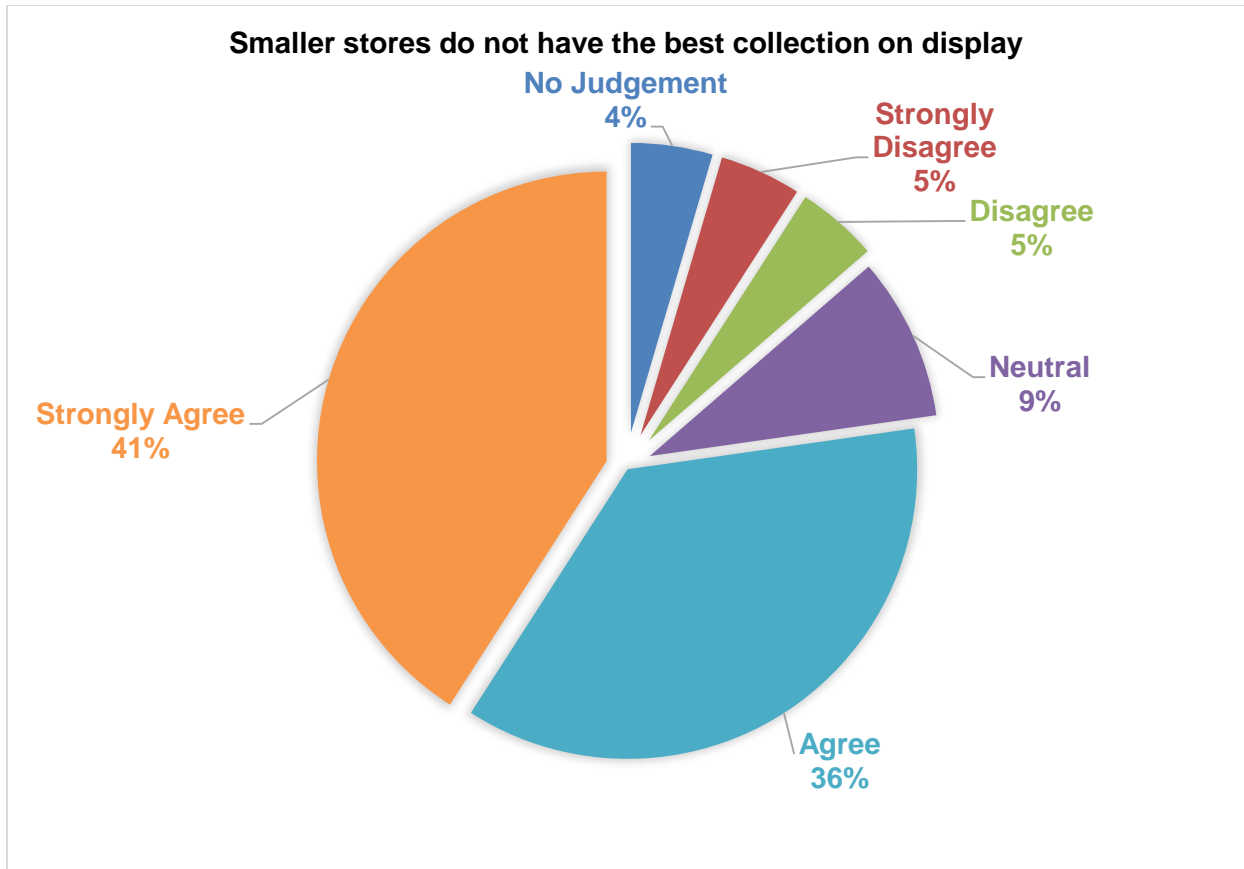


Even if the shoes are in their designated place, majority feel they still need a little assistance.

Interpretation: Customers are able to navigate through the store and find products based on their needs, however to them it does matter whether they are receiving proper service while visiting a store since that will determine their purchasing decision or if they will return to the same store.



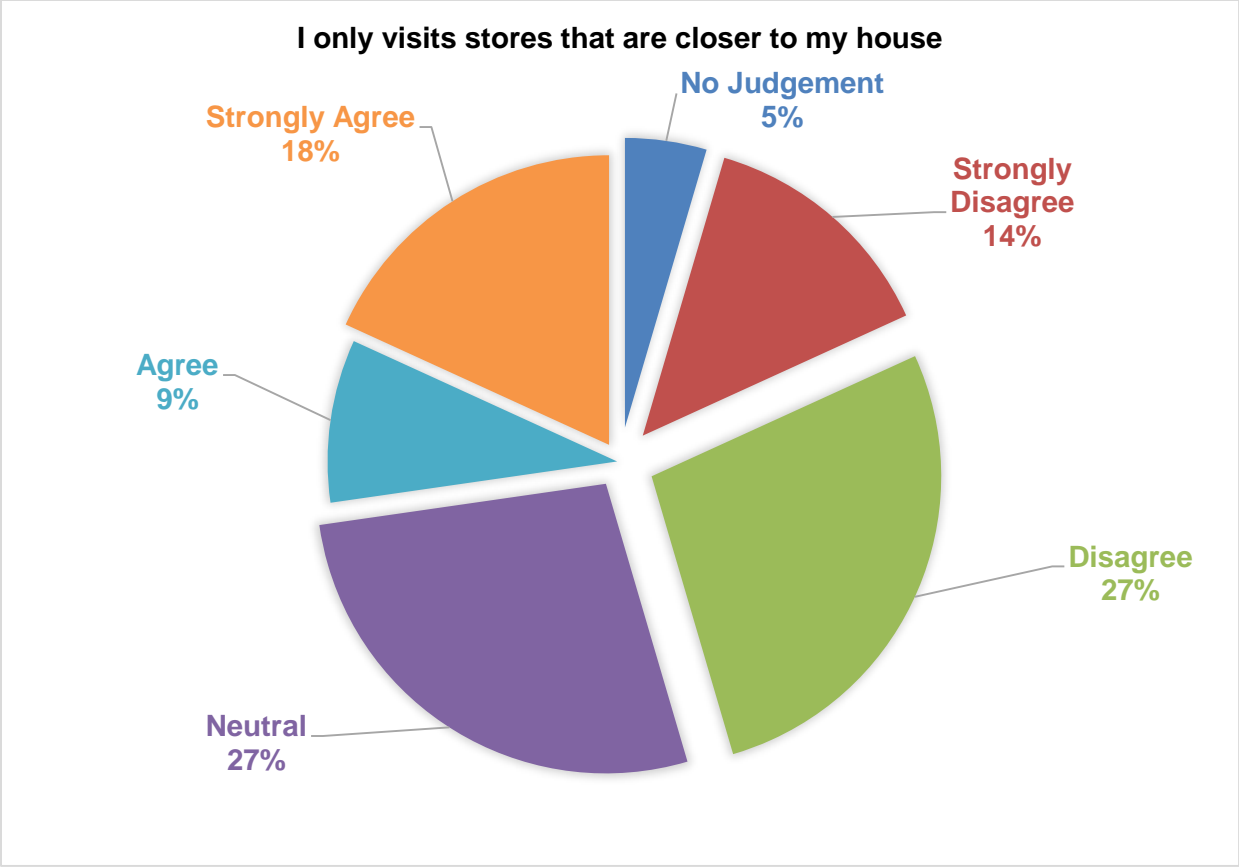
This was a clear answer that customers do not see expensive, or exclusive brands like Moochie, Venturini, Cross or Police in the smaller stores.



