The Path of Increasing Awareness:

Applying New Models for Experiential Design

By

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Abstract:

The exploration of developing digital components and integrating technology with design informs a new model for retail design. This model responds to its users and lets them engage more with the space than the traditional retail stores. It also provides an experiential space informing customers in more attractive interactive ways. Advances in computing technology and software, along with new ways to configure and display these systems, have made it possible to create a new generation of immersive environments. This new environment, which is integrated with design, gives more freedom to users. According to the more links and connections this immersive environments creates, It provides a more liberated environment that is free from place and time and engages more people to attend to the space and be a part of that. Equipping the retail with digital components makes it accessible for people to interact with each other and get any information they want. As a result, interactive retail space relies less on materials and locations and more on social and technical capabilities.

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

A. Introduction

The development of technology opens up many opportunities and it has a profound influence on the living standards of people. The current period of rapid change in technology is paired with a considerable change in people's lifestyles. This change is also seen in the increasing speed of communication. Modern societies such as European and American countries are based on industrialization and consumerism, and they need to increase their products to satisfy consumers' needs. In these societies advertising has historically played a major role in presenting products and attracting customers. Also in Western countries, visual culture has become dominant as a representation of modernity during the Industrial Revolution and the creation of mass consumers and urbanization. Assisting technology and implementing different media with visual products attracts more audiences and plays a major role in representation. It can also transfer information more easily and quickly.

Although the development of new technology has benefited customers, it also causes customers frustration in dealing with new technology systems and equipment. Thus, this project's subject is the design of a retail space that would help customers get acquainted with the new products of digital companies. The design of this typology focuses on the spatial experiences of visitors rather than the display of products. A new technologic environment provides new settings for experiencing all the features that can create attractive, interactive and cooperative space to facilitate communication. The space would be both an entertaining and experiential place in a major shopping center in Toronto.

B. Project description

1. Subject matter of inquiry

The practicum project explores interior spaces that can blur the boundaries between public pathways and retail stores. In this proposed design, there will be no clearly defined inside or outside for the retail space to display its products. It will be a somewhat fluid path that invites pedestrians to pass through the space. Not only physical boundaries will be blurred, but virtual ones will be created to provide more links for connecting to the space. Therefore, the project attempts to create a hybrid performance space that lets the virtual customers become a part of active marketing and shopping.

Moreover, the project will generally consider how to create interactive space and make an entertaining place to engage visitors more with the space. Providing such a space can potentially attract more visitors to enter and can, to some extent, act as a platform of experiencing products. Thus, design will explore how different systems such as visual products and new types of technology can assist in creating an attractive space.

Due to the crucial role of branding in marketing, how an interior offers opportunities for a company to express its brand and products and to attract more customers is critical in this project. The practicum explores how branding and its application to visual products can inform an interior space and exploit technology to provide better possibilities for expressing the brand and making better visual communications.

2. Purpose, Rationale and Benefits:

My passion for designing interactive and digital spaces was the main reason of exploring in this area. Thus, designing an interactive and high-tech retail space seemed like a good choice

for studying how to better design expressive and engaging spaces in general. Also, for a post-industrial economy, design is an important element in increasing competitiveness in global markets, attracting more consumers and further investment. Branding and advertising are critical factors in contemporary design and play a significant role in marketing and gaining revenue.

The project proposes an effective way for people to spend time in an interactive, attractive and entertaining space to become familiar with new products; to have access to the virtual world; and to increase their knowledge about new technologies and products. Such an interactive interior makes the display more of an experiential exhibition so that at the end of an interactive journey, users' knowledge of new products will be increased. This space will be designed for all ages and ranges of people. The design will include digital screen installations, interactive tables, touch screen windows and interactive floors. The interactive exhibition allows the users to get acquainted with new technological products in an experiential atmosphere.

Making a vital space with new media installations can potentially attract visitors from local and tourist markets; it brings investment on one hand and creates an entertaining and informing space on the other hand. This new experiential form of interior is an unusual way of presenting products that makes it different from the vast majority of retail stores being created today. The project proposed here directs pedestrians to the space and provides them with an interesting, entertaining and informing space that they may have not planned to visit otherwise.

C. Type of interior design

The contribution of design to increasing awareness of products and their essential qualities is shown in facilities designed to exhibit commodities. A retail space with the focal concern of raising awareness among consumers is a strong example of a space that not only serves the producing corporation, but also expands the public's knowledge about products. In this process of applying visual media and using information technology as instruments that can help to reach this goal would be helpful.

Therefore, I am going to explore ways that interior design can influence the ability to present products in a manner that establishes interactive relationships with potential consumers in a specialized interior space. At the end of an interactive journey, users' knowledge of new products may be increased. The space would house a temporary retail store that provides an opportunity for potential customers to obtain information about new digital products by attending to online or onsite sessions held in the retail. I presume this place will potentially serve as the display show for companies that are more interested in technology or those that want to take advantage of the new technological opportunities to introduce their products. In this project I am going to design a space for five high branded companies such as Apple, Sony, Toshiba, HP and Dell.

This interior retail space will be designed for two kinds of users: first, for digital native users who are familiar with virtual space and second, for digital immigrants who are not acquainted with technology and the digital world (Prensky 2001). The first group primarily consists of the younger generation that is used to a virtual experience of space, while the other group is more comfortable and familiar in physical space. Therefore, different media and

technological tools and materials will be employed in this building for creating both physical and virtual exhibition to offer diverse products. In this way the new facility will target a wide range of population.

D. Project Site

Regarding the typology and function of the interior, it is better to have an expressive and prominent design that is different from its vicinity so that it can attract more people and become the center of attention. At the same time, the design will try to assist multimedia and intelligent materials to attract more customers. Moreover, the location is in a populated area; meaning that it is located in a place with a large amount of pedestrian traffic. Since downtown Toronto is a significant commercial and economic hub on an international scale, my suggestion is the spaces around and under the openings in the Eaton Center, a major shopping center in Toronto. These openings are mostly places in the main public corridors that have access to the subway and serve a large pedestrian population every day. These locations are visually connected to the other floors to allow more people to engage with the space. Figures 1 and 2 depict the locations.

Figure 1: Eaton Centre, Image by Author

Figure 2: Eaton Centre, Image by Author

E. Desired Learning Outcomes

Gaining a thorough understanding of the interactive and experiential space that allows the audience to further engage with a retail environment is the main goal of this practicum project. The project also provides an opportunity to become familiar with new technology and materials. Thus, the goal is to design a high-tech space formed by the assistance of new materials and digital devices to inform and attract audiences. The project also provides a comprehensive understanding of visual products and their crucial role in marketing and gaining revenue.

F. Overview of document

The practicum consists of six chapters: "Introduction," "Literature Review," "Precedent Review," "Programming," "Design Implication," and "Conclusion." Chapter One provides an overview of the practicum project. It explains what the project is, why it is being done, and what the purpose of the project is. Chapter Two consists of a literature review that is divided in to two major sections: 1) the history of modern North American retail design and 2) visual communication and branding. Chapter Three includes an analysis of precedents that express themes explored in the literature review. Chapter Four provides the design program based on my theoretical research, information provided by the Cadillac Fair View Company, the owner of Eaton Centre, and an analysis of the design context of downtown Toronto. Chapter Five summarizes the final design proposal for a new model of retail design. Chapter Six provides a conclusion and discussion of potential areas for future study.

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

Section 1: History of Modern North American Retail Design

A. Introduction:

Nowadays, shopping is much easier than it was before. Today consumers are able to go to shopping centers located in their vicinities and buy what they need or even stay at home and order online; but in a traditional form of shopping, people often had to travel to different retail shops that might not be local to find their requirements. This tradition has changed with the emergence of electronic shopping, since customers can buy online and order many goods and don't need to travel to shops (Gould 1998, 149). Travelling between different places and checking alternate shops to find essential goods wasted shoppers' time and energy. Expanding retail environments, equipping them with various commodities and offering lower prices were the solutions that modern retailers proposed to better satisfy consumers (Longstreth 2010, 8). Therefore, providing comfortable, accessible, pleasant and profitable spaces, both for customers and salespersons, are the main concerns in expanding retail environments (Longstreth 2010, 8).

Expanding retail environments also make the market more competitive, as the ones that could satisfy more consumers were the ones that attracted more investment. Offering more services, diversity in commodities, better quality and lower prices of products were some of the options that modern retailers adopted to challenge each other (Longstreth 2010, 9).

This section shows the development of retail interior space and its impacts on shopping culture. The development of retail spaces will also be examined to show how service quality, consumerism and business have changed stores and created a competitive market. The progression of small stores to department stores, superseding to shopping centers, is also what

this chapter will explore. Following that, the chapter concludes by looking at future trends in retailing and the advent of virtual shopping.

This diagram shows the shopping evolution:
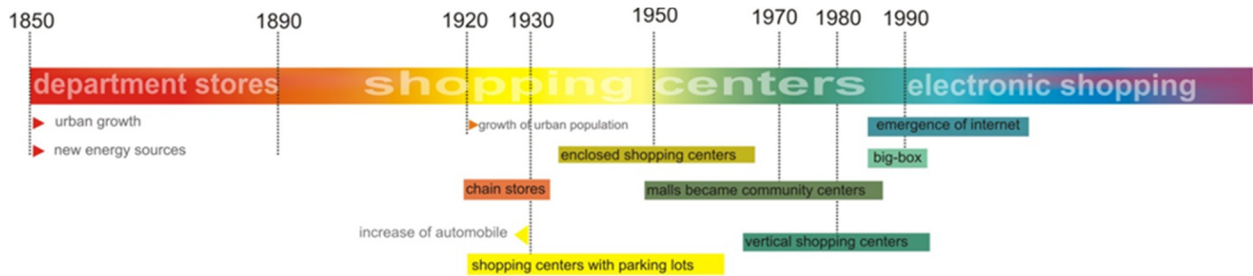
Figure 3: Shopping Center Evolution Diagram, Image by Author

B.   The Emergence of Department Stores and Shopping Centers:

The 1870s was a transitional decade in American urban retailing. Small shops, neighborhood dealers, small dry goods firms and large wholesalers were the dominant retail environments offering special goods in cities. Between 1850 and 1890, a new pattern emerged in response to urban growth and the discovery of new energy sources such as coal, gas, oil, steam and electricity (Leach 1994, 17). The progression of machines facilitated overproduction of various products such as food, clothing, medicine or even household appliances by the 1890s. Discovery of new energy resources and development of machines, helped speed up the creation of new goods and mass production; thus, many products were produced in factories and brought to the market to satisfy people's needs (Leach 1994,17). Due to urban growth, cities were faced with large and growing populations and different desires that needed to be secured.

Prior to World War I, most of the commercial, retail, office and residential spaces were located in downtown as people lived and worked there (Silberberg 1976,13). Downtowns

became commercial hubs in large cities since they became more accessible for citizens to get there. Thus, downtowns turned into important places for retailers to market their products based on the accessibility that these locations had. Therefore, transportation changed the retail environments and gradually replaced small-scale shops with centeralized vast spaces that sold a variety of products (Leach 1994, 15). Department stores, as symbols of a centralized retail environment, began to dominate the commercial districts of cities as early as the 1850's. As an example, the growth of populations in large cities such as New York, Philadelphia and Chicago by 1880 encouraged the expansion of businesses and the diversification of stores by developing a new form of retail: large stores with varied goods organized into departments (Benson 1979, 199). Macy's in New York City (1858), John Wanamaker's in Philadelphia (1861), and Marshall Field's in Chicago (1865) all exemplify this retailing revolution. This type of retail environment provided diverse choices for customers and allowed them to browse and find merchandise that met their needs.

In 1901, the Federal Industrial Commission in Washington, D.C. released a statement that recommended that department stores be located in the trade centers of U.S. cities (Leach 1994, 30). Such statements demonstrated the economic role of department stores in bringing investments into cities. Department stores functioned as a main place to display products produced in factories and industrial areas. As such, they became important places to merge regional industries and local commerce as two key ingredients for providing support for a thriving urban marketplace.

Department stores also became places for meetings, entertainment and tourism in cities of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Benson 1979, 203). As department stores started to turn into prestigious spaces, they were not solely places for shopping anymore; they started to

become spaces that were more social within a public context. For instance, they became a respectable place for women to interact with one another in public, as the departments provide safe environments for them (Benson 1979, 203).

Department stores exterior height, form and material became important elements to show off their space and encourage people to enter. Most stores were designed and remodeled in a way to persuade, seduce and fascinate customers and to make the department stores places of consumption of all kinds (Benson 1979, 203-205).

The advent of the department stores was also the commencement of a new culture of purchasing. With this new purchasing culture, customers encountered a variety of products, facilities and services such as restaurants, beauty salons, post offices, nurseries, meeting rooms for women's groups, delivery services, and repair services for jewelry (Benson 1979, 203-205).

As a by-product of this new purchasing culture and increased mass production, new kinds of media appeared in the 1890s. Picture advertisements, artistic posters, painted billboards and electronic signs were the advertising methods utilized to fascinate and attract more customers (Leach 1994, 40). Between 1890 and 1915, countless posters, signboards, billboards and electrical images appeared in the United States and Canada. Advertising and banners advised customers of products each company had and presented them with more accessible information compared to the past.

With the rise of department stores and the creation of advertising, department stores started to compete by exploiting this new media to introduce their products and their services. They highlighted the points that encouraged more consumers to visit the departments. Gradually, all the services became more customer-oriented to satisfy more consumers. These giant markets

redesigned their fixtures in a way to be more attractive and convenient for customers to browse and satisfy their needs. Changing the standard of shelving, tables and providing each item with a specific place were some strategies designed to enhance service quality. Designing specific sections and departments for different products made a clear layout for consumers to find their desired goods quicker. The invention of elevators and escalators also provided better services and allowed salespersons to have multiple departments in one building. The effective point of new arrangements and changing the layout was reducing the time it took for customers to do their shopping (Benson 1979, 216).

C.   Shopping Centers

With the growth of urban populations and the development of automobiles, a new type of marketplace developed in the 1920's. The retailing landscape was changed by the expansion of the transportation system and the increased use of the car. Retailing started to become decentralized and dispersed in the urban landscape as automobiles became the preferred mode of transportation. Development of a road system for automobile transportation facilitated longer trips and allowed people to have more leisure time and activities. Hence, downtowns were no longer the only prestigious places for shopping as large shopping centers arose in distance suburban areas as a type of retailing that provided pleasant shopping environments all over the cities.

The first shopping center was Country Club Plaza, established in 1922 in Kansas City, Missouri (Söllner 2008, 3). The development of automobiles and a growing use of cars influenced the formation of auto-based retail environments. Regional malls were designed to serve consumers who had access to automobiles. According to Richard

Figure 4: Country Club Plaza, Image by Franklin Thompson, 2008, "Country Club Plaza, KC, at Christmas"

Longstreth, the automobile was a central factor in this planning since most people had cars at an early date (Longstreth, 1997). Therefore, the need for parking spots increased and large parking lots were developed as part of shopping centers (Wrigley 2002, 78). In 1931, the first group of stores that had their own parking lot was opened in Dallas, Texas.

Malls became more popular as they provided a unique space and shopping experience through their enclosed and inward structures. The first enclosed shopping center was founded in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1956 (Feinberg 1991). It was designed to keep shoppers away from severe weather and crime and to provide a safe environment and leisure time for customers (Feinberg 1991). However, our concept of modern shopping centers today comes from the shopping environment dated back to more than a thousand years ago when bazaars and markets were the business and cultural place for people to interact.

The Grand Bazaar in Isfahan, built in 10th century, is one of the oldest examples. The fully covered ceiling let the pedestrians be protected from the hot weather of Isfahan.

Figure 5: Grand Bazaar Isfahan, Image by Alain Pannetract, 2006, "In the Bazar of Isfahan"

The number of shopping centers increased in the 1970's. People preferred the convenience of having all the shops together and the new entertaining space that they provided. Shopping malls had a great impact in retail development by providing a controlled and relatively safe environment. Shopping malls consisted of a mix of merchants with a central management; in most cases, they also had recreational spaces such as fountains and food courts that provided a pleasant environment. Creating such a safe and pleasant space encouraged consumers to spend most of their time and money there. Thus, in the late 1970's and early 1980's, malls became a recreational place and people not only went to malls to shop, but to visit their friends and to have fun. Gradually, shopping centers turned into a community center that allowed shoppers to shop, to go to entertainment places such as cinemas, restaurants, bowling alleys or cultural events. The overall size of some of these malls is quite large.

West Edmonton Mall located in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, is the largest mall in North America. This mall is spread over an area of 350,000 square meters. It has over 800 stores and parking for more than 20,000 vehicles. The mall receives 28.2 million visitors per year and between 60,000 and 150,000

Figure 6: West Edmonton Mall, Image by Eric Chu, 2009, "West Edmonton Mall"

shoppers daily, depending on the day and season. It has over 800 stores, an indoor ice skating rink and 24 movie theatres (Pocock 2008).

In the 1980's and the 1990's, another type of shopping center was formed in response to urban growth and a shortage of land. High-rises were designed to accommodate more people in a compact footprint and to act as a smaller-scale model of the city. This small-scale city needed to contain essential spaces such as shopping centers for their residents. This new typology, vertical shopping centers, included parking lots, shops, offices, hotels and residential spaces (Söllner 2008, 5). They were usually located in places with large populations. High residential, financial and office buildings were the possible choice of space for accommodating this type of shopping center, as they

Figure 7: Water Tower Place, Image by Ian Britoon, 2006, "Water Tower Place, Chicago, Illinois, USA"

could provide service to their consumers in their local vicinities. Chicago's "Water Tower Place" is an example of this type. It includes hotels, restaurants, offices, stores and residential units.

