



MASSMART

GROUP UPDATE

Game's new look Customer-centric design at work

Game's new design mixes the chain's traditional value-for-money offering with new hotspots for interactive browsing and pick-up-and-go shopping. It's designed around what Game customers want: a more convenient layout and an engaging shopping experience.

Game Boksburg's customers must have liked it. They spent R22-million between Wednesday, October 29th, when the new-look store opened, and the first Sunday in November. Employees recall the first shoppers arriving at 5am on opening day. With 200 Garmin global positioning system (GPS) units on sale for R999 each, these employees knew what their customers were after.



The new design concept piloted at Game Boksburg is customer-centric in nature, prioritising shoppers' needs and preferences. Its race-track floor plan keeps shoppers circulating comfortably around the store and the merchandise mix focuses strongly on gaming, cellular and IT. The racetrack floor plan concept is utilised in many of Massmart's stores. It lays out a plan for

directing customers through the departments and creating a flow that incorporates quick access, high visibility and enough space to stop and browse. Fresh, new livery retains Game's strong corporate pink, but features it alongside lifestyle imagery and modern price-and-product signs. The new look is contemporary and inspirational, but value-for-money is still an obvious part of Game's proposition.

From drawing board to shop floor

"It took four months to get this 30 year-old building into shape," says Boysen Pillay, Massdiscounters regional executive in charge of four stores in the Gauteng area.

"It's built on mine sand and we needed 160 tons of steel to reinforce the floor. On top of that, the entire store previously had an asbestos ceiling that had to be safely removed. For every four metres of ceiling we pulled out, we had to stop to test the air quality. It was a lot of work."

Contractors wore special gear in accordance with the Environment and Health & Safety Act and the asbestos was disposed of carefully.

The old office area was gutted and relocated to make room for a better in-store flow for shoppers. The

four key goals Game was aiming to achieve with the new look was improved clarity of what's on offer, a faster and more efficient design for customers in search of specific items, a more engaging hi-tech sales space and a more enjoyable overall in-store experience.

In hi-tech, the sales area is now more open and customers can pick up and try out cellphones, cameras, gaming consoles and laptops. Alarmed electronic article surveillance (EAS) systems protect the goods while shoppers are able to enjoy the products in a way they were never able to before at a Game store. "Some of this comes from what we've learned at Dion Wired," Pillay says. "This is the first part of an ongoing process planned for Game stores. This year, we will tweak the concept and get it just right. As stores are due for revamps, we'll start phasing in this new look and feel across the chain."

Despite the challenges during renovations, the store continued to trade during the revamp. Once complete, record-breaking sales were achieved. With ongoing promotional advertising and R53-million worth of stock to sell, the store's new look should keep drawing customers who'll appreciate the competitive prices and a pleasant shopping experience. ■