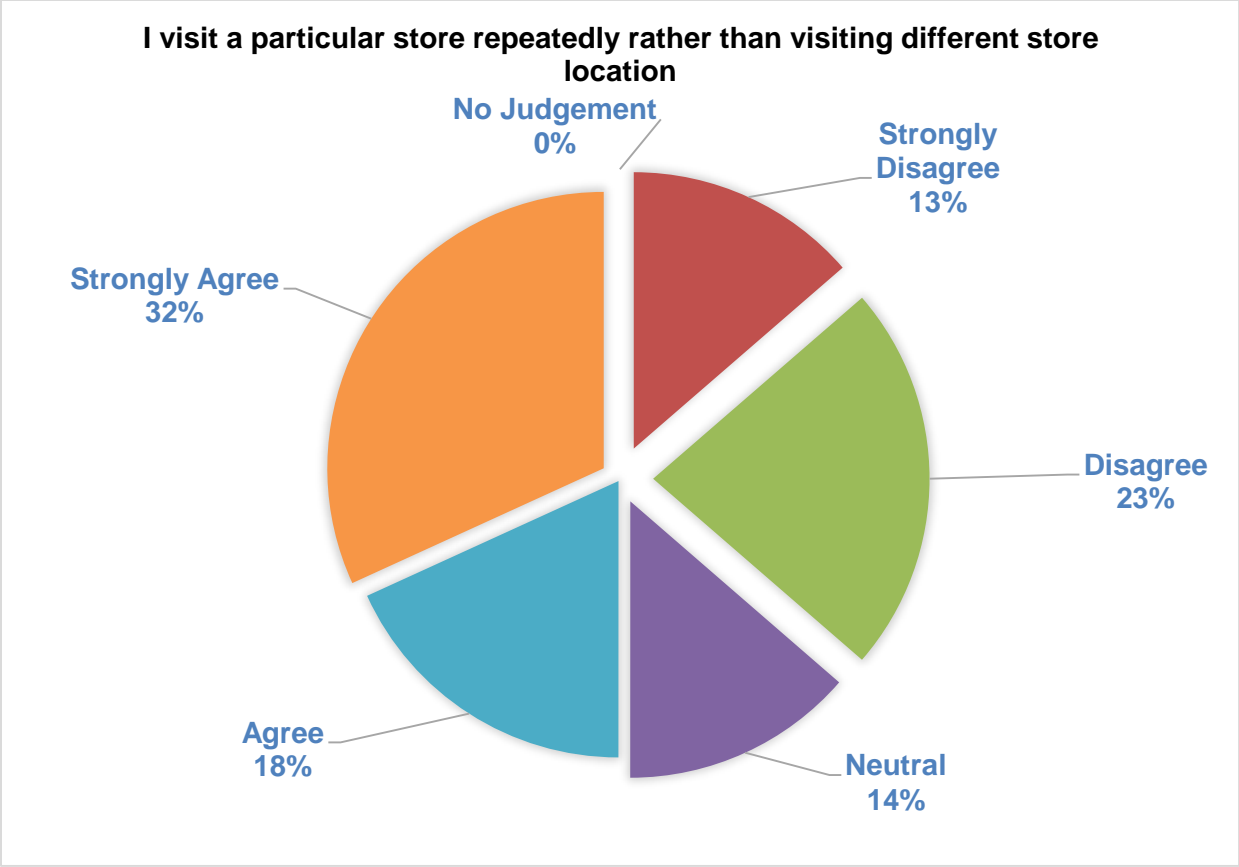
Again, similar to the previous statement, customer think bigger stores have the best and exclusive collection whereas the smaller store caters to the mass market with the regularly purchased products.

Interpretation: From the results of the statements regarding the size of the stores and collection displayed, most felt that the size is related to the type of products that is to be displayed. The bigger the store, the expensive the brands and their products.

This is true because Apex wants to specify their target customer.



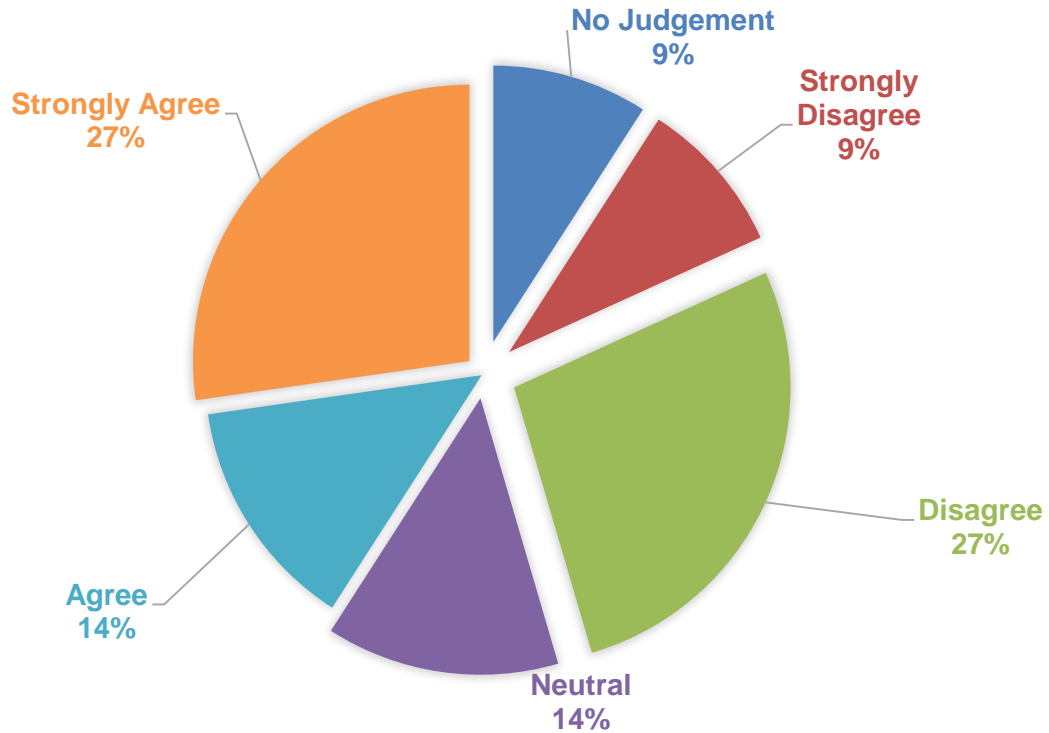
However, a small number of respondents responded positively, most of them disagreed. Most of them are willing to go an extra mile.