Supercenters, warehouse club stores, big box retailers and on-line mass merchandisers are other types of retailing that have emerged in the late 1990's (Hausman and Leibtag 2007, 1158). They often have extremely large stores and sell a wide variety of products. Today, Wal-Mart is the largest and most popular of these supercenter outlets. Wal-Mart offers different products from different brands at significantly lower prices. The average price at Wal-Mart is about 15%-25% lower than traditional pricing (Hausman and Leibtag 2007, 1157). These lower

prices create a competitive market and they force other traditional retail outlets to compete with Wal-Mart by reducing their prices or by leaving the marketplace. This competitive market has brought benefits for consumers by offering a variety of options in prices that allows them to choose the most affordable one. On the other hand, Wal-Mart makes profit by increasing their customers, which they have attracted by offering lower prices and through their convenient return policy.

C. The Emergence of Online Shopping

In the late 1990's, popularity and prevalence of the Internet influenced shopping behavior, and marked the beginning of electronic shopping. This section explores the impact of e-commerce on the general retail environment and the critical role of digitization and the World Wide Web in shopping behavior. Recent research shows that the global electronic market and digital revolution have had a great impact on electronic shopping (Dixon 2005, 98). The number of consumers shopping online and the amount of time they are spending to do online shopping is rising. Research estimated that internet sales doubled in 2000 comparing to 1999 (Wolfinbarger and Gilly 2001, 34).

The commencement of the World Wide Web in the 1990's and the subsequent emergence of online banking provide a space to do online buying. Online shopping is an option that allows consumers to find the items they need, to order them online and to receive their orders in a couple of days or weeks. Moreover, with the expansion of the Internet, a further marketing channel to target consumers has emerged that allows customers to browse more easily and more quickly from their home instead of going out into public or being stuck in traffic. Having freedom and control are the two noticeable benefits that shoppers gain while shopping

online. Inquiries have defined the convenience of online shopping in terms of saving time and effort and due to increased accessibility (Wolfinbarger and Gilly 2001, 42).

The possibility of shopping at home at any time, even after stores are closed, gives freedom to consumers and allows them to shop online 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Shopping online provides a comfortable environment for buyers at home, work or school. It makes shopping timeless and placeless, as consumers can do their shopping any time and anywhere.

Technology makes life even easier. Now, smart phones make the network accessible everywhere and make it possible to connect to the Internet and order what is desired while waiting in bus stations or in doctors' offices. Having freedom in this trend of shopping makes it very popular. Today, web sites like Amazon or eBay are very popular. Both companies are online shopping websites in which people and businesses buy and sell a broad variety of goods and services worldwide. They offer various products with reasonable products and shipment prices that motivate more customers to buy online from their websites. Both websites allow for the buying and selling of both used and new products between the users. Payments are made easily through online payment services such as Paypal and a user-based feedback system ensures a rather reliable trade.

Online shopping allows customers to take advantage of unparalleled opportunities to find and purchase products. It is usually impossible to explore all options before making a choice; however, browsing the websites allows consumers to get all the possible information and a variety of prices to compare before making a decision. Mary Wolfinbarger, in her paper "Shopping Online for Freedom, Control and Fun", states that "online buyers' perceptions that e-commerce offers them better selection, however, refers to the selection available on the internet

in general, rather than the selection on the individual sites, which is often perceived as limited as compared to the retailer's offline stores and even catalogs" (Wolfinbarger and Gilly 2001, 43).

A significant reason for consumers to use e-shopping is the great availability of information that is available with just a few clicks of the mouse. They can acquire all the information they want about a product, compare the prices and qualities and decide later. Price is an important piece of information that is searched by consumers and the Internet, as a medium, provides an environment to compare multiple websites and check their products and prices. The availability of information provided by the Internet has given many opportunities to retailers to promote their products and trade them online. For example, for a furniture store with limited space, it is rarely possible to display their entire color collection for a piece of furniture; however, it is possible to display all of them in different colors on their website. This way, the store is able to give the customers the opportunity to see how the product looks in other colors without having to carry them physically in the store.

Despite the fact that online shopping provides more freedom and control, in some cases websites are a less convenient way to shop. There is a huge difference between physical stores and electronic ones. First, it is difficult for customers to trust a website from which they have never purchased goods. Second, it is not possible to touch objects and feel their shape and the materials or even to see whether they are the right size or not. That is a particularly critical issue when buying clothes and shoes. Although some websites such as eddiebauer.com and landsend.com offer virtual fitting rooms, shoppers rarely prefer trying out cloths in virtual rooms or seeing it on virtual models to traditional fitting rooms (Wolfinbarger and Gilly 2001, 42). Return policies are another problem in online shopping. Sometimes an item is sent to a consumer

by mistake or a consumer clicks on the wrong product. In these cases, it can be difficult to return items and get refunds.

I assume these days, customers prefer multi-model shopping; they go to retail stores to check out products, to touch them, and to examine them offline and then later they go online to compare the prices and get the information to order their desired product. Motivation is an important part of designing a multi-model retail store, since the retailers should provide a convenient environment for their customers and attract them to shop at their store. Thus, deciding if a store should be structured more online or offline depends on the type of the products they are offering.

Even with all the disadvantages, online shopping remains one of the most efficient ways to purchase goods such as books, movies and tickets as they don't need to be touched before buying. Computer users prefer to buy online instead of going to different stores, standing in line and being in crowded spaces, which they perceive as a waste of their time.

D. Conclusion

Through this review of literature on the history of retail and the development of commercial space, it was demonstrated that there is a relationship between retail design and technological, economic and social structure. The discovery of new energy sources such as coal, steam and electricity and the invention of industrial machines has sped up the creation of new goods and led to mass production. Over- production has resulted in an expansion from small shops to department stores and shopping centers that was an influence of the developing industry and technology. Moreover, the development of technology and the growing use of the Internet created the concept of online shopping in the last decade, another example of the progression of technology and its influence in retailing. Retail landscapes have also changed in response to

urban growth, and emerging department stores and large shopping centers are the results to this change. Retailers have always taken advantage of changes; they have made profits by improving convenience and accessibility in their spaces by offering a variety of products to their customers. All of these social, economic and technological advances have influenced the formation of retail environments.

Finally, the development of retail environments turned them into places that not only offer shopping opportunities, but also a more attractive place for customers by providing entertainment and leisure services.

I assume in the future, retailing will also be affected by social trends and technology. New ideas and business models are emerging almost every day and they have been influenced by the progression of technology. In my opinion a successful retailers are the ones that can bring more freedom, convenience and security to consumers. Designing both online and offline shopping centers gives even more freedom to customers and is more satisfactory.

Section 2: Visual Communication and Branding

E. Introduction:

We live in a society that is becoming more consumer-oriented. In this society "products" play a crucial role in gaining revenue for cities; they vary from architectural products to companies' commodities. In the large scale, architectural products, buildings, can attract tourists and advertise the city by image making; however in the small scale, retail stores attract customers and bring in investments by offering different products. Therefore, presenting and introducing products as a way of advertising, has become a new marketing strategy in recent years.

In this new strategy, products will be identified by a brand which has a name, logo and value. For cities, creating landmarks can help symbolize a location and provide identity for its context (Julier, 2005, 871). Therefore, architectural products, buildings, could act as a sign to advertise their locations. For example, in a city like Paris, the Eiffel tower is a symbol of the city and an attraction as well. On the other hand companies such as Apple, Chanel or other businesses such as McDonalds' restaurants introduce and market their products by creating a name, logo and specific design.

Successful brands in the market are the ones which are extended to all visual components and enhance the visual communication between viewers and the viewed. Related to this definition, my project proposes a design that communicates with users and provides linguistic signs to outsiders in order to attract customers. The project involves the creation of art and technology, and can be seen as a system for embracing visual and material worlds. Thus, transferring information and advertising products through displaying abstract forms may be accomplished more easily and quickly by implementing visual components. Integrating the

design with new forms of technology and visual products enhances the desirability of brands, the store and motivates more customers to consider making purchases. Therefore, this section is going to explore the role that visual products play as ways for attracting customers and advertisement of products.

First, this section is going to investigate the role of the Industrial Revolution and the rise of consumerism in large cities and subsequently, it is going to examine the crucial role of advertising in marketing. Then, visual culture will be discussed in relationship to advertising, communicating and transferring information to outsiders. Later, branding will be introduced as an outcome of visual components, by exploring the necessity of branding as an effective element in advertising. This chapter demonstrates the different methods of branding that vary from concrete to abstract forms. Furthermore, retail stores will be examined as the origin of brands and the display of products that act as a medium between producers and customers.

F.   The Role of Industrial Revolution and The Rise of Capitalism in large Cities

The Industrial Revolution started in the United Kingdom during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Deane 2000, 2). Changes in agriculture, manufacturing and transportation not only affected economic, cultural and social conditions in the United Kingdom but also the impacts were extended to Europe and North America as well. Furthermore, the development of machines, wheels and steam in the nineteenth century sped up the manufacture of even more products. The commencement of mass production generated a process that led to industrialization. Mass production and diversity in products bombarded industrial societies with

new commodities that needed to be introduced to customers. Advertising and presenting products with the help of visual components were among the strategies that sellers used in order to compete in this customer-oriented environment.

G. Visual Communication

1. The important role of visual culture in consumer societies

Due to the importance of visual culture in today's capitalist societies, enhancing visual communication along with a thorough understanding of visual culture are key factors in commercial design strategies. Visual culture represents modernity in Western countries during the Industrial Revolution and has contributed to the creation of mass consumers and Urbanization (Julier, 2006). In these societies, marketing has reached a level that requires more advertising. When this occurs, visual products play an outstanding role by attracting more audiences and more investments. Visual products usually include film-making, image-making, animation and photography that can express the condition evidently (Julier, 2006). Thus, visual culture became important for studying the relationship between commodities, meaning, and identity in today's capitalist societies.

In the last twenty years, things have evolved from non-visual shapes to aesthetic and visual forms and we can trace this change in design. Architectural forms are the other shape of visual products and new forms of mediated design that are displays of social, cultural and economical expressions that convey information through particular choices of materials and forms. The influential theorist-practitioners Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour have encouraged architects to conceive of their buildings as billboards and to

concentrate on their exterior surfaces as media for conveying certain information (Julier, 2008, 127). Especially for retail, design could be a representation of the activity happening inside and an attraction for customers to lead them inside. Together with design, as we are surrounded by products in the consumer era, it is important to understand the symbolic meanings of products. For this purpose, visual products and sign language play an outstanding role by attracting more audiences and gaining more investments. Value is communicated to the consumer through advertising, signage or design that helps with better communication about the products through their visualization.

Today, customers choose products based on the symbolic value. Signs, symbols and icons are elements of visual thinking. Symbols and signs communicate better with customers to find their needs by using visual products. Signs and symbols can transfer meanings and values in a quicker manner than words alone. When words, sounds and signs are used together and assigned to products as systems of advertising, the result transfers more information to audiences. Moreover, visual advertising and sign language address bigger numbers of users including local customers, universal audiences and also disabled people by providing systems of mass media.

Visual components are universal language or "sign language" that can be perceived and understood by everyone. People with hearing loss realize the world through a system of signs. Visionless people understand their environment by either touching or hearing. Thus, well-equipped signs not only transfer meanings universally, but also make it possible to communicate with disabled people as well. Addressing more customers and extending the market by exploiting universal communications create a global market for companies and bring in more investments for them.

In the global market, "branding" creates systems of signs, meanings and identity for companies to advertise their products. Thus, branding is an outcome of visual communication and an effective element of advertising at all scales. Anna Klingmann, in her book *Brandscape*, calls today's landscape of advertising a "brandscape." In developed capitalist societies, the presence of brands everywhere makes the environment a rich "brandscape." Now, in the twenty-first century, she tells us that "we must learn to look at cities not as skylines but as brandscapes, and at buildings not as objects but as advertisements and destinations" (Klingmann, 2007).

Now the question is: What is branding? And what kinds of branding do we have?

H. What is branding?

1. The definition of branding

We live in an era in which we are surrounded by products, brands and ads. In order to understand the world we live in, it is important

Figure 8: Branding, Image by Author

to perceive the signs and symbols of products and their values. In the last decade, especially in commercial industry, branding in particular has emerged as a top management priority and as a means of influencing customer perceptions (Ailawadi and Keller 2004). It involves the creation of simple signage that is easy to understand for consumers. Branding gives meaning to a place and helps it to be identified through the network of signs that convey specific values, information and symbols which are understandable for customers. Branding and visual techniques create

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product identities that are later conveyed to consumers as part of their own identities. Selecting a specific brand thus becomes an expression of the consumer's interests and taste.

2. Types of branding

Branding is the external frame of business strategy that supports business goals. Moreover it is a way for customers to forms ideas and feelings about a business and its products. It therefore acts as a medium between customers and a business that communicates with its addressees visually and literally (Petromilli, Morrisonis, and Million 2002, 23). Literally, branding includes conveying the company's special name, characteristics and values. Visually, signage and brands display themselves through their logo and by representing the uniqueness of offerings that can be reflected in design culture as well.

Literature by Julier also considers the important role of branding as a major theme in contemporary design practice (Julier, 2005). Brands communicate value to consumers, and design helps enhance brand communication by shaping users'

Figure 9: McDonald's Restaurant, Image by Author

experience of the brand through visual representations. McDonald's restaurants are a good example in the way that they demonstrate the contribution of brand to a corporation's design culture. The oversized yellow M on a red background — the "golden arches" — is one of the world's most recognized logos. The use of a comic font for the "M" along with vibrant colors conveys a sense of liveliness that also extends to the interior spaces through the application of

these two dominant colours to interior walls and furniture. This example shows how design can signify its brand and become a symbol.

In Julier's thesis, the branding of a location is an attempt to create a meaning and a narration for a place. In his definition, place branding is a process of branding that is not just dedicated to a place, but also to all activities and identities happening there. Brand value and hard branding are the two forms of branding Julier points in his thesis (Julier, 2005). Brand value has an abstract meaning while the others have concrete representations. Assumptions about brand value recommend identifying an environment by branding improves the place's image. This means that a place's image is defined in both abstract and concrete terms. Abstract qualities include vibrancy, interactivity, and technological themes. These qualities are supported by concrete and visual icons including architectural examples such as the Bilbao Museum, the Sydney Opera House or the CN Tower. These images are iconic images for the cities and advertise them to attract tourists and become a signature for them. Thus, linking brand values with concrete representations both in cities and companies creates a rich brand that can advertise places or products.

3.   How to reinforce a brand?

For a brand to be strong, it has to bring together several components such as customer interactions, employee communications, corporate philosophy and advertising/marketing efforts. A brand then reaches out to employees, consumers, the media and the public. These components need to strengthen the brand on a regular basis, or it will fail to satisfy the customers.

In marketing, two or more brands are used together in order to enhance their values. For example, the master brand identity of Disney is that it produces "wholesome family

entertainment. This master brand creates the same value for sub-brands as well regardless of whether it is Disneyworld, Disney Land, or Disney stores. Each sub-brand has the same value of the master one (Petromilli, Morrisonis, and Million 2002, 26).

To Vanolo, in order to better perceive and remember a built environment, specific labels, symbols, and communicative stereotypes have to be created and must circulate at the international level (Vanolo 2008). Starbucks is a good example in this case. Its dispersed branches around the world are dialectically linked together by similar design, characters and signs that are used repeatedly. Its structure in interior design includes prominent displays of visual art and background music that are provided with aesthetic forms and warm interiors (Thompson and Arsel 2004, 633).

Specificity in meaning, values or even the design of a brand can reinforce it as well. For example, specificity in design makes a branded architecture that further creates iconic architecture. Iconic forms and intangible design strategies, especially for commercial spaces, create systems of signification and reinforce companies' brands. Therefore, symbolization in design and exploitation of new materials and technology offer the possibility of better visual communication that can expand to commercial markets.

4.   Branding in commercial spaces- retail stores

Compared to other designed environments in a city, commercial spaces also play a major role in gaining revenue for a city. Retail stores are inherently vibrant and dynamic regarding their relationships with consumers and other environments in attracting users (Findlay 2002). The hard part is for retailers to use opportunities by setting up a system that makes them work as a "bridge" and to be the link between the customers and the producers. The brand is the medium that links these two groups together; it emerges from numerous sensual impressions and experiences. Brand architecture is a creation of a world in which all discerned components are combined into one emotional experience. In order to find solutions for 3D brand management, the advantages of architecture and communication should be combined. Forms, colours, sounds and scents can help a brand be a genuine experience for all human senses. Brands provide a platform for products and make the brands not only a point of sale but a point of contact (Manuelli 2006, 117).

 In recent years, development in consumer's shopping behavior has changed retail stores from a functional buying place to a place that is more **recreational**. Retailers are rethinking ways to attract customers with new format strategies. Integrating spaces with visual products and technological instruments is one common way that retailers use provides more attractive and interactive spaces for customers. They are not looking to create places just to sell, but to suggest and evoke the essence of the brand (Manuelli 2006, 12).