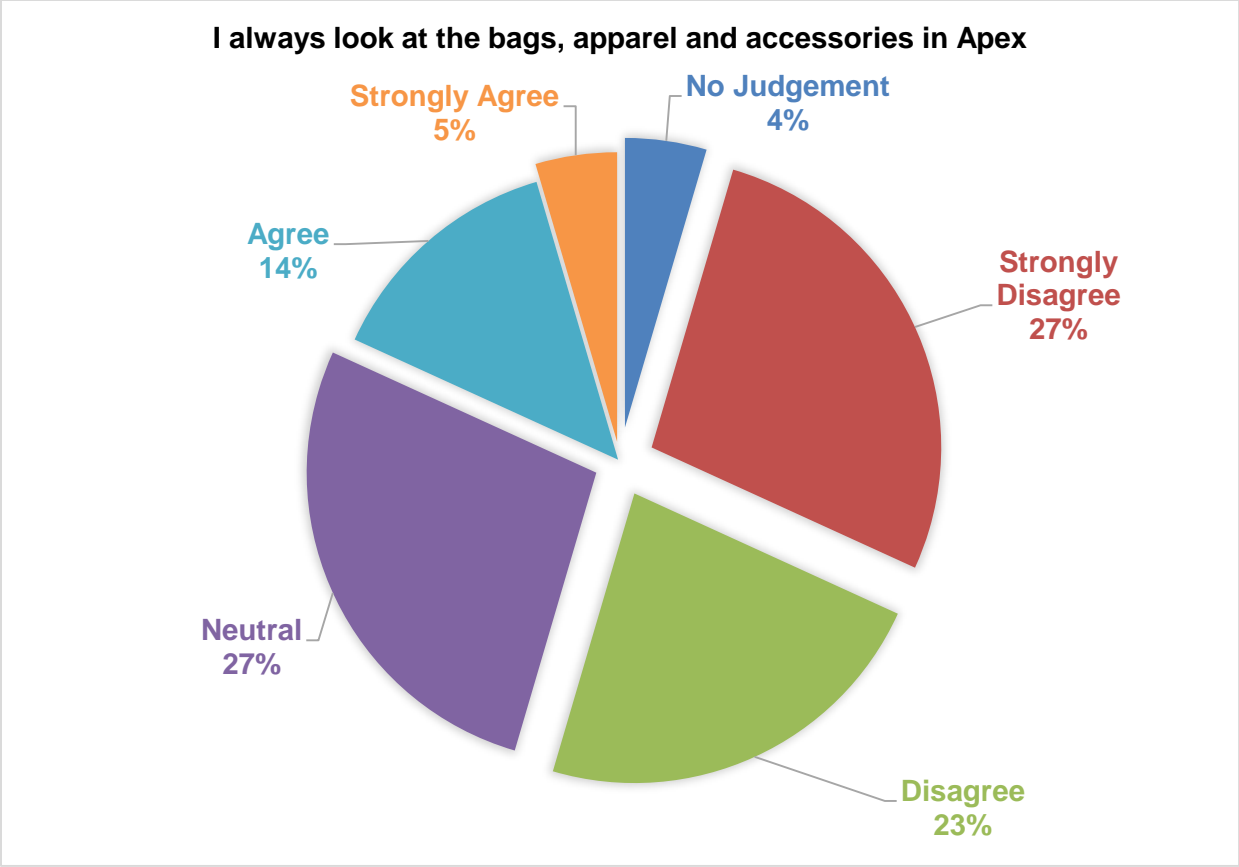
It matters to a customer if they feel that a particular store has better collection of products that suits their taste, or be it for the convenience and ease of finding the brands, products since they are familiar with the store layout, they know what is placed where. These customers are also regular customers since they revisit the same stores rather than exploring other stores.

Interpretation: Since the range of products from Apex falls under Shopping category, for any consumer products when it comes to consumer buying pattern or behavior, therefore, it would require a certain amount of planning and comparing prices and exploring competing brands. All of which adds up to a consumer going an extra mile, and getting what is best suited for them to the point where once, they are acquainted or familiar with the a store, they invest their time and money there.

I only buy shoes from Apex, other product are not displayed properly for viewing



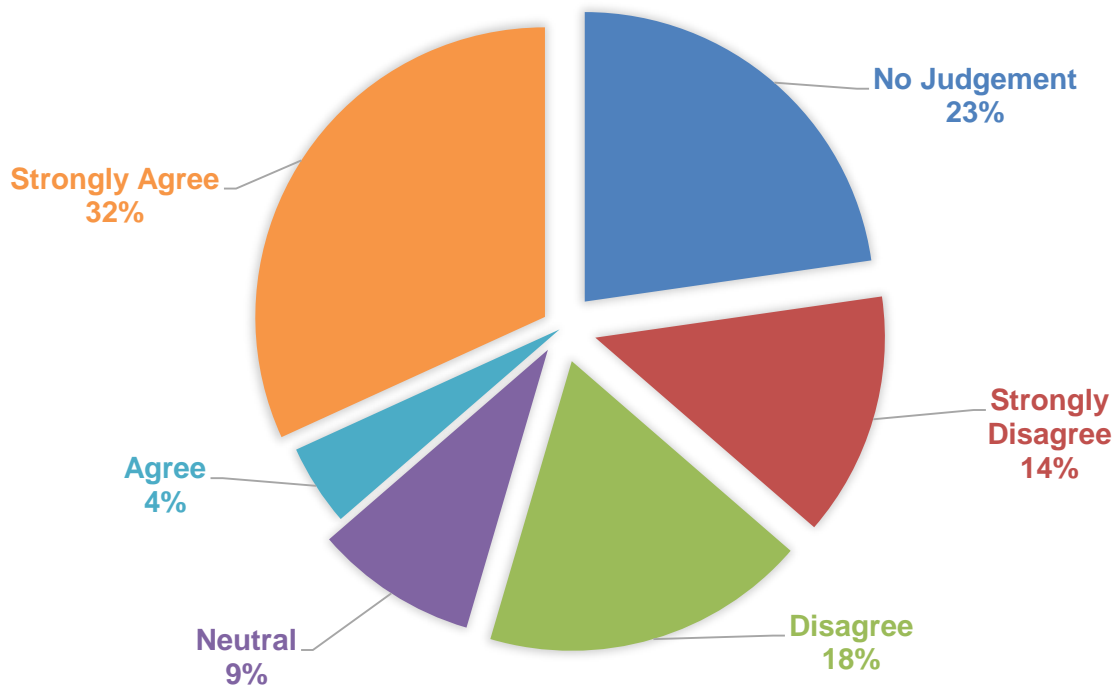
Some customer feel that all types of products are displayed well for proper exposure to their customers, however, majority think they are not actually noticing much other than shoes from Apex. Apex has different types of bags, belts, apparel, shoe care kits, wallets, sunglasses, etc. carried by various brands.



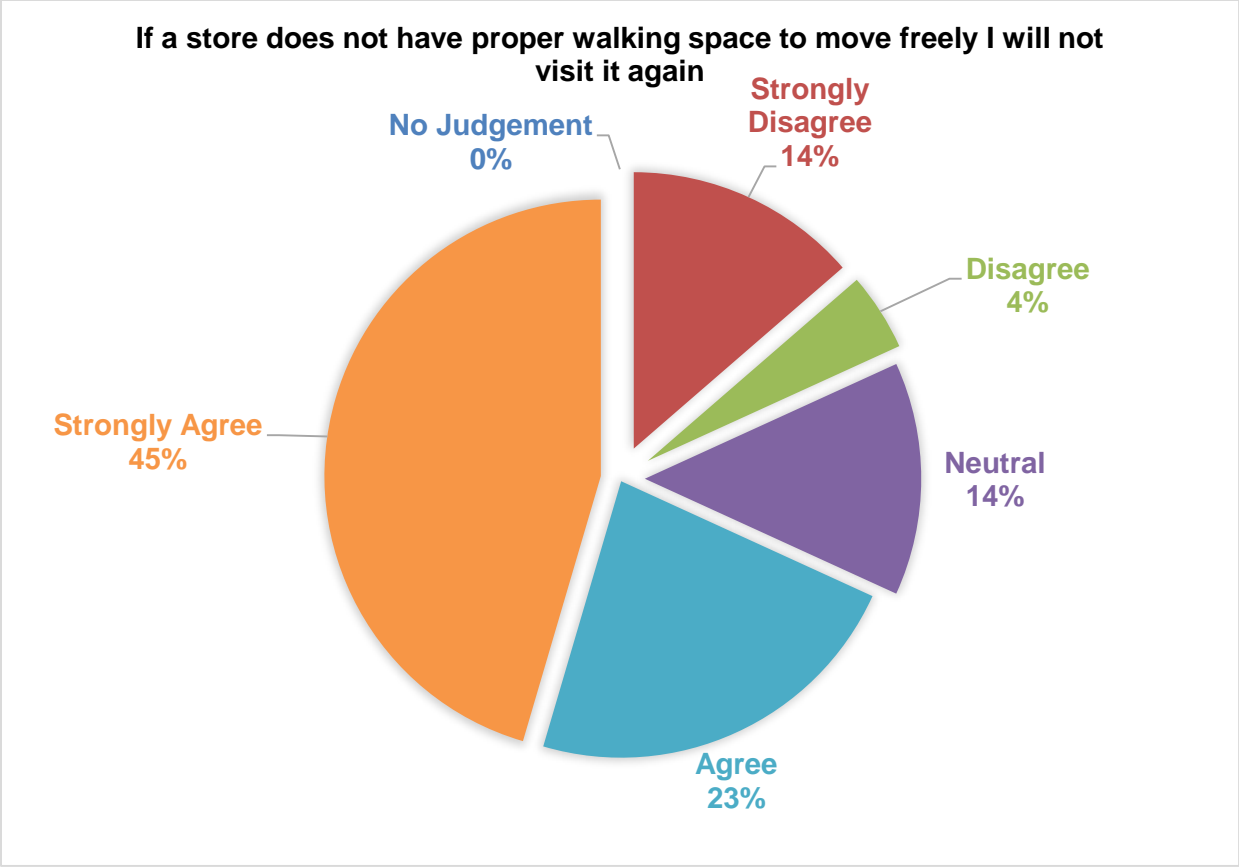
While some agreed that they notice other products than shoes, here, most of them say that they do not spend time looking through those other products.

Interpretation: Most customers would rather spend time and money on shoes either they do not have proper viewing or knowledge about those other products or they are simply not interested to invest in them.

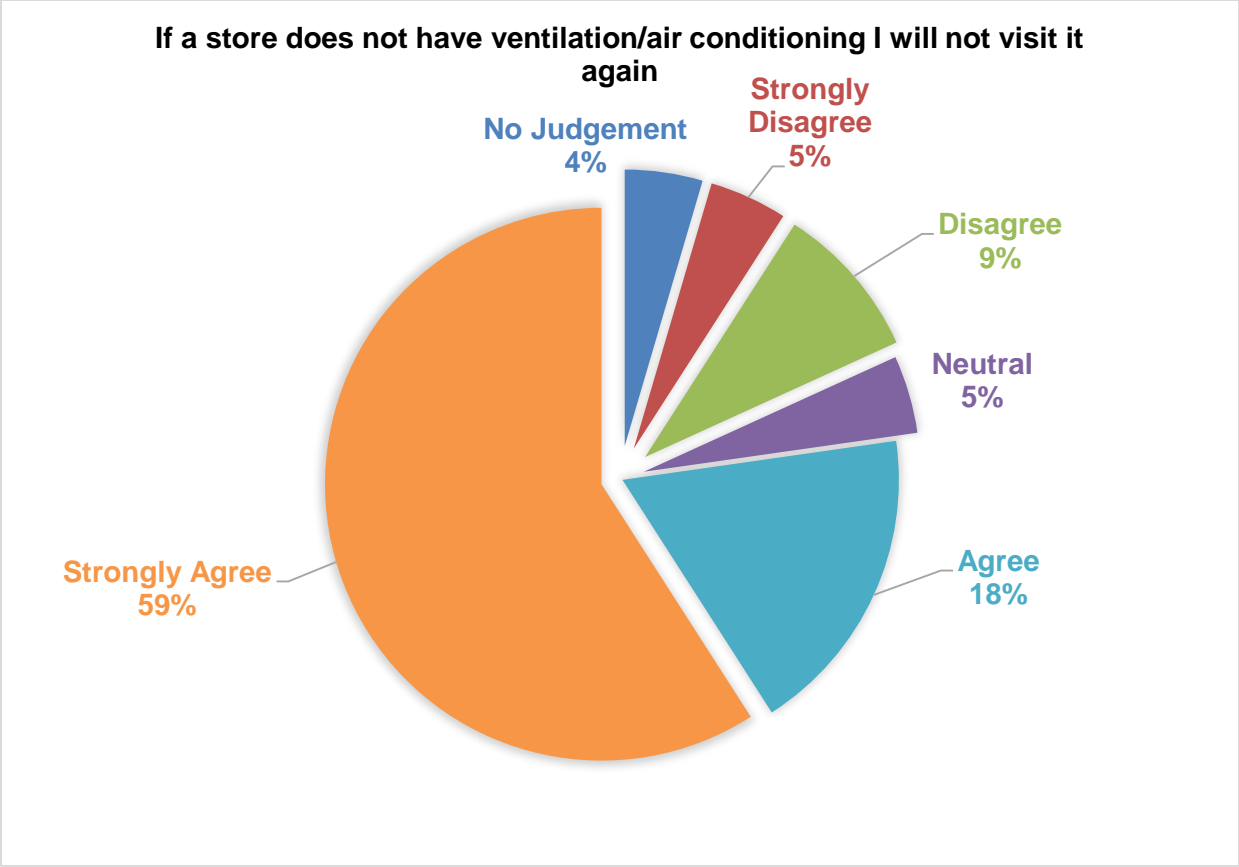
I only visits stores that have parking facility