Changes in shopping behavior are caused not only by customers but also by an increasing supply of products. Stores are homes to brands and should be the representation of brand and convey its message. Brand architecture allows customers to get in direct touch with the brand

and its context and characteristics are understood by them. If the customer can relate to these brand values, the brand will become understood by them and they will buy the product (Manuelli 2006, 117). Consumers no longer buy products only because of their functional qualities. They like purchases that stand for something they can connect and relate to, something – or even better, someone- of which they can be a part (Schultz and Rossum-Willems 2009, 11). As an example, today people keep updating themselves with new Apple products to reveal how modern, high-tech and prestigious they are. Using special products and brands creates identity for users and shows their taste and status.

The project is the origin of five digital products. Hence, the design not only should be a platform that represents the values of the retailer itself, but also should represent each individual brand values as well. The **EnEx Store** is the brand name I chose for this retail. It is the abbreviation of "Entertaining and Experiential Store" which includes the essential values of both the retail store and the companies displaying their products in them.

5.   The role of technology in marketing

As mentioned before, retailers try to create a recreational space for their stores to attract more customers. New technology and the digital information revolution has had a huge impact on shops around the world and they have become attractive elements in commercial spaces. In today's world, consumers are surrounded by technology. The internet is a significant innovation in attracting customers in commercial industry (Burke 2002, 411).

Online access is one way of increasing connection to space. Mediation is another altering factor and a way to form a closer communication and relationship between the retail supplier and the customer. Journalist Paul Markillie points out in *The Economist's* survey of consumer power (8 April, 2005) that eighty percent of Ford's customers in the USA have already researched their purchase online before they arrived to the showroom (Manuelli 2006, 11). However, there are many other technological tools such as wireless devices, touch screen kiosks, electronic signage, smart cards and even robots that make commercial spaces more interactive and attractive.

Figure 10: Interactive Menu, Image by Carol Vinzant, 2010, "David tries to order at Clo"

An example of the integration of touch screen technology can be seen in figure 9. This image shows the digital menu in a bar named Clo, a high-tech, self-serve wine bar in New York. Clo has an interactive menu that is projected onto the bar surface and allows the user to search through the menu and read the information on each wine, grapes, location and tasting notes, as

well as the location of the bottle in the bar. The internet and other high-tech types of facilities provide advance searches for customers and usually located prior to purchase (Burke 2002).

The research that has been done shows that technology was satisfactory in cases where consumers saved time (30%), it worked reliably (21%), it was easy to use (16%), it addressed important needs (11%), and it offered better access and control at all times (8%)(Burke 2002, 412). However, in some cases such as physical experience of shopping, technology will not be found to be useful.

Volker Katschinski writes that physical experience is important in shopping. The internet, he says, is an example of the digital age, and it is used as a new medium. It is complementary to traditional media (just like television has not displaced theater or cinema yet). As much as the Digital Age can help us with shopping, nothing is going to be the same as physically touching the product and specially shopping for clothes and shoes (Manuelli 2006, 11).

Retail stores take advantage of technology as equipment to facilitate their marketing, controlling, advertising and expressing their brands and products. Integrating technology with popular media to interior spaces and retail designs is usually based on the aesthetics and attractions (Schultz and Rossum-Willems 2009, 18). Mobilizing stores with technology is an indication of being powerful, wealthy, modern and fashionable for the brand. Therefore, making high-tech stores target customers with these values and qualities. The repetition of using technological devices in similar layouts of interior spaces for a specific brand makes technology an inherent character of the brand and reinforces this value.

E: Conclusion:

This section sets out to examine brands as symbols for attracting customers and advertising products. Branding is a medium of communication between manufacturers and customers that can transfer meanings. Branding is a crucial factor in contemporary design and plays a significant role in marketing and gaining revenue. Values are communicated to the consumer through the brand and design helps enhance brand communication by shaping users' experience of the brand through visual representations.

Design and branding work together to create a strong value with which customers can associate. As mentioned previously, design in different scales, from the urban city to interior, has played a significant role in making brands successful. Architectural innovation, the choice of construction materials, the application of space, and the various visual elements of graphic and product design can be employed to create a brand that appeals both to consumers and investors in an integrated and highly persuasive fashion.

CHAPTER 3: Precedent Review

A. Introduction

I have selected my precedents according to their similarity to my project in terms of function and design approach. I studied and analyzed them in terms of the qualities of their interior spaces, their architectural form and/or their relationship to their urban context. Most of the projects are commercial spaces in metropolitan contexts with innovative functions that encourage visitors to enter the interior space and provide them with a new spatial experience. The BMW Museum, the Apple Store in New York, the Cell Phone Exhibition, the Listening Post, the Minneapolis Public Library and the CIO bar in New York are the precedents I have identified as most relevant. How the designers of these spaces have integrated them with visual components, how technology and new materials have been used to enhance the quality of space and allocate a unique character to the environment are the major factors that I will explore in this chapter.

B. BMW Museum

One of the precedents informing my project is the BMW Museum Munich opened in 2008. It was designed by ATELIER BRÜCKNER (ART+COM, 2008). The modern and dynamic design makes it exceptional and allows it to be seen as a benchmark. The unconventional form, elegant use of materials and its high-tech environment makes the building unique.

Figure 11: Projecting Walls, Image by Anton Schedlbauer, 2007, "BMW Museum, Munchen"

The interior space is artistically equipped with a digital and visual system to easily advertise the products and also provides an attractive environment for visitors to spend more time in the space and get informed with the products.

The architecture and exhibition have focused on new media based on the ART +COM installations. The mass medium system that employs media arts and design, computer software, media and communication technics applied to the interior space.
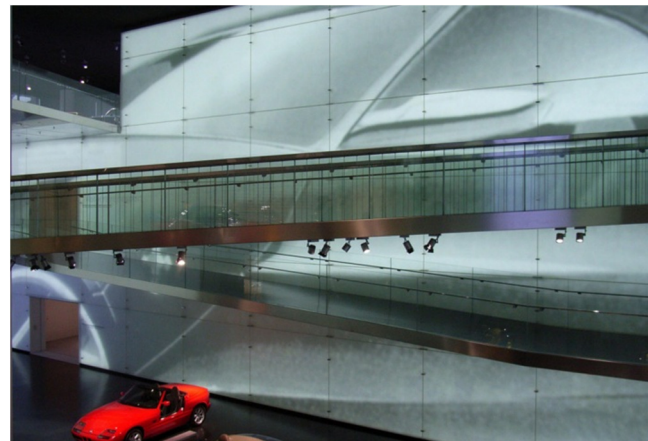

Figure 12: LED walls, Image by Anton Schedlbauer, 2007, "BMW Museum, Munchen"

The ART+COM media installations create a distinctive dynamic environment for exhibits. "The concept of dynamisation and fluidity can be traced both in exterior and interior. The continuation of the street into enclosed space, the 360 degree display show and the ramps as symbols of mobility and fluidity of space are the principles applied to the museum by ATELIER BRÜCKNER.

White LED's mounted behind the frosted glasses create the "mediatecture" walls. "Mediatecture" walls created by an installation of LED's lights make the interior spaces more attractive (ART+COM, 2008). Most of this media relies on interactive and reactive concepts.

Figure 13: Interactive Table, Image by John Nousis, 2009, "BMW Museum Munich, Germany"

In the interior, visitors are actively involved in the exhibition and can access the content autonomously and according to their individual interests. For example, the interactive table designed in this space provides an opportunity for audiences to get any information they want about BMW products.

Figure 14: Interior View, Image by John Nousis, 2009, "BMW Museum Munich, Germany"

The creative design of the BMW museum sets a new standard in the field of brand-focused museums. BMW also makes an effective use of design uniqueness in its marketing. The

architecture visually communicates to customers in order to reinforce BMW's brand by assisting technology, its exceptional form and representing blue color in its interior and exterior as the dominant color of the brand. The display of the brand can be traced in interior spaces as well, where materials such as steel and glass are representations of modernity. The interior spaces are often colored with blue and white which are the two major colors in the BMW logo. The integration of new forms of technology in both interior and exterior spaces is another design strategy to reinforce the brand.

C. Apple Store

Apple stores are an outstanding example of the powerful effect of architecture on business, and of how the public understands and experiences a brand. The signature Apple store in New York City is a transparent cube with a noticeable Apple logo. The design strategy immediately attracts attention and thereby more effectively advertises the company's products. It was opened in New York City in 2005. Designers Bohlin, Cywinski and Jackson and structural engineers Eckersly and O'Callahan (glass elements) in collaboration with Apple, used Apple Stores' signature structural glass vertical

Figure 15: Exterior View, Image by Pet, 2010, "Apple Store, New York at Night"

Figure 16: Stair Case, Image by David, 2006, "Apple Store Stairs"

circulation to entice plaza level passers-by down to the store's underground main level. The 32-foot structural glass cube marking the store's entrance makes a bold yet subtle architectural statement. The design houses a transparent glass elevator wrapped by a circular glass stair to provide options for accessing the retail level below. By day it is a skylight that brings natural light underground, while at night the lighted cube is a glowing sign. It is located at 767 Fifth Avenue between 58th and 59th Streets (Jackson n.d.)

This store contains elements in common with other Apple locations throughout the world. These repetitive elements reinforce the brand and make it more attractive to customers. They usually include an open space, to accommodate large numbers of shoppers. Apple's logo on the front is a nonlinguistic visual sign that forms a potent aspect of the company's brand. Simple and transparent interior spaces integrate with technology are the characters repeated in interior spaces and are part of Apple's design culture. The transparency can be traced in the design structure as well. Making a glass structure, with no metal framing creates a transparent and invisible space and provides a symbol which is only dedicated to the Apple store.

Figure 17: Apple Store, Chicago, Stair Case, Image by Author

Figure 18: Apple Store, Chicago, Interior view, Image by Author

D. Cell Phone Exhibition:

The "Art and the Mobile Phone" exhibition opened at the Maryland Contemporary Museum in Baltimore in 2007. Curator Irene Hofmann selected "Cell Phone Disco" as one of a few dozen art pieces related to cell phone culture and technology (Informationlab 2007). The creation of

Figure 19: Cell Phone Exhibition, Image by Max Glanville, 2007, "Cell Phone Disco"

this technology increases the involvement of users, technology and networks because creation of art relates on the presence of users and the existence of technology.

Artists are interested in mobile phone technology not only because it allows them to create artworks but also because there is a possibility of creating works that can be performed. These works go farther than gallery walls and are not constrained by wires and cables. They bring art into the dynamic area of mobility, interaction and global connectivity (Informationlab 2007).

"Cell phone disco" demonstrates the electromagnetic parts of an active mobile phone. If a phone call is made or received in the vicinity of this installation, it will light up thousands and thousands of lights.

This installation makes use of the organization of communication within a mobile phone network and shows us part of our environment that is otherwise hidden to our senses

(CellPhoneDisco 2006). This space is a good example of designing an interactive space and of how visitors can become a part of exhibition and display.

E. Four Stories at the Minneapolis Public Library

The Minneapolis Central Library is an active civic and cultural space for the city and act as a landmark for the city as well. The new Central Library building designed by Caesar Pelli opened to the public in May, 2006. Its highly sustainable design creates a collaborative and public space that makes it a magnificent urban library (Clarke 2006).

Figure 20: Minneapolis Public Library, Image by Karl Frankowski, 2006, "Minneapolis Public Library"

Ben Rubin designed two elevator cabs for the four stories' hall in the Minneapolis Public Library. These two elevators are visible from much of the library's hall. As the elevators move between floors, illuminated texts are shown on the elevators facade. These texts are the titles of recent books checked out (Rubin 2010). This installation not only creates an attractive space, but also makes the space more

Figure 21: Public Elevators, Image by State Library of NSW Public Library Services, 2007, "Minneapolis Public Library, Minnesota"

interactive. This piece of art is created by the interrelationship between books as the dominant

objects in the space and the people who are the visitors of the space. These two groups unintentionally affect each other and make an attractive piece of art. The size of each panel is 48"*90" (122 cm x 229 cm) and is equipped with LED tube fixtures, laser range finders, and custom software.

F. Listening Post

The "Listening post" is another precedent used to inspire my design ideas. It is an art installation that displays text fragments that are transmitted in chat rooms, on bulletin boards and in thousands of public forums. It is something between art, entertainment and documentary and was designed by Mark Hansen and Ben Rubin. It is an audiovisual art installation at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, USA (Rubin 2010).

Figure 22: listening Post, Image by Naveen Jamal, 2006

These little digital screens are mounted on a concave grid that is equipped with a voice synthesizer that can read and sing the texts that pop up on the digital screens. The listening post is a response to a virtual world that can convert
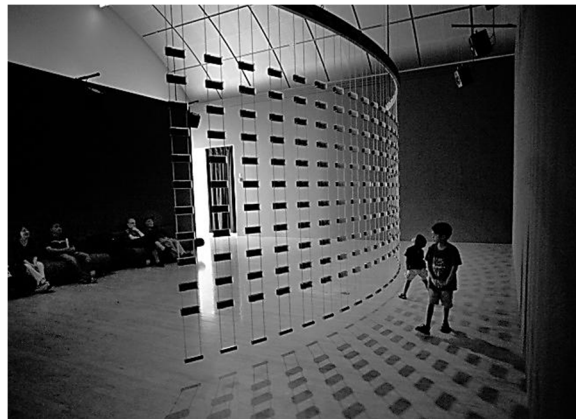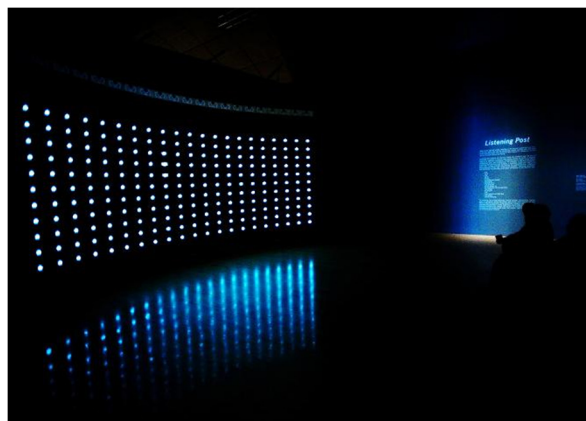

Figure 23: listening Post, Image by Naveen Jamal, 2006

the virtual communication to visual and sonic response (Rubin 210). What is interesting about this precedent is how different media assist to convey information and how new choice of materials such as digital screens and sonic boxes provides better communication systems for audiences than before.

G. Clo Bar in New York City

The CIO Bar is a self-service wine-tasting bar in New York City. It is located on the fourth floor of the Time Warner Center in Manhattan. This high tech bar has an interactive menu, which is projected on to the bar surface. A self-service machine is located around the bar to provide testing samples of 104 wines (Sykes 2009). Visitors can search the interactive table-menu at the center of the space and read the information on each wine, its grapes, the location of
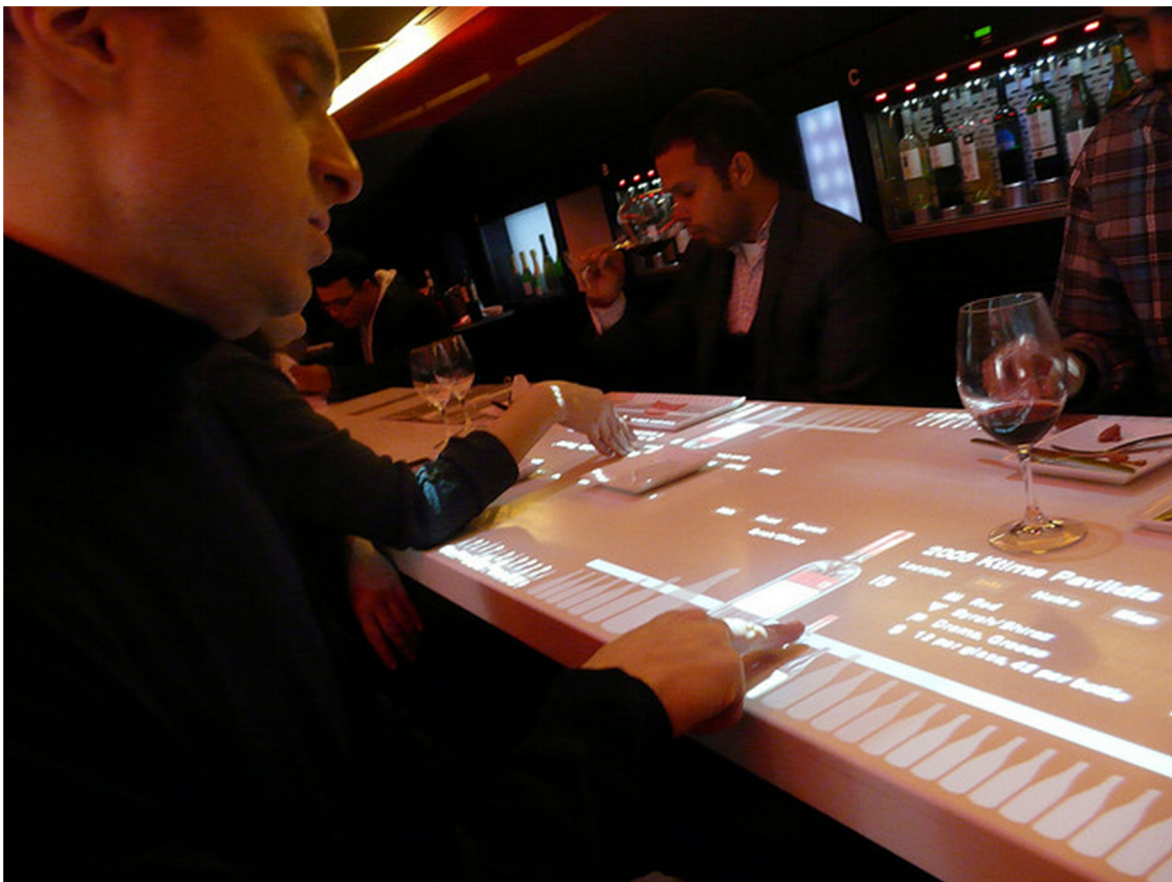

Figure 24: CIO Bar, Image by Carol Vinzant, 2010, "David tries to order at Clo"

the location vineyard, tasting notes and their location in the wall of bottles that surrounds the bar. After selecting wine using the menu bar, you can get the wine yourself by inserting the CIO master card in a slot above the dispensing bottle case and pressing the button above your selected bottle.

CIO is a simple and fun concept that can attract people to visit the space. I think this approach to dispensing products would be a huge success in places with limited space such as shopping centers, airports or hotels. This type of space can be controlled, served and managed by technology. Thus, there is no need to have spaces such as a staff room, reception area, cashier or counters for serving wine so they are more efficient in their use of space.

H. Conclusion

In all these examples, design and branding work together to create a strong value with which customers can associate themselves. As mentioned previously, design in different scales, from urban areas to interior, plays a significant role in adding to the success of the brands and their markets. Architectural innovation, the choice of materials such as applying new technologic instruments like digital screens, interactive surfaces, touch screen panels, the application of space, the various visual elements of graphic and product design and integrating design with technology can be employed to create a brand that appeals to consumers and investors in an integrated and highly persuasive fashion.

CHAPTER 4: Programing

A. Introduction:

The ENEX digital store is a high-tech retail space that sells highly branded products. Raising awareness of new digital products among consumers is the main concern of this project. Broadcasting information about digital products both online and offline, providing an experiential space for consumers to examine digital commodities and comparing products from different brands at the same time lets consumers make better decisions. The space is unique in terms of creating an experiential environment. In the process of making experiential space, applying visual media and the use of information technology can help to raise awareness among consumers. This type of retail environment needs adequate space to display products and provides a space for consumers to touch them easily. The display needs a secure space for products and space for storing additional items. The retail environment needs digital screens to broadcast information using pictures and text.

This retail environment will be embedded in a large shopping center. Specifically I have chosen the Eaton Centre in Toronto. The site has many visitors each day and it is the number one tourist attraction in Toronto. Therefore, I am going to explore ways that interior design can influence the ability to present products in a manner that encourages more interactive relationships with potential consumers in a specialized interior space. At the end of an interactive journey, users' knowledge of new products would be increased. The space would provide an opportunity for potential customers to obtain more information about new digital products. This place could potentially serve as an experiential/virtual retail show for companies that are more interested in technology or that want to take advantage of the new technological opportunities to introduce their products.

B. Site analysis:

This section provides information and analysis of the site proposed to the project. It will examine social, cultural, and commercial contexts for the project. Figure 25 shows the location of the site and its vicinities.

1.   Site selection:

Regarding the typology and function of the interior, this practicum is based on the premise that it is better to have an expressive and prominent design that is different from its surroundings so that it can attract more people and becomes the center of attention. At the same time, the design will try to assist multimedia and digital communication systems to acquire more customers through

Figure 25: Eaton Centre in Toronto, Image by Author

using intelligent materials and structures. However, it helps customers to get familiar with new digital products of different companies coming out every day. Moreover, the location should be in a populated area; meaning that it is located in a place with a large amount of pedestrian traffic.

My suggestion is to insert this design onto the path and open spaces on different levels of the Eaton Centre. The locations are visually connected to multiple floors, allowing more people to engage with the space. Figure 26, shows the location.

The following points show the criteria for selecting a site:

Figure 26: Eaton centre in Toronto, Image by Author

- Located in a commercial and economic hub of Canada on an international level

- Located in a primary commercial district.

- Significant in its vicinity

- A place with a large amount of pedestrian traffic

- Accessible by public transit

- Located in a modern shopping center

- Placed in a main access path of a shopping center

- Having different interior volumes from small to large

2. Site Description:

Based on these criteria, the proposed site for this project is the Eaton Centre in downtown Toronto. It is surrounded by primary high density streets in Toronto. Dundas Street is to the north, Queen Street is to the south, Young Street is to the east, and Bay Street is located to the west. The shopping center has direct access to two subway stations: Dundas Station and Queen Station. This location offers few opportunities for social interaction for shoppers and passersby.
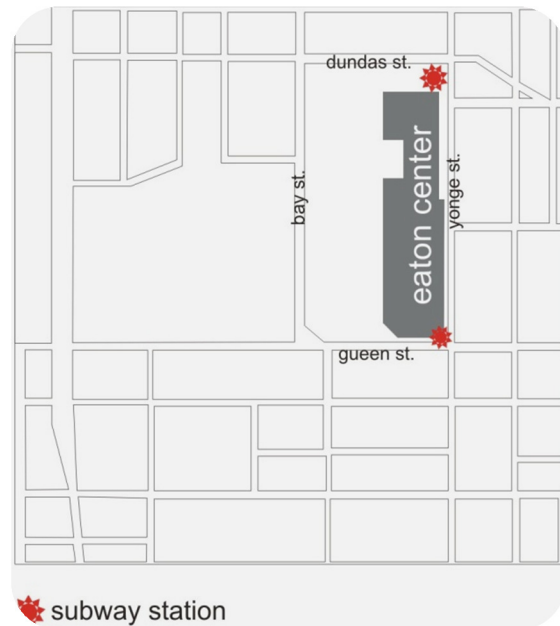

Figure 27: Subway Stations, Image by Author

3. Circulation:
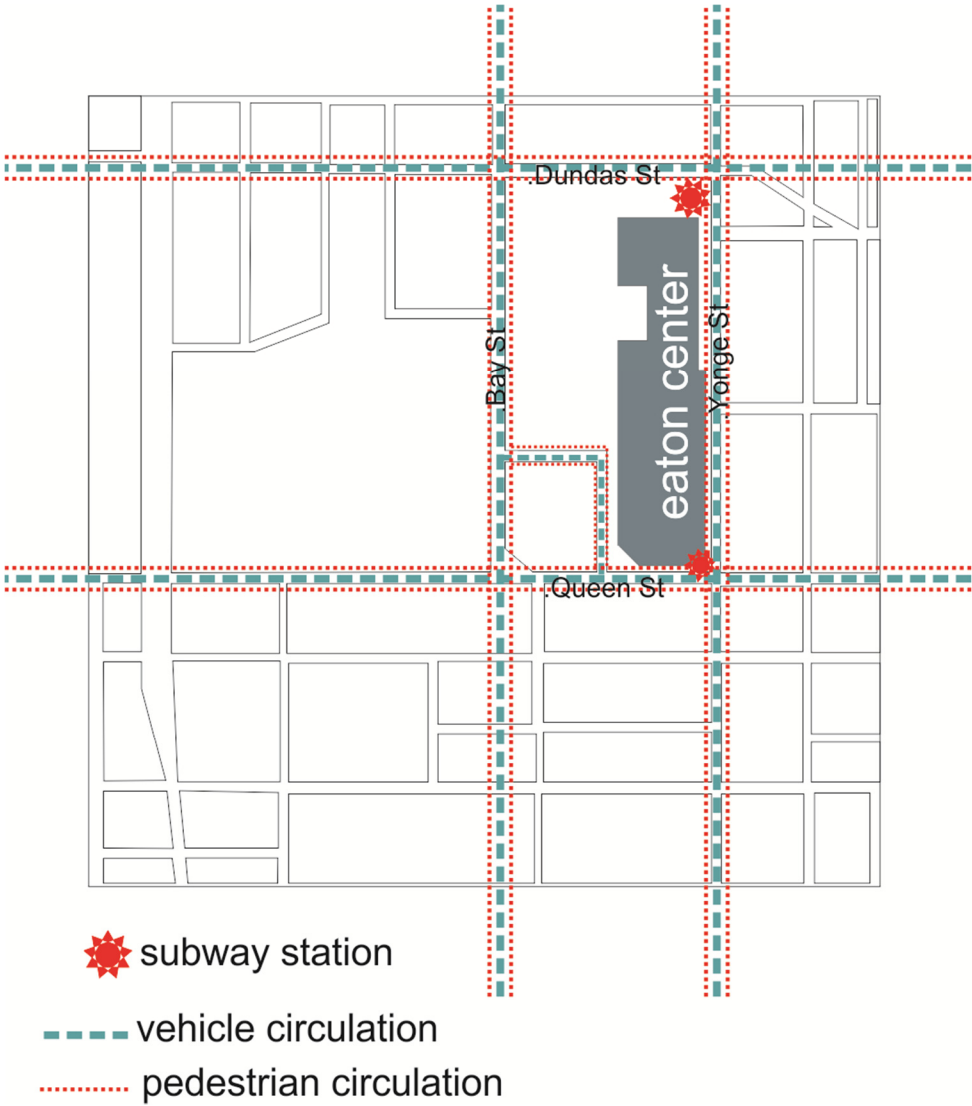
Figure 28: Circulation Map, Image by Author

4.   Access:

Figure 29: Access Map, Image by Author

5.   Nodes:

A node is an important cultural, historical, functional or visual space which is mostly known by people. The important nodes within this area consist of the CN Tower, the Rogers Centre, Ryerson University, the University of Toronto, the Convention Center, the City Hall, Allen Garden, the Art Gallery of Ontario, and the CBC Broadcast Centre.
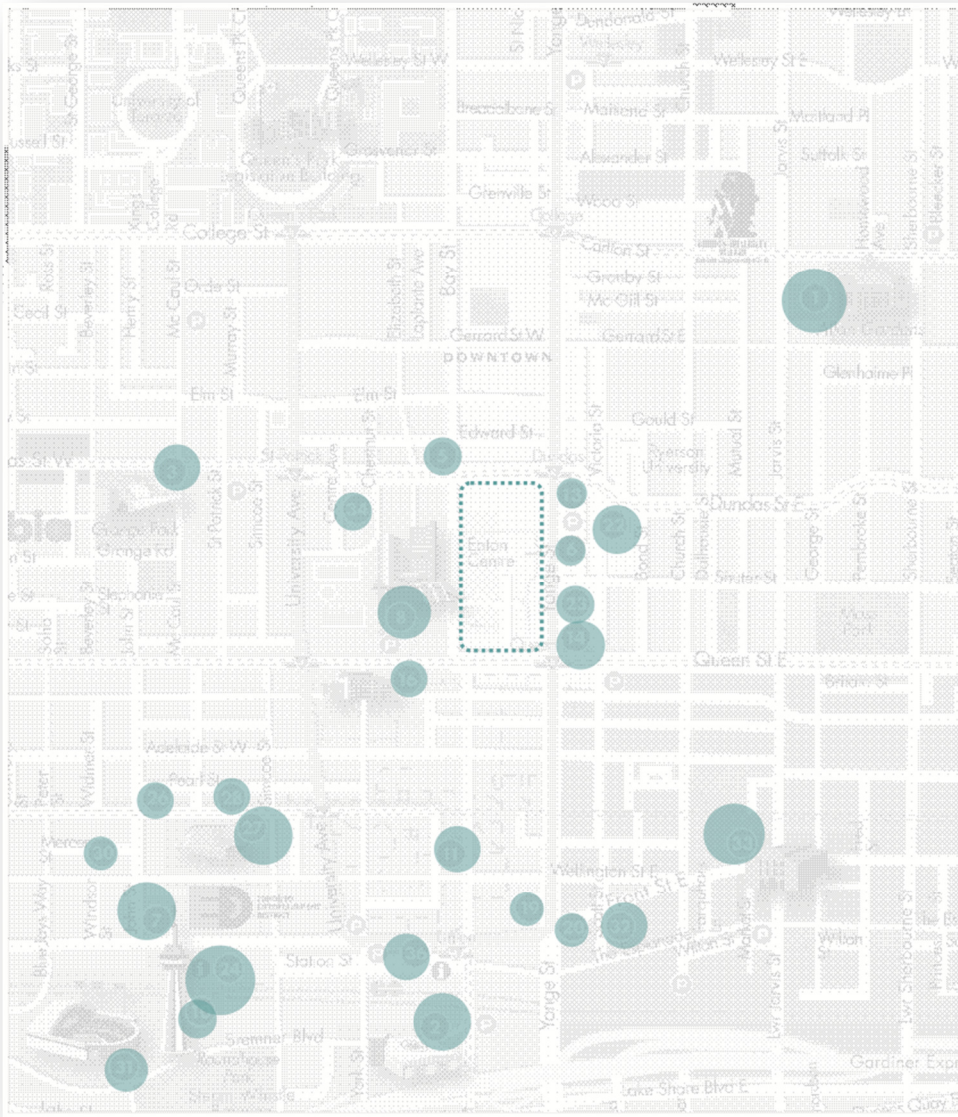

Figure 30: Important Nodes
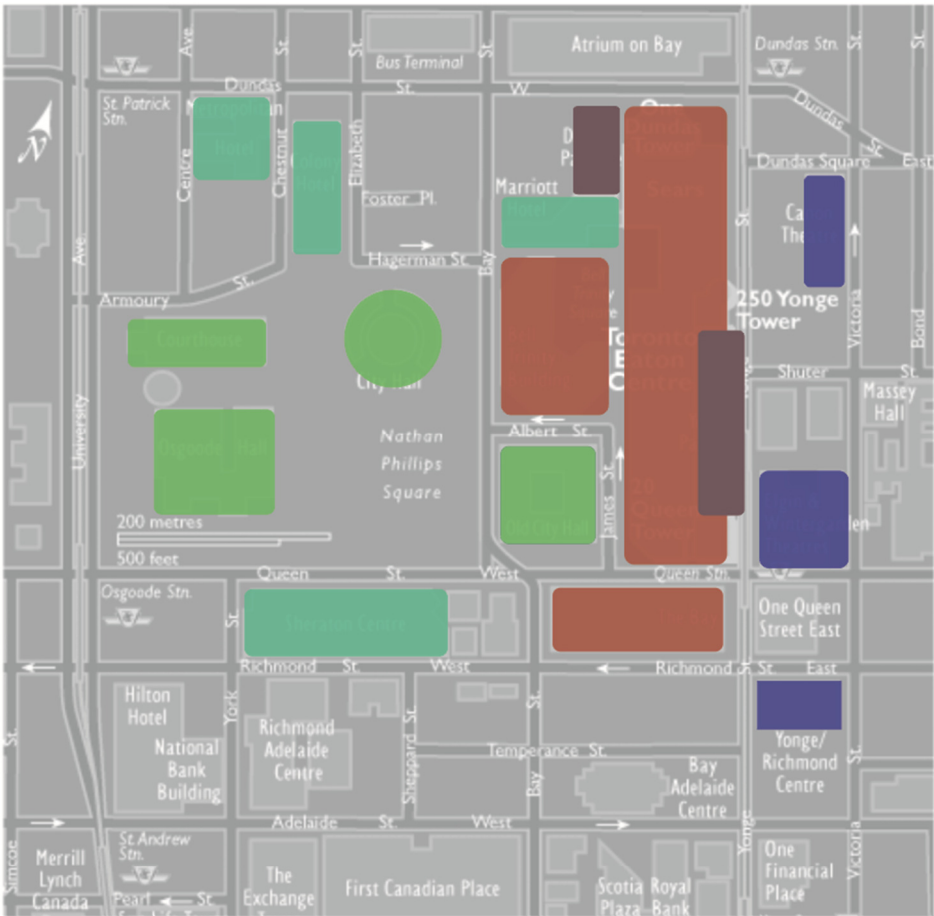
6.   Neighborhood buildings:

Figure 32: Neighbourhood

- � commercial space
- ▮ governmental space
- ▮ cultural space
- ▮ residential space
- ▮ parkade

7. Density:

There are only a few permanent residents living in this neighborhood. Most of the people who pass this area are shoppers, business, office and governmental employees and students. Thus the site context is more active between 8 AM and 5 PM. During the evening the majority of the population that occupies the site is young adults who shop, eat out in restaurants and go to bars. The location is one of the popular spaces in Toronto, because most of the social activities and events happen in this context.

Figure 33: Eaton Centre Entrance, Image by Author

8.   Climate

Climate analysis of the site is relevant for the design. It is important to know how natural light wind and temperature will affect the design. Toronto has a semi-continental climate, with a warm, humid summer and a cold winter.