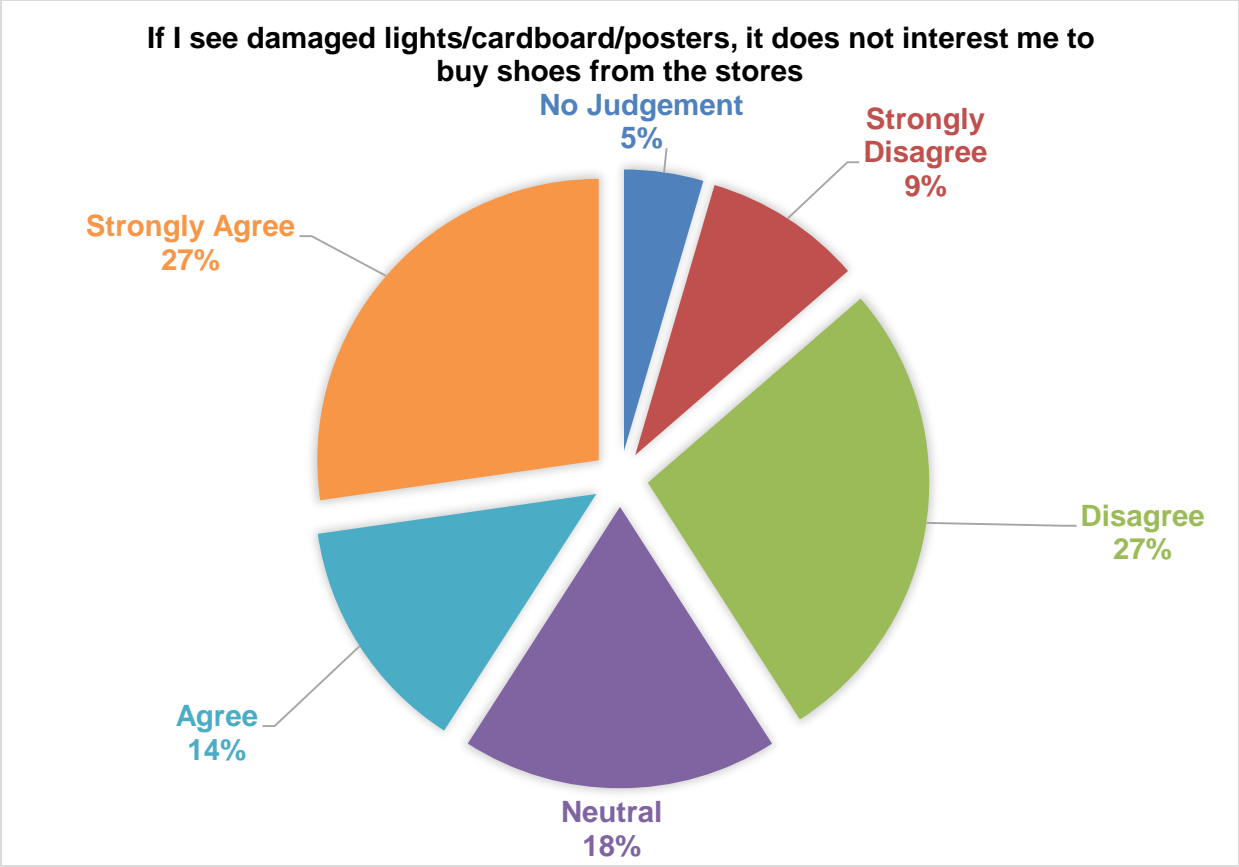
Interpretation: This statement was mainly based on the demographic factors such as age and income which show that once the customers fall into the category of middle aged, with stable income or in other words, have the affordability of buying a car would definitely opt to visit stores with parking facility. Similarly, those with a lower income and age have no judgement or disagree to it.



Interpretation: The responses of this statement show clearly that the customers would not visit a store with inadequate moving or walking space. This also indicated that the size, placement of products, utilization of space and storage play a big factor in a customer revisiting a store.

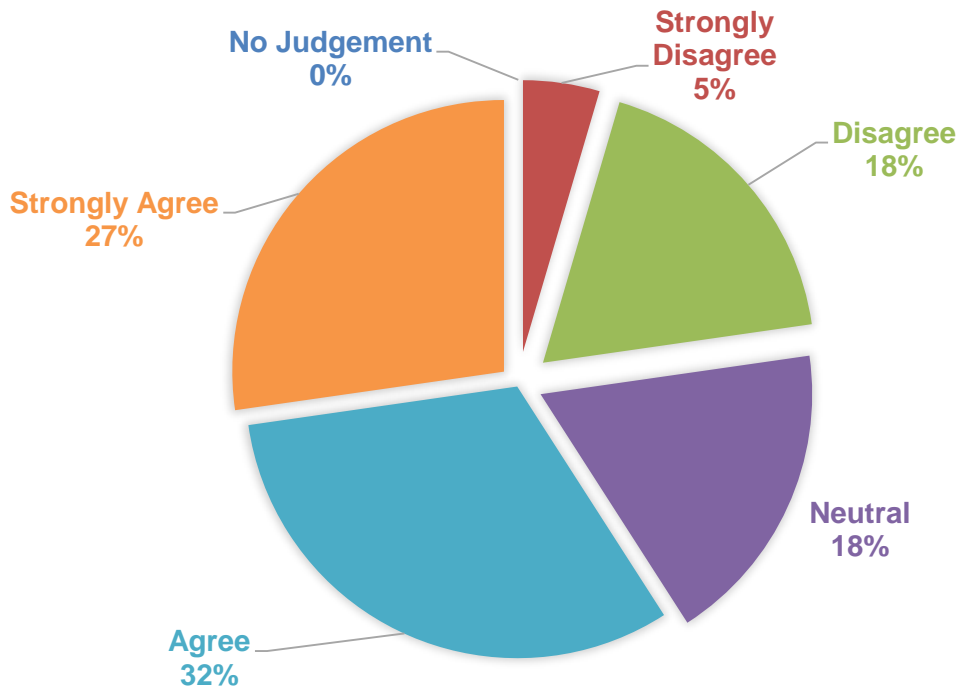


Interpretation: In an age where most customers are aware that they are paying for not just a product but also the kind of service they receive while their shopping experience, it is only evident that factors like proper ventilation and air conditioning play a very important role in a customer's choice of visiting a store. Most said they would leave if they did not have air conditioning.

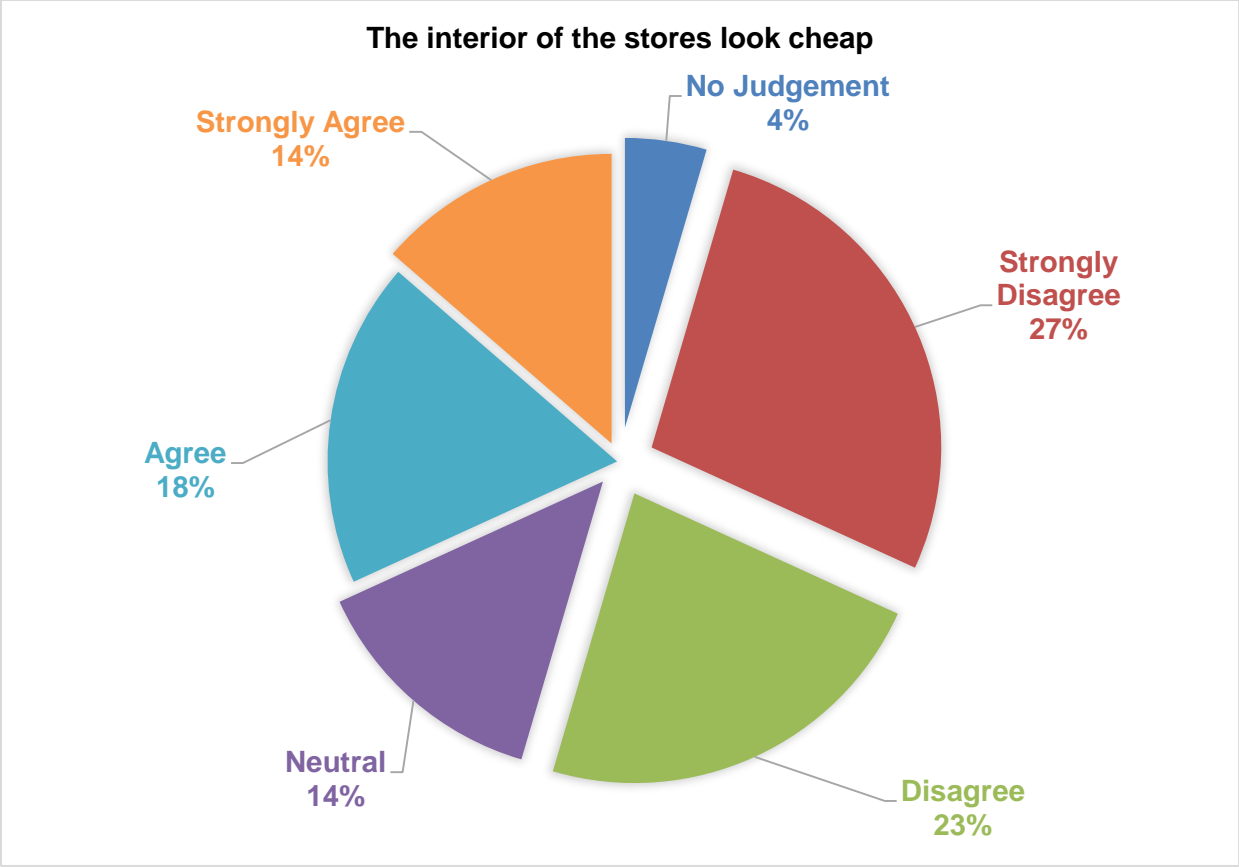


Interpretation: A few responded positively to this statement but for most, it would not appeal to them if they see any form of disfiguration of the store elements such as the lights, or posters, artificially built walls, etc. For example, during store visitations, at Mirpur 1 and 10, the managers said that the damaged posters or light that is not working in coordination with the rest of the set up will affect the sales made. Few customers would disregard disfiguration of store properties.