Lake Ontario serves to moderate Toronto's weather to the point that its climate is one of the mildest in Canada (Living in Canada n.d.).
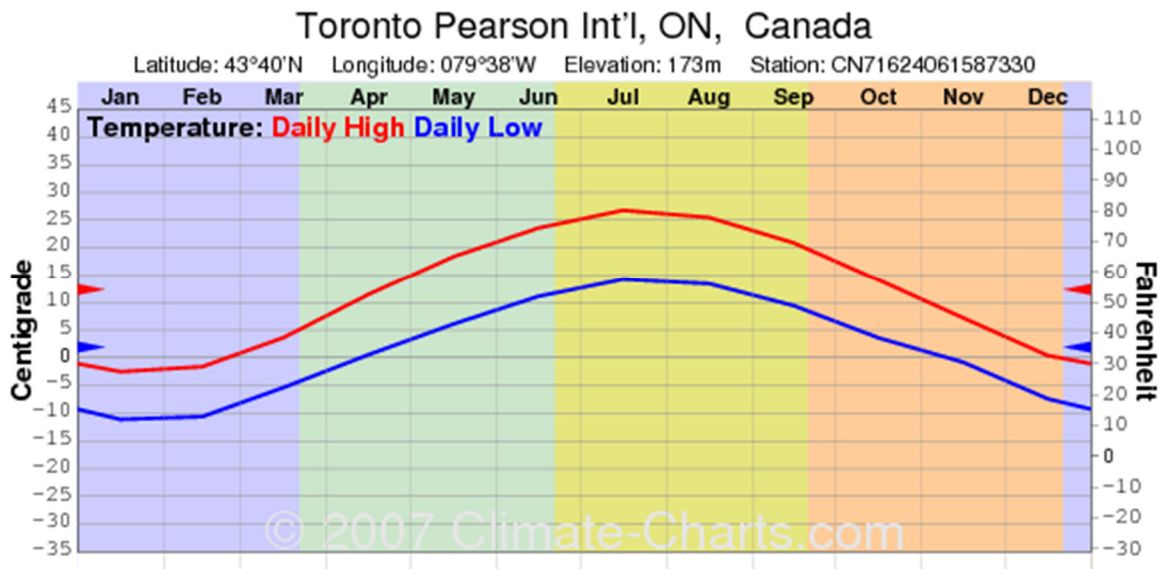

Figure 34: Temperature Diagram, Courtesy of Joe Casey, "Toronto Pearson Int'l, ON, Canada"

Figure 35 shows eight months of a year have 6-9 hours sun light per day. The Eaton Centre is covered with a glass roof, to allow sunlight to penetrate the space and enlighten the atrium. Thus, it will affect the placement of digital screens because they are easier to view in direct sunlight.
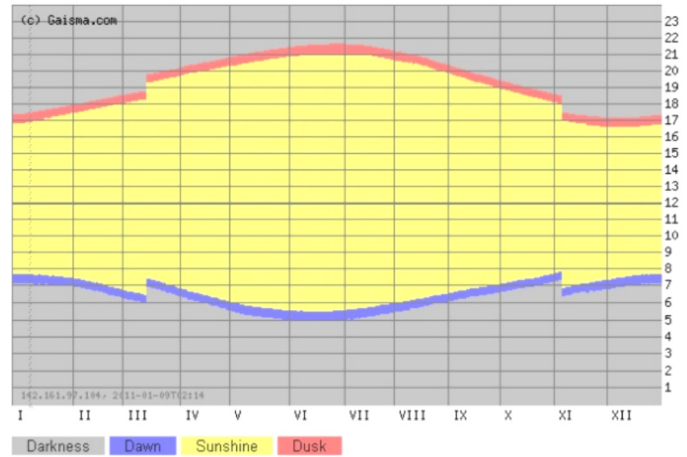

Figure 35: Sunlight Diagram, Courtesy of Joe Casey, "Toronto Pearson Int'l, ON, Canada"

C. Building Systems

- Year constructed: 1979

- Project size: 900 foot-long- galleria with
  237,720 m2

- 5 levels

- Architect: Bregman + Hamann Architects and
  Zeidler Partnership Architects

Figure 36: Eaton Center, Image by Author

- Owner: Cadillac Fairview

- A multi-leveled, glass-roofed galleria comprising more than 320 shops and restaurants,
  17 cinemas, and a 400-room Marriott hotel

- Number one tourist attraction in Toronto with one million visitors a week (toronto n.d.)

- Received the 2008 landmark award from the Ontario Association of Architects in 1992

- One of the most prominent features in the shopping mall is the group of Canadian geese
  hanging from the ceiling

- The complex is oriented inwards, with very few street-facing retail stores

- Natural light mainly comes through the glass-roofed galleria lightens up the inside of
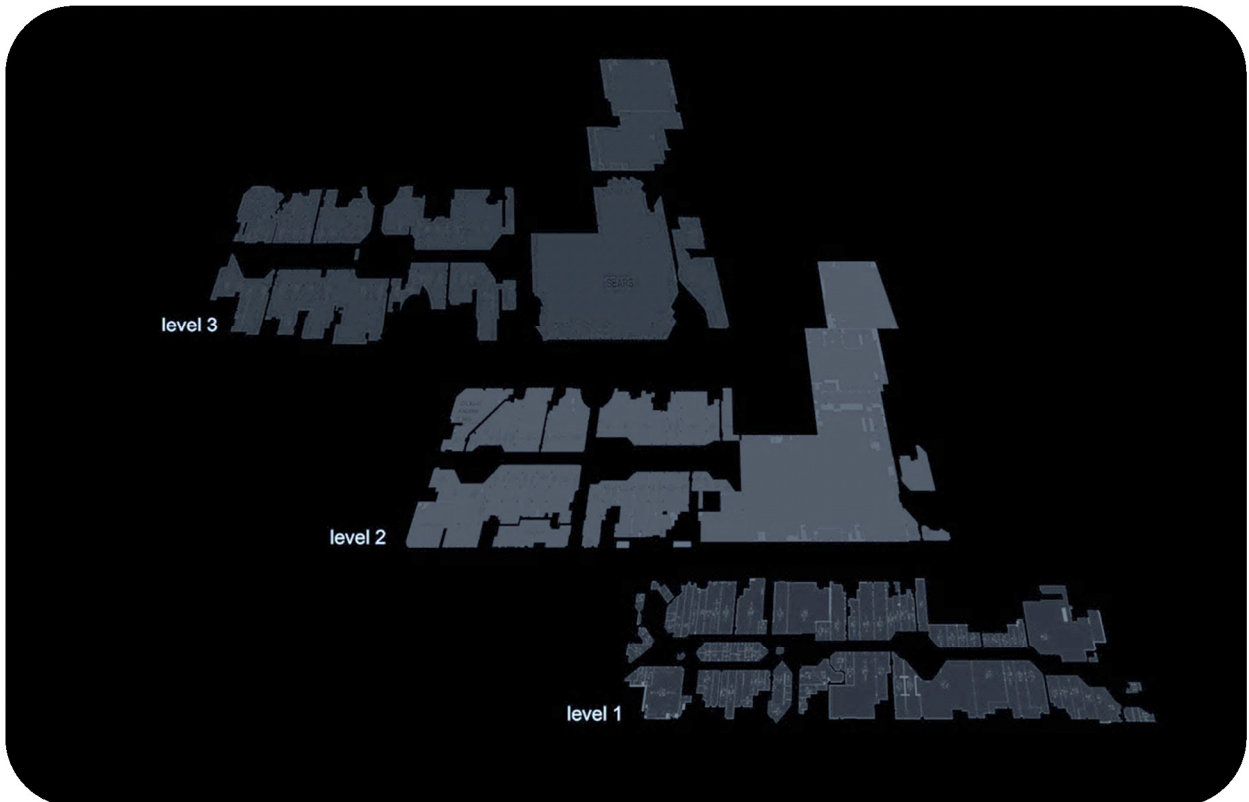
  the shopping center during the day

Figure 37: Building's Plans, Image by Author

D. Building code:

1. Section 3.1 general

3.1.2.1 Major occupancy classification: Group E

Building area: 48,000 m2

Building levels: 5 levels

Building sprinkled

2. Section 3.2: Building fire safety

3.2.2.62. Group E,

- Building shall be of noncombustible construction;

- The building shall be sprinkled throughout;

- Floor assemblies shall be fire separations with a fire-resistance rating not less than 2 hour;

- Load-bearing walls, columns and arches shall have a fire-resistance rating not less than that required for the supported assembly.

3. Section 3.7: health requirements

- 3.7.4.2 Water closets: the number of water closets required is 22 for male (8 closets+ 14 urinals) and 44 for female

4. Section 6.1: fire separation of public corridors

3.3.1.4. (3) Public corridor on a sprinkled story: travel distance to the exit from any part of the floor area > 45m;

3.3.1.4. (4) No fire separation required between a public corridor and a room or suite provided the public corridor;

3.3.1.9 Public corridors containing an occupancy (mall) should be unobstructed and >=3m and all the combined occupancies in public corridor should be <= 15% of the area of the public corridor;
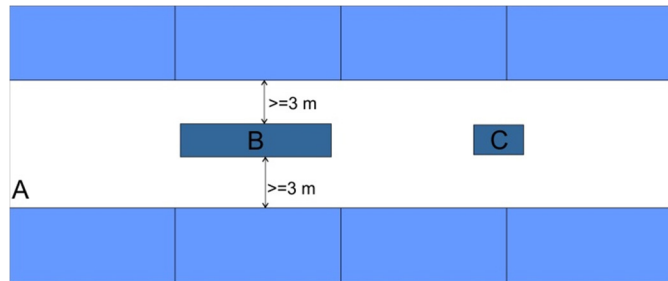
Figure 38: Public Corridor Plan, Image by Author

3.4.2.5   At least 4m ceiling height is needed to have kiosk in public corridors.
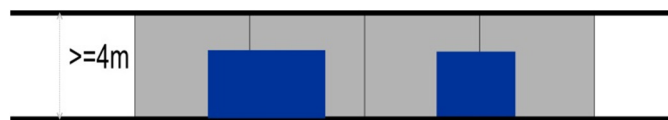

Figure 39: Public Corridor Section, Image by Author

E. Human Factor:

The space will be designed for two kinds of users: first, for digital native users who are familiar with virtual space and second, for digital immigrants who are not acquainted with technology and the digital world (Prensky 2001). The first group consists of the younger generation that is used to a virtual experience of space. They know how to access the virtual world to get information and buy what they need, while the other group is more comfortable and familiar in physical space. Both groups would appreciate the ability to examine and compare products physically, however. Therefore, different media and technological tools and materials will be employed in this building for creating both physical and virtual exhibition to offer diverse products. In this way the new facility can target a wide range of population.

5.   Physical visitors:

This group contains people who come to the space to buy products or get information about specific products. Thus, this group spends more time in the physical space than does those shoppers who accidentally pass through the space and are attracted to new products.

Based on the information I found, the Eaton Center has 800,000 visitors per week. Therefore, in an average day, 100,000- 120,000 people visit this five story shopping center. So, basically around 20,000 people may visit each level per day. But only 3% to 5% of those visitors may get involved with the products and the space. With such a wide range of users, the design should be universal and accessible for everyone.

6.   Virtual visitors:

These groups of users are the ones who connect to the space virtually to get the information, compare prices and see products. There is no limit in the number of visitors. The only thing they need is an accessible, convenient and accurate website to lead them to their products.

7.   Producer:

Five well-known brands will serve as the companies that introduce their products in this more experiential space. Apple, Sonny, Dell, Toshiba and HP are going to exhibit their products in this retail environment. What they need is highly educated personal to give accurate information about products to customers. The retail environment would provide a high-tech and entertaining display for these companies to introduce their new products.

8.   Staff:

Staff are basically divided into two groups: sales staff and food service staff. The sales staff includes a manager, visual technicians, an import coordinator, consultants and sellers. The food service staff includes a chef, cooks, servers and a manager. The café bar and restaurant will be close to the food court. However, the retail staff will spread out along the retail path to assist customers.

number of people	users	values	activities	needs	frequency of use
1000	physical visitors	safety and security- -easily find their needs - meaningful experiences -examine different choices - social interaction -efficiency -comfort -reliability	searching and browsing new- ,products -connecting to virtual networking , -attending to instructing tour, -attending to audio visual classes, -examine experiential stations, -socializing -shopping	access to diverse selection- , of electronic product -opportunity for getting , information - provide virtual and communal activities -lounge space -easily pick up their ordered products -access to washroom	Mon-Fri 10:00 AM - 9:00 PM Sat 9:30 AM - 7:00 PM 11:00 AM - 6:00 PM Sun
unlimited	online users	finding information easily- - connecting to the website fast -comfort -diversity in product	browsing- -attending to virtual show rooms -consulting with experts online -sharing information with other users -shopping online	a comprehensive website- - fast server - online experts	any time
high branded 5 digital companies	producer	introducing their products- - increase their customers - get more invest -enhance their quality - overcome the competition among the other producers	,sharing knowledge- -selling their products, -introducing their products,	,display rooms- -discussion rooms, -presentation space, -storage room, -space for selling products	visit the retail space once or twice a month
25	retail staff	safety- -comfort -involving community -controlling the retail environment	assisting customers- - sell products -guide shoppers -updating products - organizing the store	space for changing their cloth- - space for resting and lounge -guide rooms -flexible showroom for changing the lay out -access to washroom -access to loading zone	Mon-Fri 10:00 AM - 9:00 PM Sat 9:30 AM - 7:00 PM 11:00 AM - 6:00 PM Sun
5	resurant staff	work in safe and healthy- environment -comfort -serving properly -controlling restaurant -ease of ordering	cooking fast food- -serving coffee and tea -cleaning the restaurant -helping customers to order digitally	space for changing their cloth- - space for resting and lounge -kitchen -food storage -washroom	Mon-Fri 10:00 AM - 9:00 PM Sat 9:30 AM - 7:00 PM 11:00 AM - 6:00 PM Sun

Table 1: Number of Users

B. Type of products:

The products that will be sold and exhibited in this digital court are from different companies such as Apple, Sony, HP, Toshiba and Dell. The products chosen for this retail environment are the popular digital products people use every day. TVs, laptops, cell phones, cameras and mp3 players are the products that will be shown. Having different brands lets the customers compare the products and make a better decision.
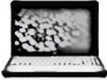
Size	Product / Company	Apple	Sony	Dell	Toshiba	HP
Large	LCD					
Medium	Laptop					
Small	Cell Phone					
	Camera					
	Mp3 Player					

Table 2: Type of Products

C. Adjacencies:

Ease of browsing, access and getting information are the main criteria for designing this retail space. Architecture should provide a safe, convenient, interesting and entertaining environment.
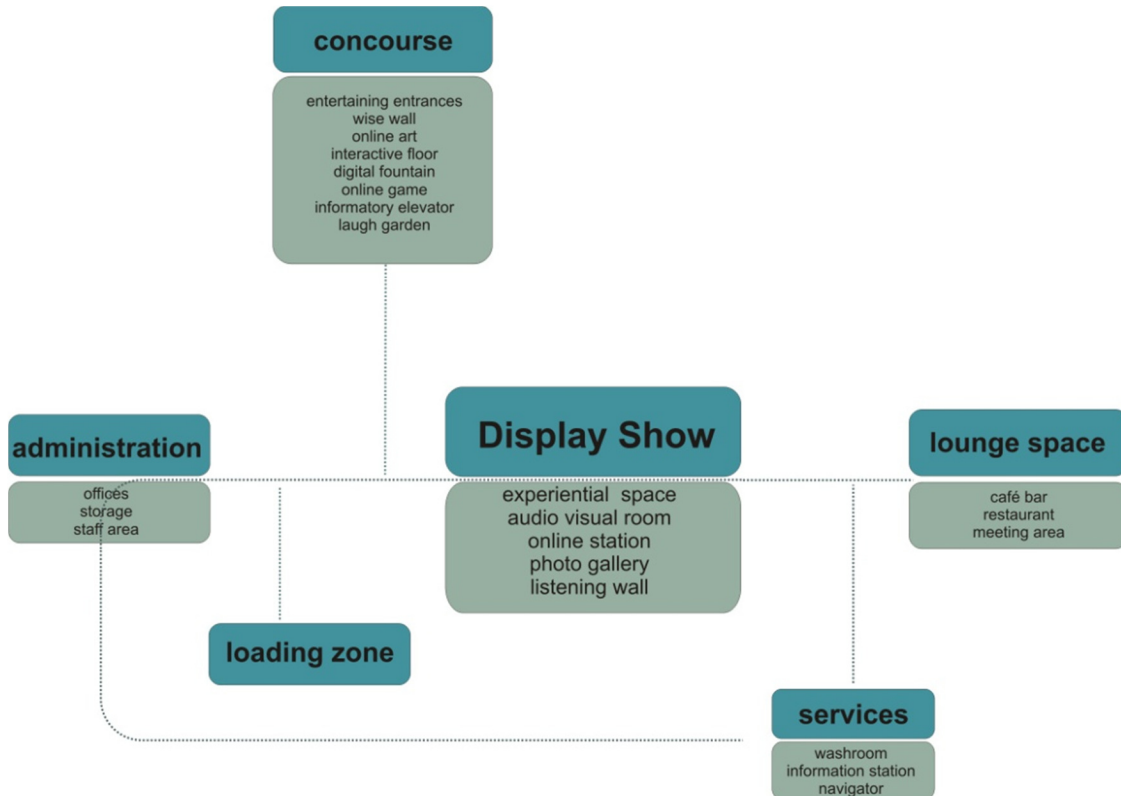
Figure 40: Adjacencies, Image by Author

D. Adjacency Matrix
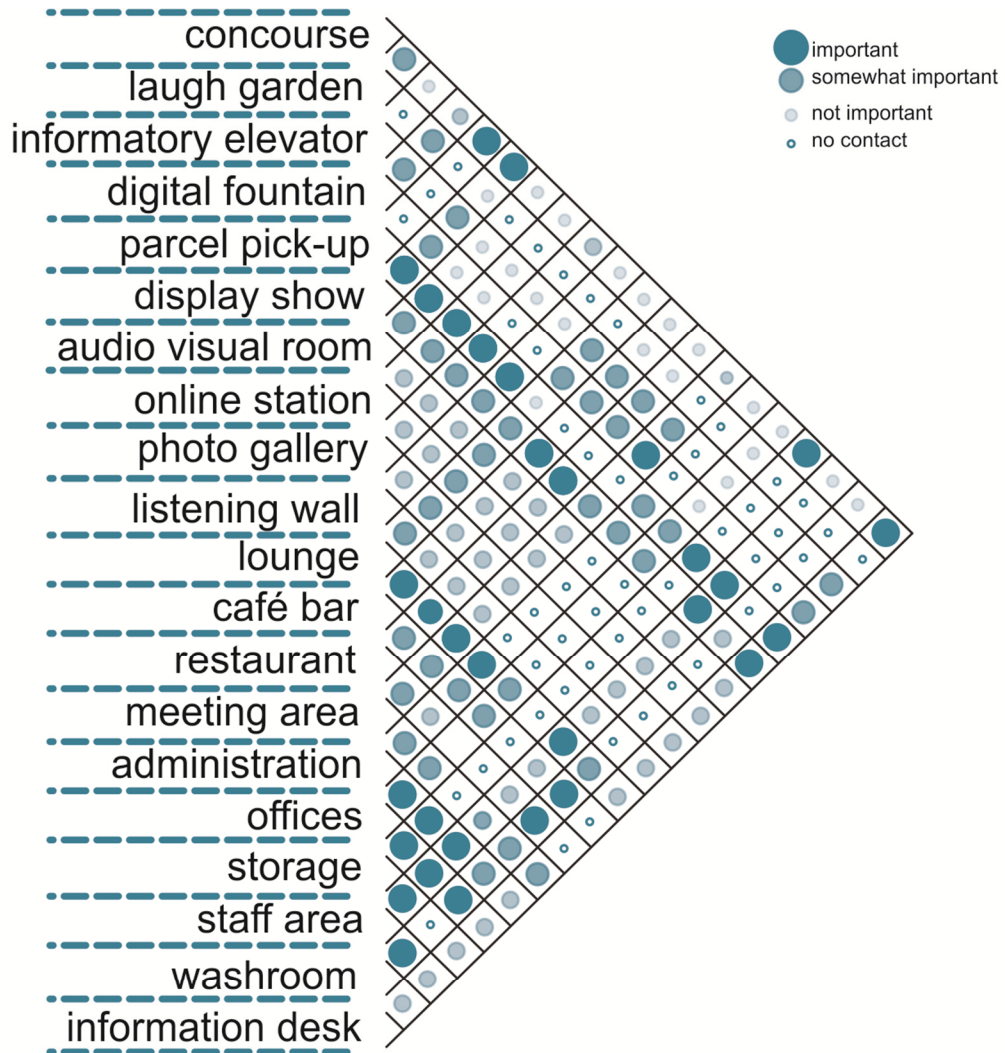
Figure 41: Adjacent Chart, Image by Author

Spatial requirement
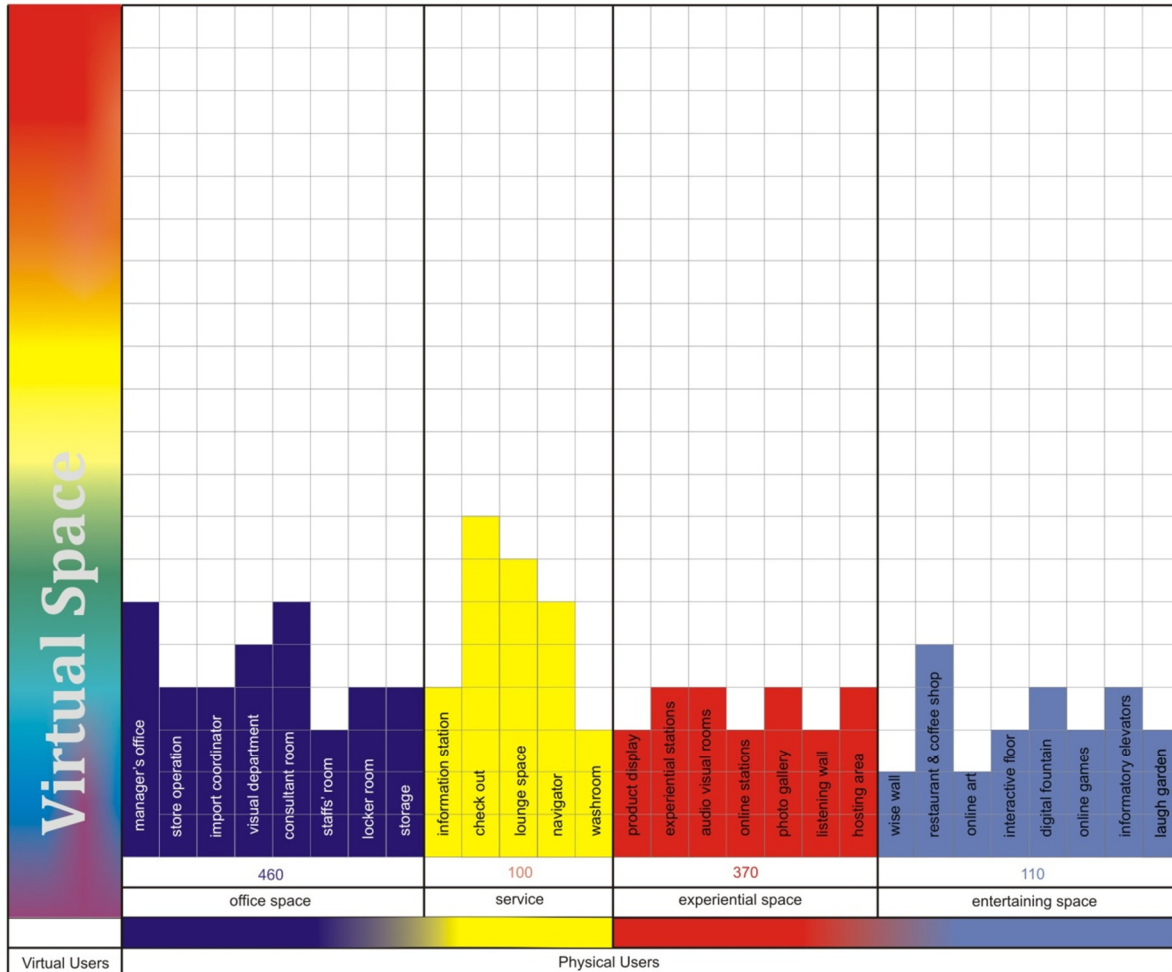
Figure 42: Spatial Requirement, Image by Author

office space

	number of users	number of space	type of furniture	space need/ person	total sq.m
manager's office	3	3	desk chair guest chair storage	2m10	2m30
import coordinator	5	1	desk chair storage	2m6	2m30
visual department	3	1	desk chair storage server printer and copier scanner	_____	2m30
consultant room	5	5	lounge chair table screen brochure holder	2m15	2m75
staffs' room	50	1	lounge chair table cabinet refrigerator dishwasher oven coffee maker	_____	2m100
locker room	25	2	lounge chair table shower W.C	2m25	2m50
storage	1	1	desk chair shelves trolley cabinet	_____	2m150

Table 3: Functional Program

experiential space

	number of users	number of space	type of furniture	space need/ person or space	total sq.m
audio visual rooms (screen display)	15	2	several screen panels seating chair	50 m2	100 m2
online stations (lap top display)	30	1	lap top stand lap top lounge chair	50 m2	50 m2
photo gallery (camera display)	15	1	cameras printer picture stand object display	30 m2	30 m2
communicational station (cell phone display)	20	5	wave interactive wall mobile display seating chair	15 m2	75 m2
listening wall (Mp3 players display)	50	2	listening wall by mp3 players installation	30 m	60 m
lounge space	50	3	lounge chair table lap top Mp3 player tv	35 m2	120 m2

Table 4: Functional Program

entertaining space					
	number of users	number of space	type of furniture	space need/ person	total sq.m
wise wall	5	1	interactive wall	10 m	10 m
restaurant & coffee shop	20	1	table chair counter cabinet small kitchen digital tools installation	60 m2	60 m2
online art	10	1	interactive wall	20 m	20 m
interactive floor	————	5	colorful interactive floor	10 m2	50 m2
digital fountain	10	1	seating chairs surrounded	————	15 m2
online games	20	1	computer desk chair	30 m2	30 m2
informatory elevators	————		elevators digital screen	————	————
laugh garden	10	1	screen screen stand		10 m2

Table 5: Functional Program

The project revitalizes the public path in the Eaton Centre where there is an opening in each floor. Creating an entertaining, experiential and interactive retail environment is the main criteria of designing these informatory paths and openings. The diagrams below show the stations in section and in the main level.
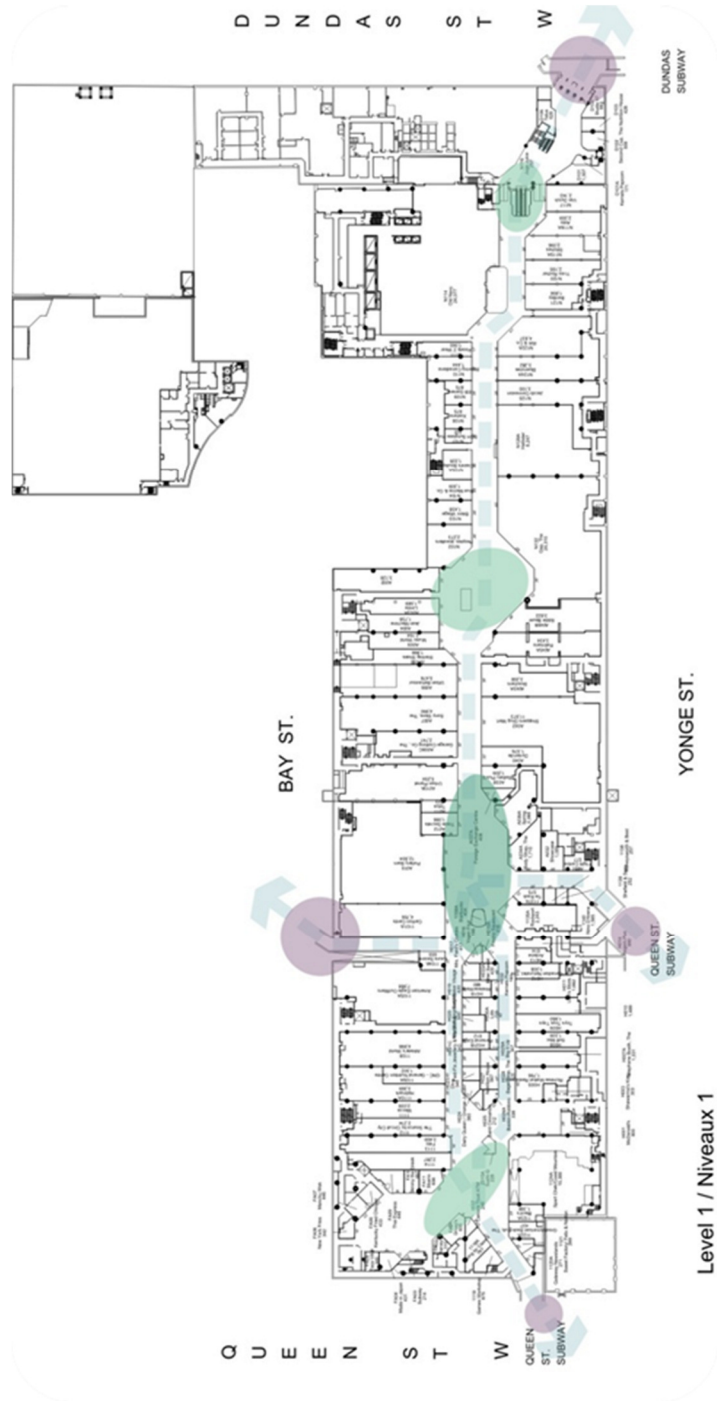
Figure 43: Attractive, Entertaining Nodes, First Floor
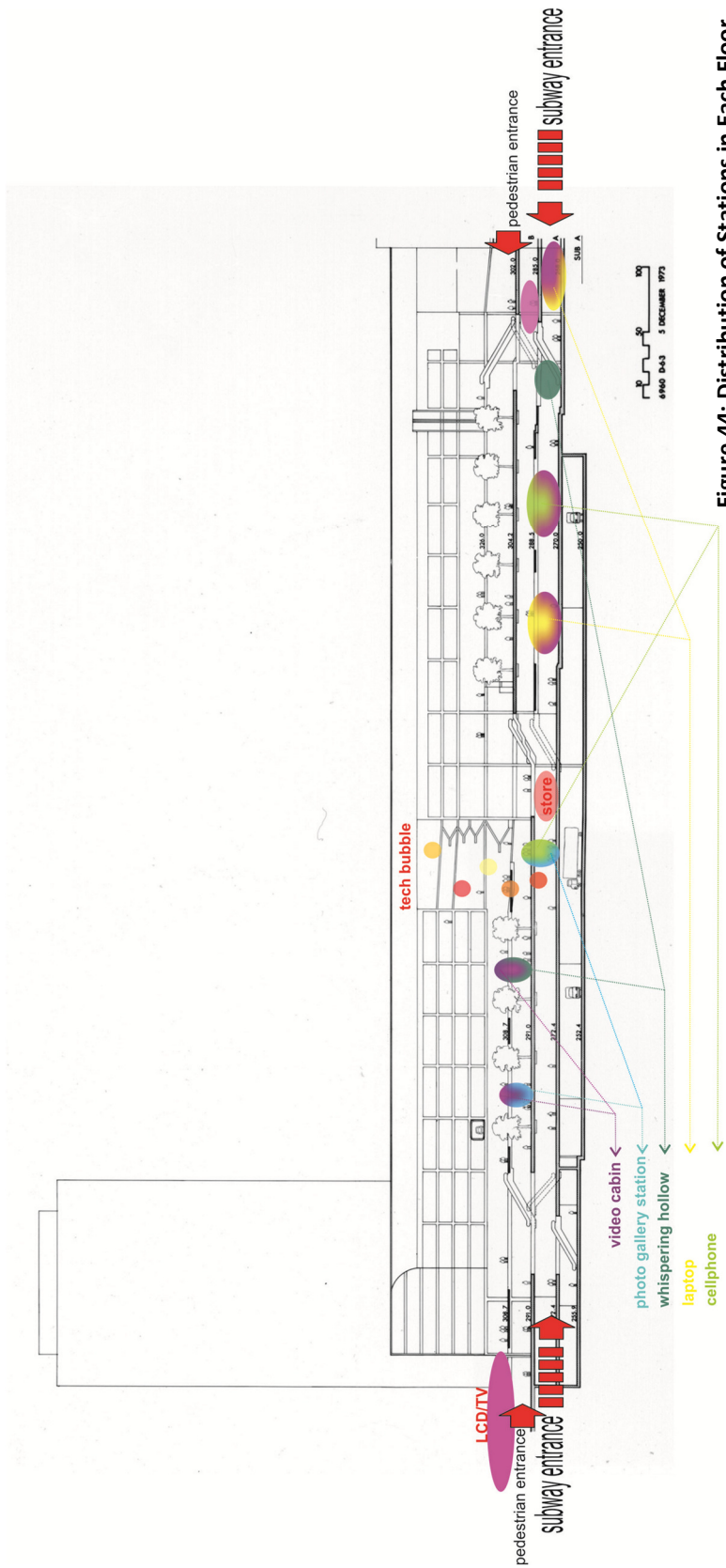
Figure 44: Distribution of Stations in Each Floor

pedestrian entrance

subway entrance

subway entrance

pedestrian entrance

LCD/TV

tech bubble

store

video cabin

photo gallery station

whispering hollow

laptop

cellphone

CHAPTER 5: Design Proposal

A. Design Proposal

The proposed design explored in this chapter is influenced by theory, review of precedents and the program analysis addressed in the document.

Exploration of the retail evolution has shown the important role technology has played in retail design in creating new interactive spaces. Also the development of shopping behavior has deployed advertising and made visual communication a key element in retail design. Likewise incorporating brands with design has become popular as they visually communicate with customers by transferring companies' value.

A successful retail design is the one that can attract more customers by providing more links to the space, creating interesting forms and entertaining spaces. Also a good design is one that leads customers to examine the products and inform them by providing experiential spaces.

The following points are strategies that are going to be incorporated with the design;

- According to the research, the progression of technology causes customers' frustration in dealing with new technology systems and equipment come up every day. Thus, designing a space with the focal concern of raising awareness among consumers is one of the strategies of design in this practicum.

- Investigating in retail evolution shows that shopping spaces have turned to recreational space, to attract more customers. Thus, providing a prominent design that is different from its vicinity in order to attract more customers and become the center of attention is a strategy in design.

- Since attracting more customers become a strategy in consumer culture, it is important to provide flexible and responsive design that brings more fantasy to the space and make the space more entertaining.

- The research showed that, assisting visual products and interactive materials engage more people and make the space more entertaining. Thus, I suggested to present products in a manner that establishes more interactive relationships with potential consumers in a specialized interior space. Also, the design provides opportunities for customers to participate with interiors by equipping the space with interactive materials and furniture.

- The importance role of visual culture explored in the research persuades me to apply multimedia and intelligent materials in design to attract and inform more customers.

- According to the research a successful retail design is the one that can create more links to the space. Thus, the design should provide more connection to the space to allow more people to engage with space by creating visual and virtual connections.

These points are the criteria that formed the design of the interior space but also these strategies incorporate with design at the entrances as attracting/entertaining nodes of shopping center.