If a store does not have adequate sitting are for show/apparel trial I will not visit it again

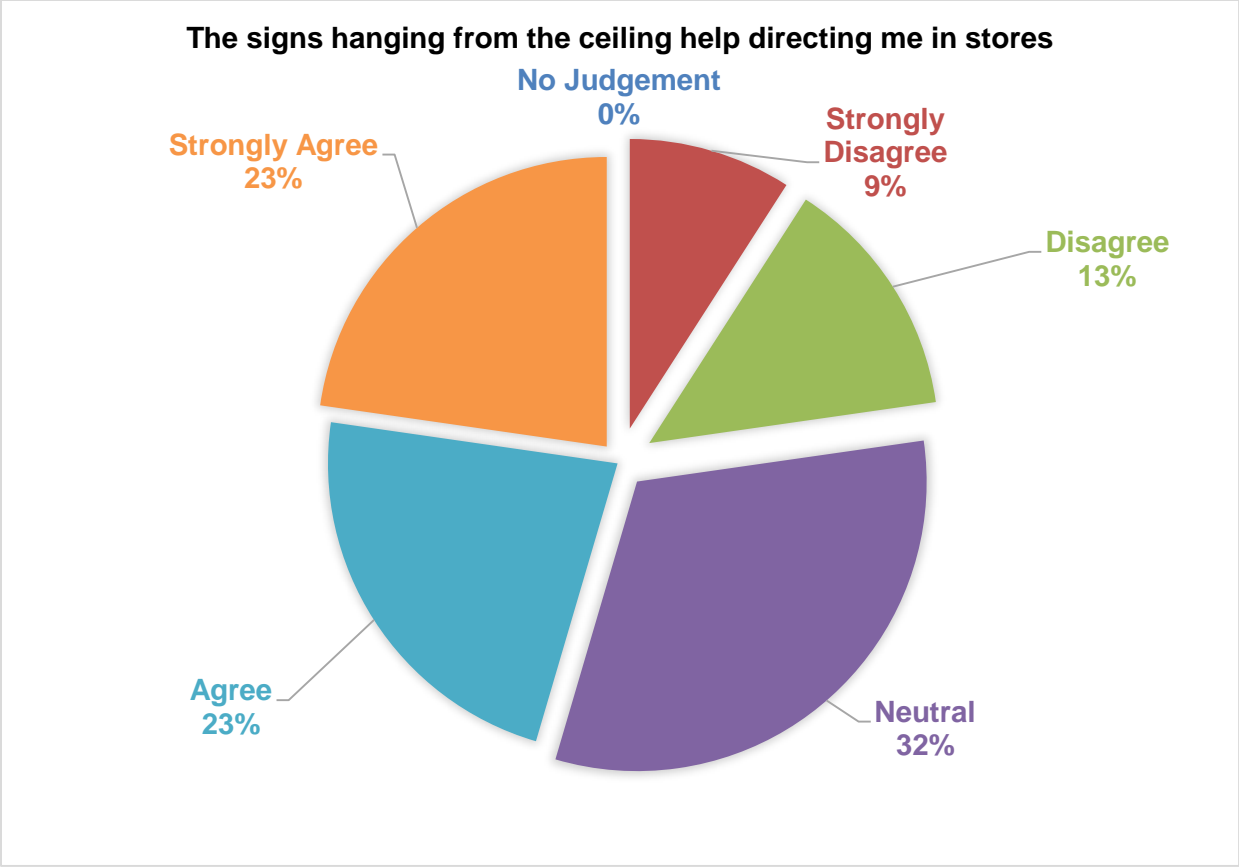


Interpretation: This statement was crucial since Apex is mainly a shoe store where customer would likely sit and try the product before purchasing it. Therefore, it was rather surprising why around 23% of them disagreed to this statement.



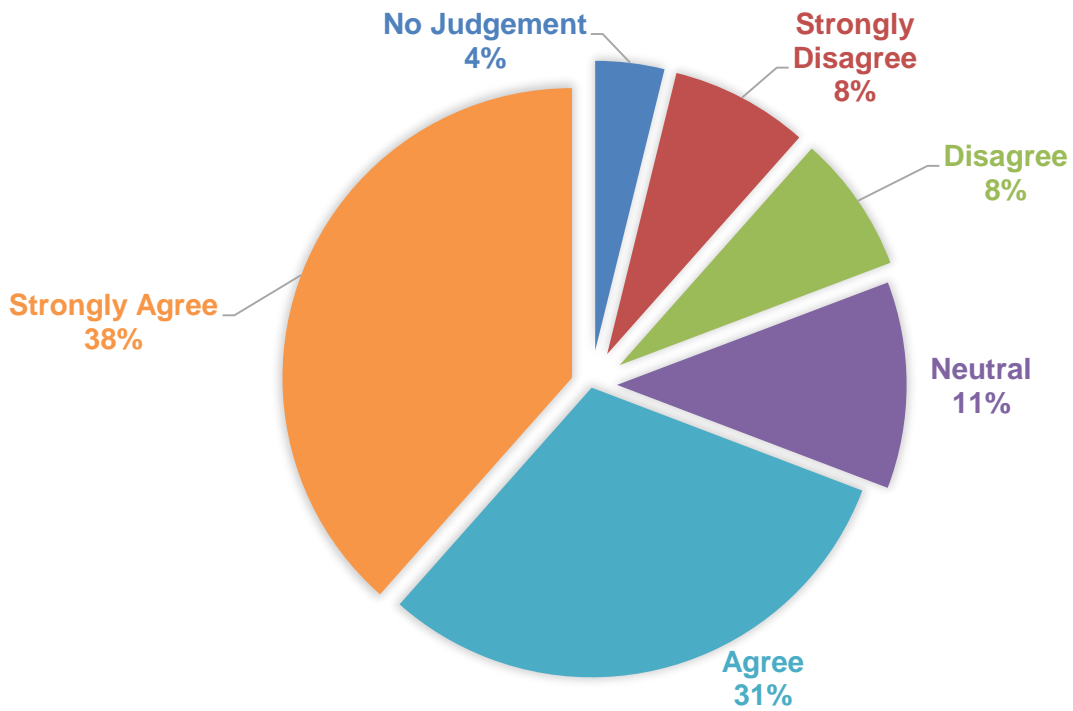
While most of the customers visiting the stores thought that the stores did not look cheap, a few disagreed.

Interpretation: This result is because Apex has yet to find a uniform style for all their retail outlets. Most stores located in popular sites with larger space do have a uniform interior and the same style is maintained consistently throughout. However, the smaller stores are not very well thought out, and it shows that they did not put much effort into making the style and layout consistent with their unique format that they have for those larger stores.

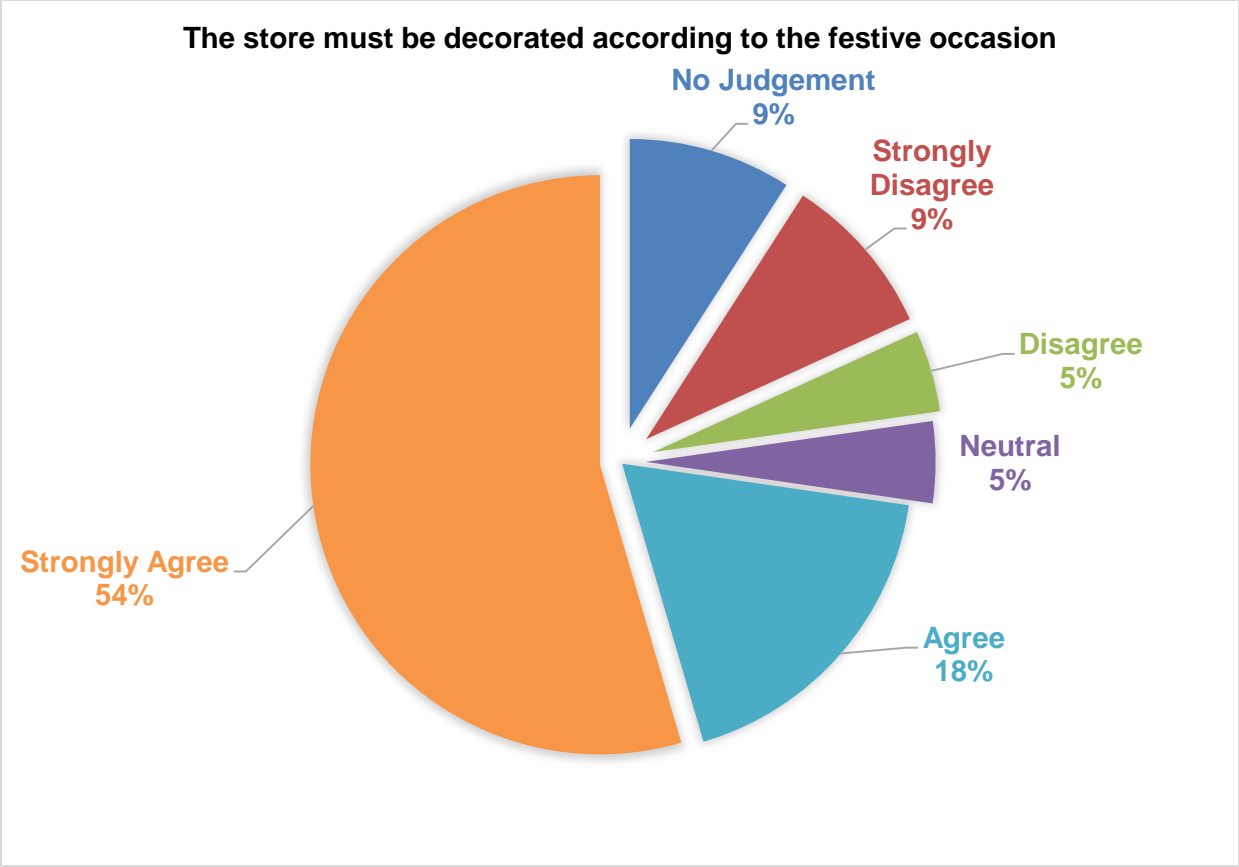


Interpretation: Most respondents find that if there are directions placed throughout the stores it helps them navigate the stores if they are visiting for the first time.

The kind of music playing in the store sets the vibe for shopping

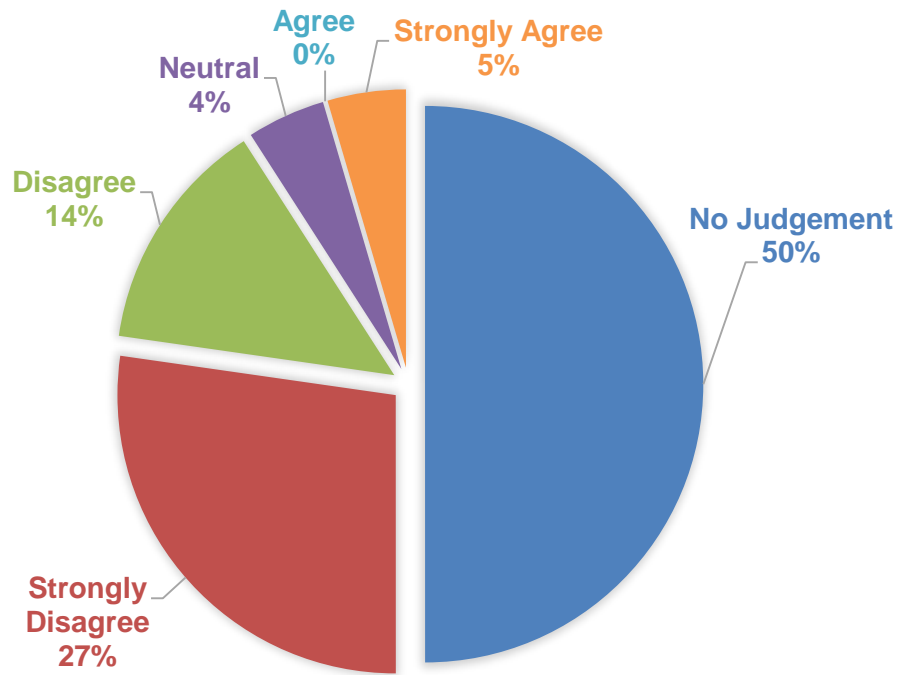


Interpretation: The kind of music playing in the background definitely has an affect on human behavior for majority. Most would prefer a neutral, soft or upbeat, and non-negative kind of songs. Playing harsh or sad song will also not help set the right mood for customer to make a purchasing decision.