B. Site plan:
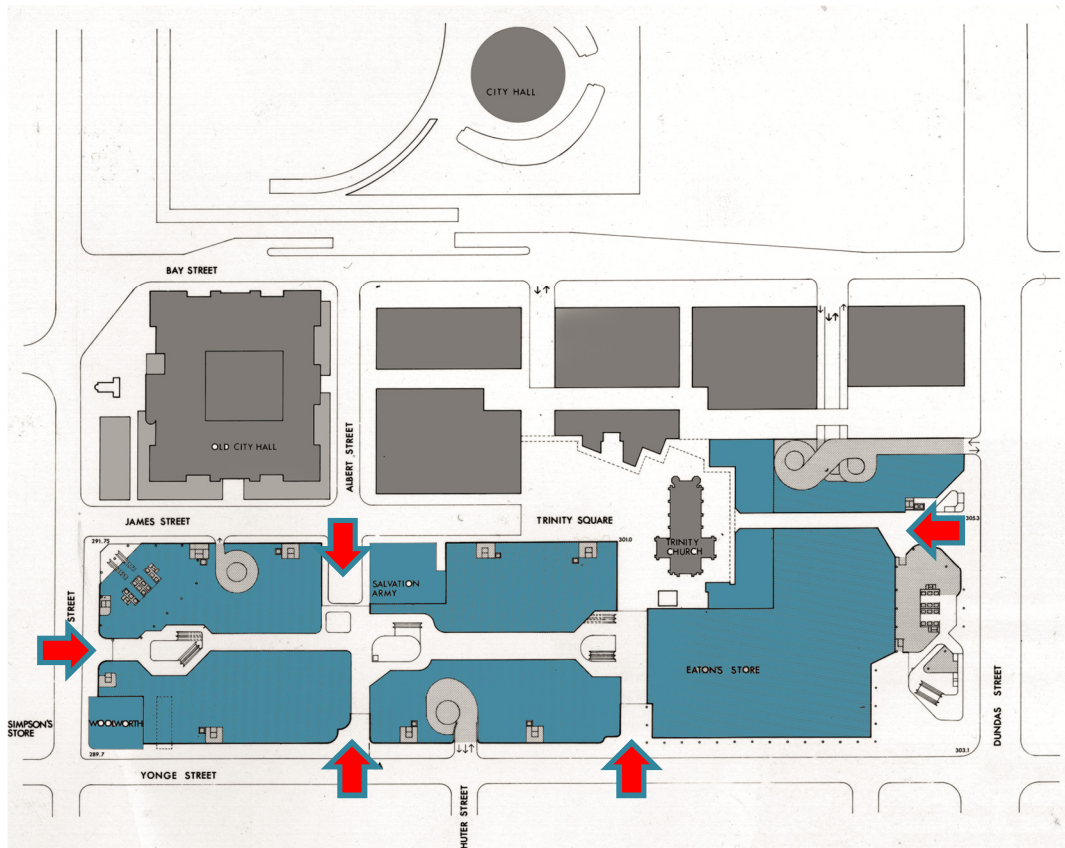
Figure 45: Eaton Centre Site Plan

The site selected in downtown Toronto serves high pedestrian traffic. That is a great opportunity for the shopping center and stores inside the mall to have a large number of visitors per day. Thus the design could play a major role in attracting and inviting people inside especially at the entrances. The Eaton Centre has five entrances and I have identified as attractive/entertaining stations. These stations perform as inviting openings by creating alluring forms, interactive material and audio visual applications.

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Here is the west entrance located at James St. facing toward old City Hall. The concave curve of the entrance wall creates an open inviting space in front of the shopping center. My proposed design is to take advantage of this opportunity and make it as a community garden for social interactions. The "Laugh Garden" is part of this space and is equipped with sound synthesisers that respond to people's movement. That makes the space more fun and inviting both visually and through sound. The "Laugh Garden" is surrounded by a transparent deformed hemisphere that shelters the pedestrian path. The place is more like a semi-enclosed threshold between the street and shopping center. This fun

Figure 46: Eaton Centre West Entrance, Image by Author

stationary would also be active at night. The glowing enclosure is also illuminating at night and it attracts pedestrians to come to the space. Digital screens, LED canopy, The "Laugh Garden" and community garden motivate passersby to stop by. The space could also be a place for social gathering; as digital screens could be the displays of events like hockey, football or news.

James St.

laugh garden
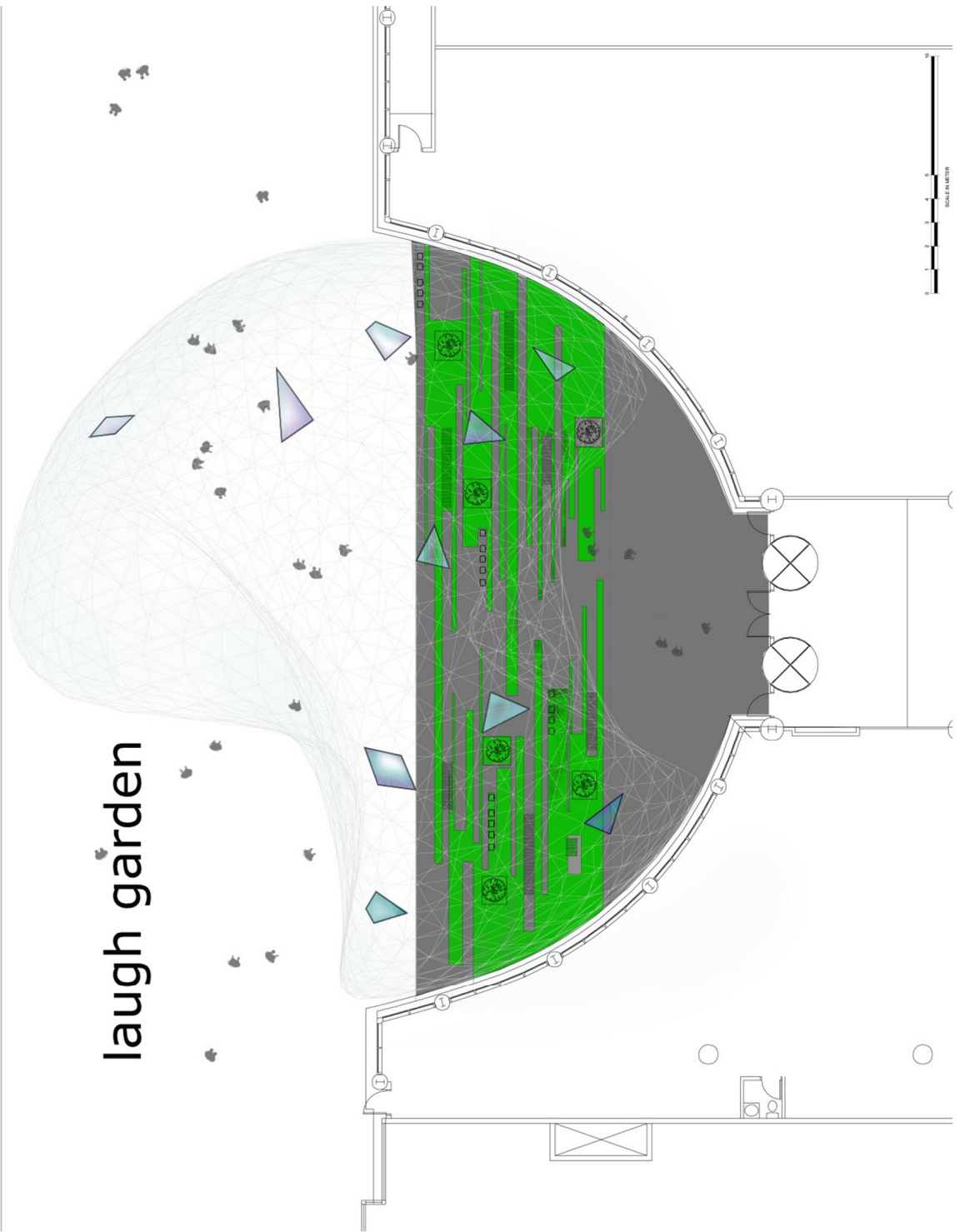
Figure 47: Laugh Garden Plan
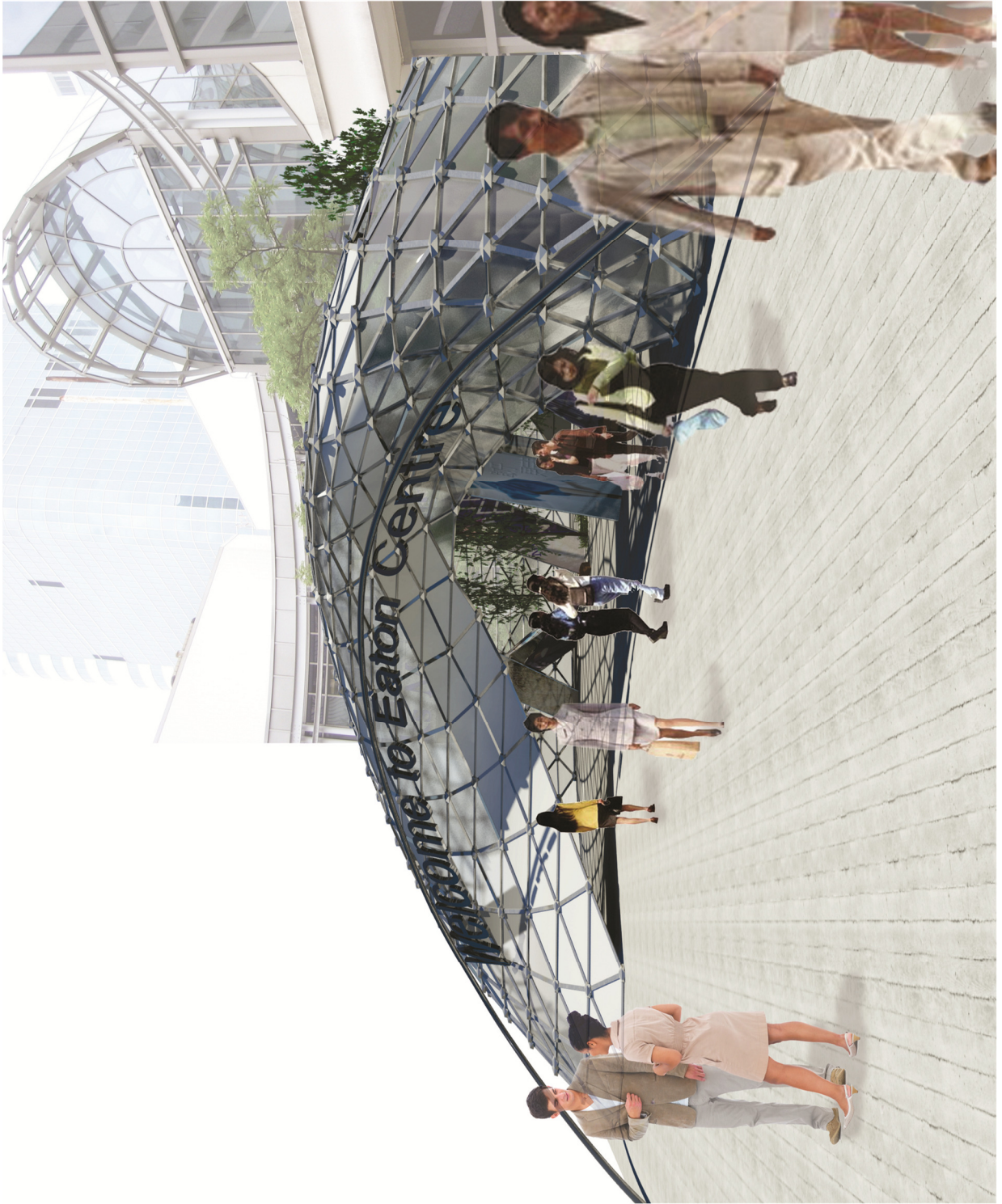
Figure 48: Laugh Garden, View from the James St.

Figure 49: Laugh Garden, View from James St.

Figure 50: Laugh Garden, Interior View

Figure 51: Laugh Garden, Night View

C. Design Development

The project is about designing a retail space for five high branded companies such as Apple, Sony, Toshiba, HP and Dell. They will display their products that include televisions, laptop computers, cameras, cell phones, and MP3 players. The products will be displayed in unconventional ways that can attract and entertain more customers and inform shoppers during their entertaining journey.

Today, because the younger generation is more familiar with digital spaces, using digital marketing has become a strategy that retailers use to attract younger customers. This may be a good opportunity for many commercial companies to increase their attractiveness. Therefore, I am going to study a space that has an artistic "digital" environment and would be meaningfully interactive and experiential. Advances in digital technology, have made it possible to create a new generation of immersive environments. This new immersive environment which is integrated with design, gives more freedom to users. It provides a more liberated environment that is free from place and time and engages more people to attend to the space and be a part of that. Equipping a space with digital components makes it accessible for people to interact with each other and get any information they want.

The interior design of this project includes two parts: the main retail store and experiential stations.

D. Main Store

The main ENEX retail store is located on the first floor. The first level serves as a place for storing and selling products. Customers place their online orders here or solve their problem when they have technical difficulties. Experts are available to inform and help visitors.

Also there are some on-site sessions considered for customers to get advice and become familiar with new products. They are usually held on the auditory stair facing a projection wall designed for those who are interested in new products. The staff room, offices, storage and services' are also housed in the main level. These functions are shown in this first floor zoning diagram.
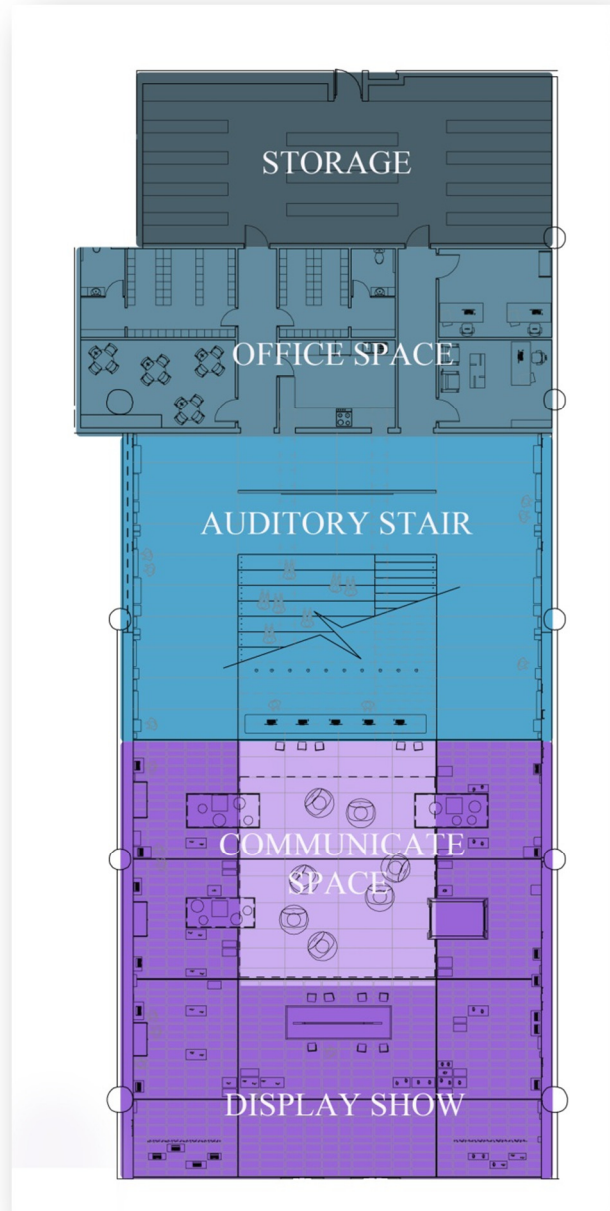
Figure 52: Main Store, Zoning Diagram