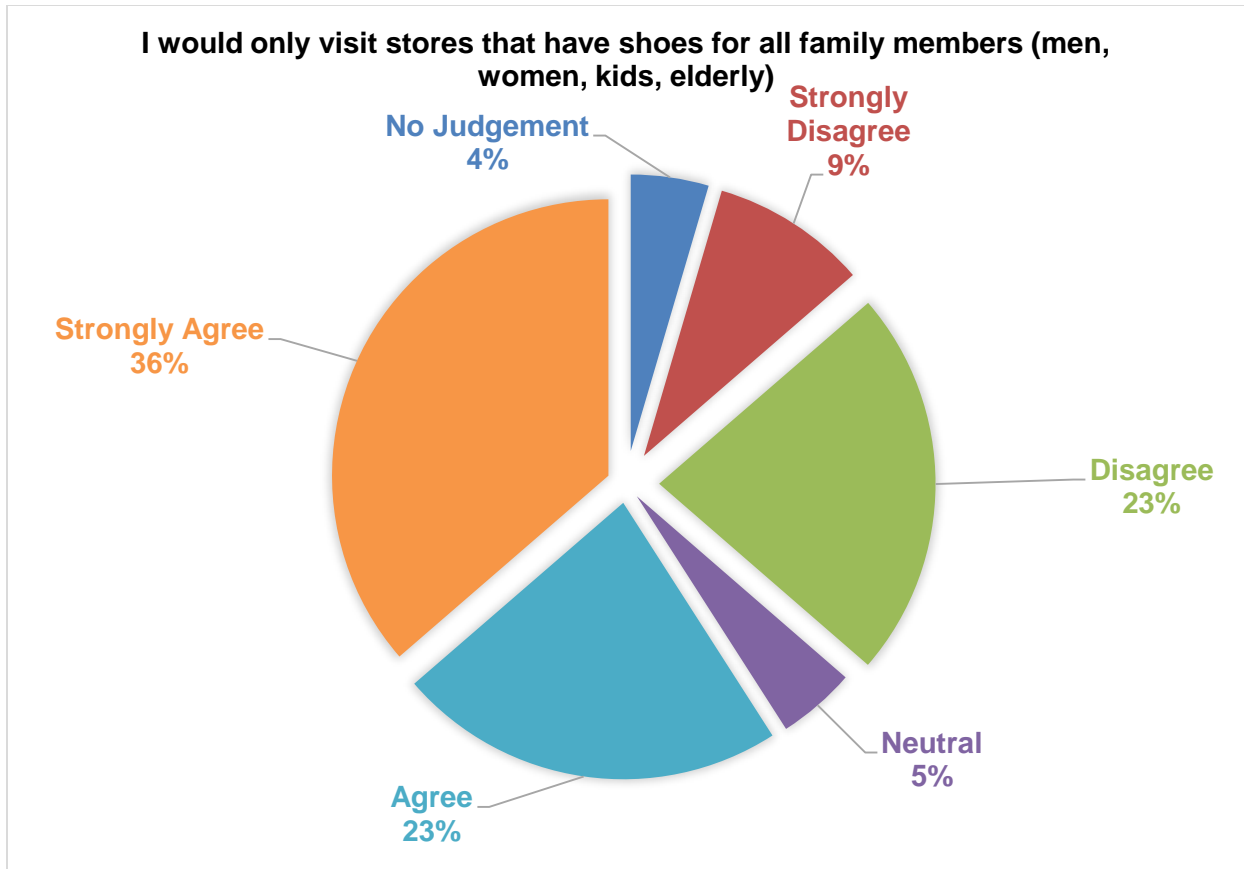


Interpretation: As most Bengali people would be considered to do shopping around festive seasons; they want to feel that festive vibe within the store as well. This is why they feel that the store needs to be decorated according to the occasions.

I only visit stores with playing area for children



Interpretation: While most respondents said that it does not matter whether the store has playing area for children or not, some disagreed completely and siding with playing area for children do not determine if they want to visit or revisit the store.



Majority of the respondents said they want to shop from stores where they can find shoes for all their family members rather than visiting different stores for different family member's needs.

Interpretation: This statement also may vary with the age of the customer. For example, a younger customer would shop for only herself whereas a married woman would rather look for variation where she can get shoes for herself, her husband and children.

Findings: Factors that influence Consumer Buying Behavior based on Store Layouts

1. More effort put in setting up Store Front or Window Display. While visiting different stores, it seemed that there was minimal effort put by the Visual Merchandising team.
2. Utilization of space for the best display of products. During a launch of a newer store in Milkvita road, Mirpur-6, the entire store had shoe boxes piled up at every parameter of the store which caused each person to be distressed while making their way to look at shoes. This happened due to lack of storage unit in the store.
3. Lack of Proper Branding for each of the brand carried by Apex. Consumer are still unaware of the brands.
4. Not having right representation of each brand. Having a familiar face would seem more relatable in consumer's mind than having unknown foreign models are the brand ambassador.
5. Adequate Ventilation or Air Condition is major factor for any store due to the humid weather, sweating is common and can cause disinterest in shopping.
6. Enough walking space to move around freely or else, the store layout may look claustrophobic or congested to consumers.
7. Having Trail rooms or Sitting areas is crucial since the consumer come to brick and mortar store to receive these services which could other not be necessary if they were to shop online.
8. Best collection without clustering products is important. The consumer wants to see variety of new arrivals as well discounted products based on their age and income. Therefore, using the space in the store wisely, rather than putting all products into heaps can be an effective way to provide the best selection of products for different target customers. Furthermore, as mentioned previously, if a particular shoe has the same design that come in different colors, putting the most popular color on display to make more room for shoes of other designs shows a wider range of product than being repetitive.

9. Music playing in the background matters to quite a lot of people while shopping because it has the ability to change one's mood. Fortunately, in this case Apex complies with the requirement for a traditional to generic songs.
10. Decorating stores according to Festivals or Seasons seems to have a lot of affect on consumer minds. Although Apex does this well enough, they have a lot of room for improvement.
11. Price of product, and collection depending on the size of store, location and consumer purchasing power. Apex uses this to their advantage, because they want to differentiate between generic, mass market versus people who are willing to invest more.
12. Lack of consumer's interest in any other product than shoes is evident due to not having enough exposure or knowledge about these items.
13. Lack of having a unique interior for store branding. Bata on the other hand does it beautifully, where they have a strong brand appearance consistent with all their stores.
14. Disfiguration of store elements may cause the consumers to rethink on their buying pattern for that certain store. Therefore, looking into complaining and getting fast service from procurement can help retain these customer as they have the potential to spread a negative word of mouth.
15. Familiarity with revisiting same store comes with a consumer revisiting, and becoming a loyalist to a brand. This means that once they are comfortable with the look and feel of a particular store, they would visit it because they know their way around instead.

Recommendations

- Taking into consideration of customer feedback to give them what they want to best serve and increase customer retention. Put any complaints related to store layout that could potentially affect sales through and take immediate action to come to a solution.
- Consistency, uniformity in style of every store to have a brand personality of Apex as a brand.
- Interactive branding in stores in simple, yet educative manner in case of an innovative product.

For example, for visual display of products, for sports shoe that have a unique technology or specific feature, such as the following can be represented like this where the shoe is taken apart, and each element is shown piece by piece on a display stand in the store.



- Have pictorial or demonstrative videos playing on the TV or digital screens on the use of specialty products, or have 'How to use', 'Hacks to Shoe-Keeping' or 'Maintenance of

Shoes' videos to enlighten customers. This might help them to take notice of the category of unsought products from Apex such as maintenance of a Premium Genuine Leather goods, since it is a big investment. Having visual representation is preferred by customer and being lost in a sea of unrelatable word of jargon.

As reference, this is a short video on how to use French Press, that demonstrates and shows simple ways so consumers can self-educate and do it themselves.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIKr2EMkm48>

- Giving equal importance to discounted products as regular products.
- Stronger branding for each of the 14 brands that apex carries, each having their own distinct and clear brand personality so consumers know the know of products they offer. Additionally, having known celebrities as representatives of each brand can also reflect with what the brand stands for.
- Experimenting with innovative ideas to interact with customers in stores. For example, setting up a Boishakhi Mela for certain period of time during 1-14th April in any exclusive store location where customers.
- Have the Visual Merchandising team understand what works best for the kind of customers that come into each store, based of research.

Conclusions

Retention and reaching larger audience more effort needs to put in store layout which is correlated with increasing sales. Changing, switching it up may also result in consumer purchasing behavior. More and more consumers are switching into e-commerce and f-commerce (Facebook shop). Since shoes are the type of product that one would need to buy based on how it looks after a trial, the threat is yet to fall upon this. However, E-commerce and F-commerce are predicted to boost within the next years once the consumers gain more trust with online transactions and sellers. Therefore, acting while they can would minimize the risk of having consumer switch from retail to E-tail.

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