STORAGE .1
STORE OPERATION .2
MANAGER'S OFFICE.3
STAFF ROOM .4

MEN'S LOCKER ROOM .5
WOMEN'S LOCKER ROOM .6
KITCHEN .7
AUDITORY STAIR .8
ADVISORY BAR .9
WAITING SPACE .10
DISPLAY SHOW .11
ACCESORY DISPLAY .12
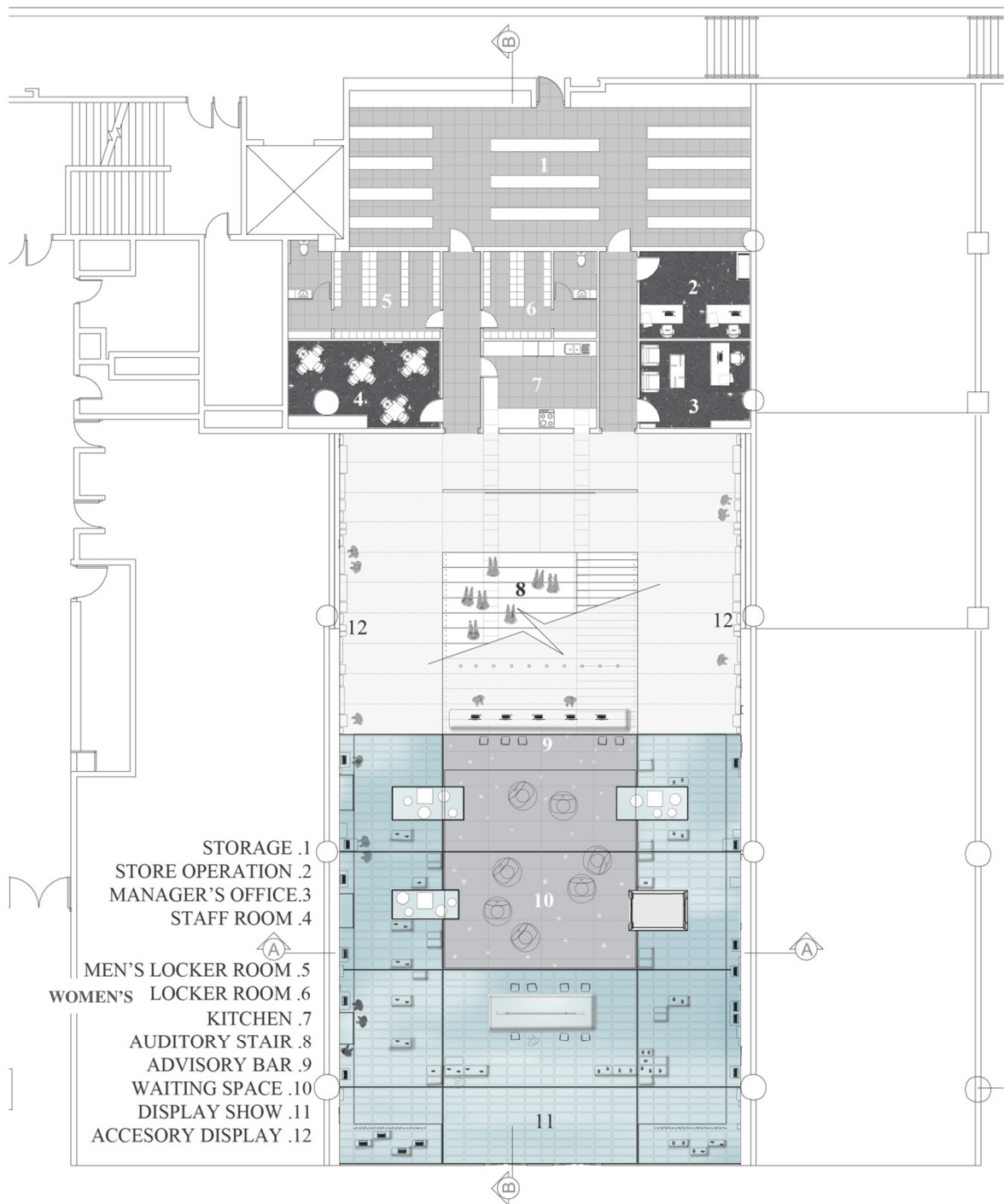
Figure 53: Main Store, First Floor Plan

8" DIA. HALOGEN
RECESSED POTLIGHT

48" METAL
SUSPENDED LIGHT

10"- 14" DISK LIGHT

6" DIA. HALOGEN
RECESSED POTLIGHT

SUSPENDED LIGHT BOX

OPEN TO THE SECOND FLOOR

OPEN TO THE SECOND FLOOR

Figure 54: First Floor Reflected Ceiling Plan

The design is based on simple cubic forms. However this simplicity brings more complexity to the space. The space is shaped by cubic mesh that grows up from the floor and makes display stands, table and seats or drops from the ceiling and creates informational screens and lighting fixture.
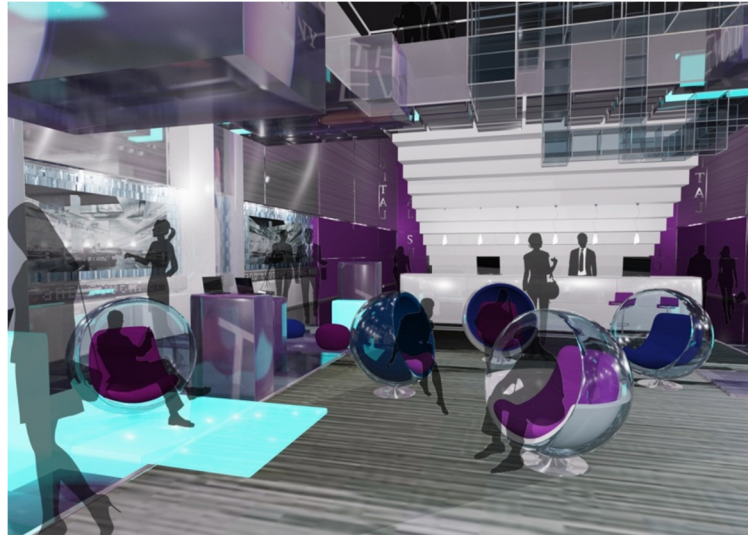
Figure 55: Main Floor View

Figure 56: Main Floor View

The advisory bar is located underneath the stair, which gives texture to the background.

Most of the materials used in the space have neutral colors to let the advertising and products projected on screens color the space.

Figure 57: Advisory Bar

Figure 58: Advisory Bar
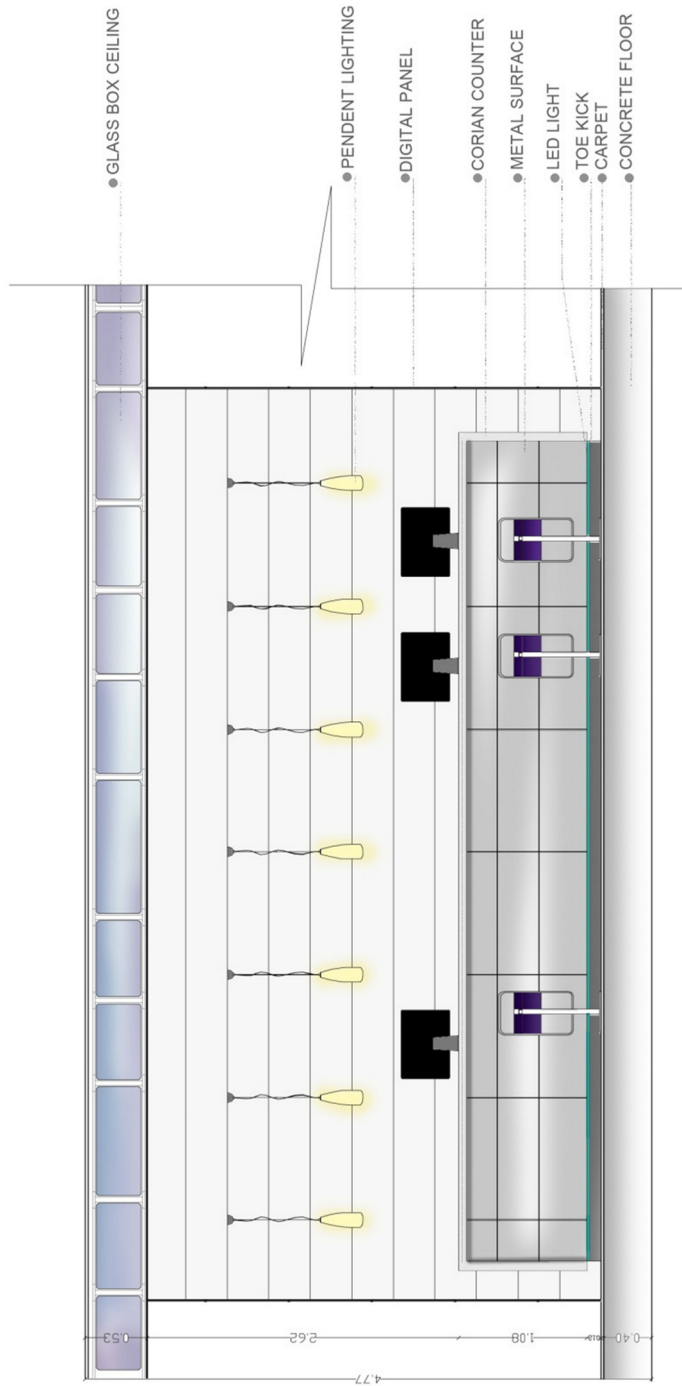
Figure 58: Advisory Ba e, Front View

GLASS BOX CEILING

PENDENT LIGHTING

DIGITAL PANEL

CORIAN COUNTER

METAL SURFACE

LED LIGHT

TOE KICK

CARPET

CONCRETE FLOOR

SCALE IN METER

0   1   2   3   4   5   10

0.53

2.62

1.08

0.40

4.77
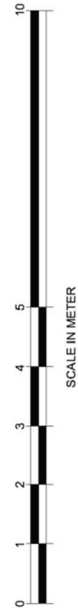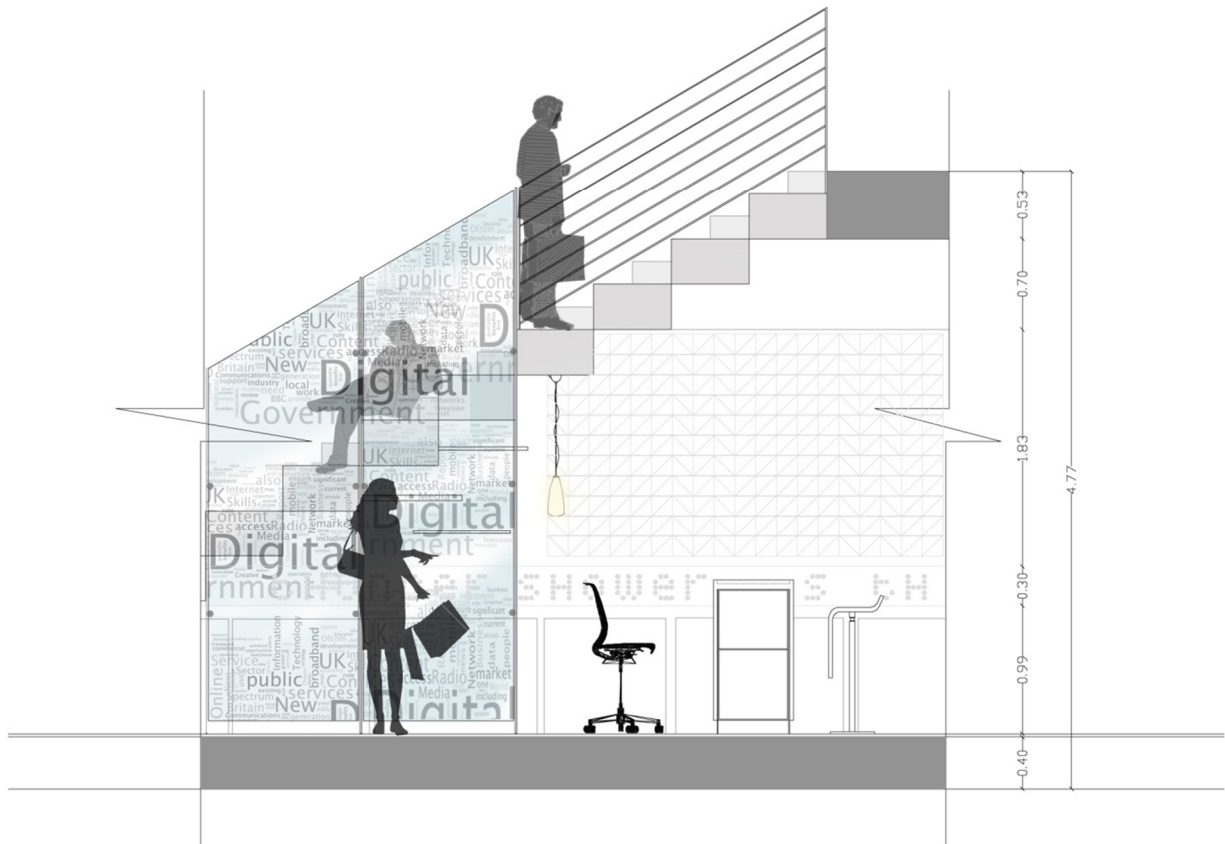
Figure 59: Advisory Bar, Side View
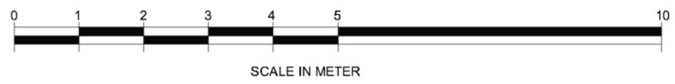
Figure 60: Auditory Stair

The auditory stair is not only a transition path connecting the first floor to the second floor. It is also designed for onsite sessions, introducing new products and watching interesting clips. The auditory stair is facing to the projecting wall provided for broadcasting clips, advertisings and movies.

The second floor houses a coffee/ snack bar. The design provides unconventional space for visitors to indirectly get informed by new technology. Interactive tables let customers order their drinks or foods from their seats. It is also possible for customers to play games, watch movies or connect to the internet from their tables equipped with interactive surfaces. Also digital screens around the space are the mediums that visually communicate with visitors and inform them by broadcasting the process of making a product. The space could become a meeting space when it is necessary.
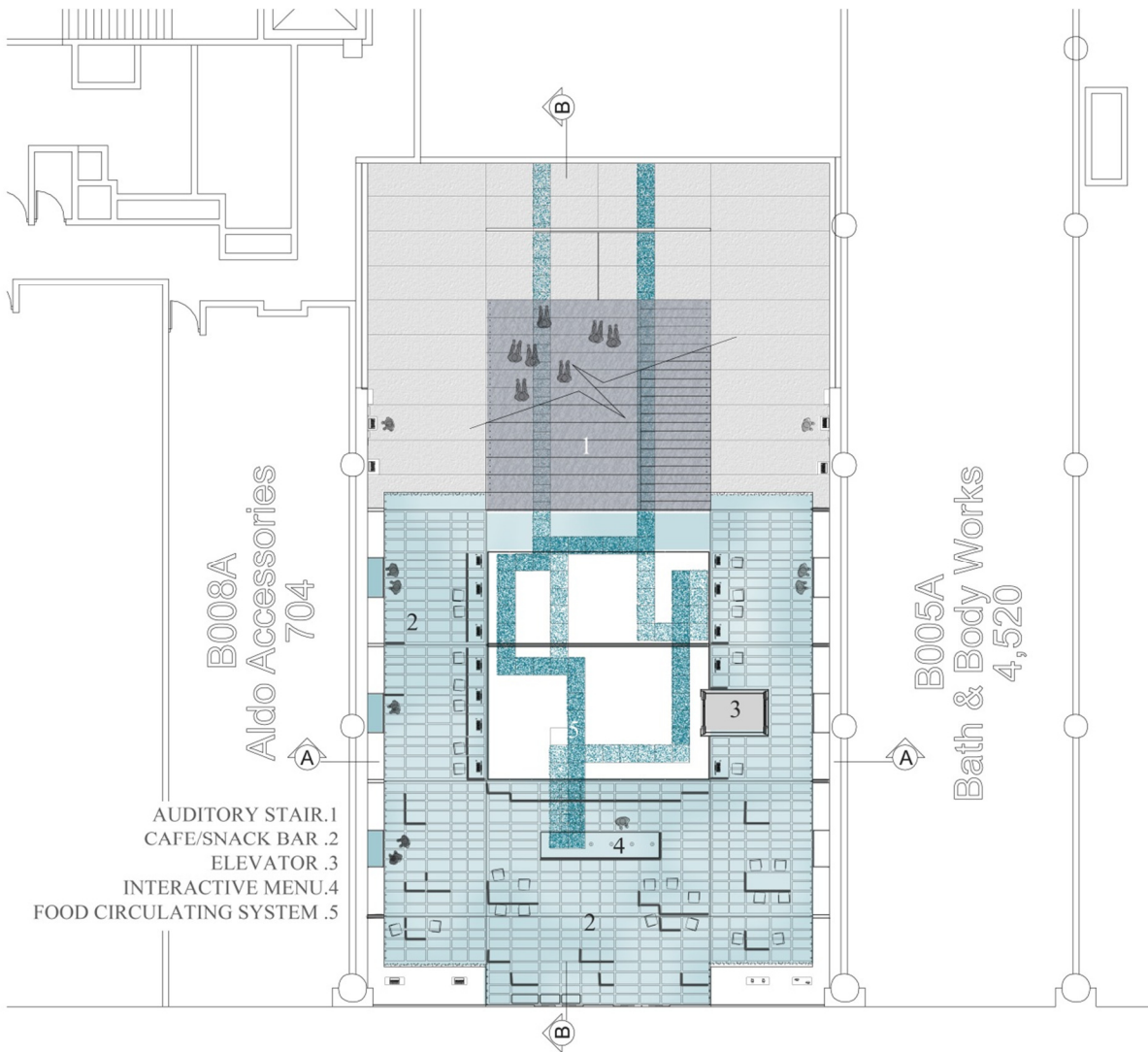
Figure 61: Second Floor Plan

AUDITORY STAIR.1
CAFE/SNACK BAR .2
ELEVATOR .3
INTERACTIVE MENU.4
FOOD CIRCULATING SYSTEM .5

Figure 62: Second Floor View

Although the kitchen is located in the first level, customers can order from the interactive menus installed on their tables. Orders are directly transmitted to the staff in the kitchen. When their orders get ready, they are placed on a conveyor rotating between the kitchen and the snack bar, where customers can pick them up.

Figure 63: Second Floor Plan, View from Snack Bar

Based on the conceptual strategies mentioned previously, the space establishes interactive relationships with potential consumers. The materials are interactive and respond to users. Most of the surfaces and walls are digital screens and portion of floors are equipped with LED lights that respond to heavy traffic loads. This means that the floor lightens when the space gets crowded.

The idea of transparency can be traced in every portion of the design. Transparent cubes hang down from the ceiling or come up from the floor create surfaces for installing digital screens. These surfaces can work as advertising panels or be used as products displays. The color

of the space depends on the image projecting from these cubes. Shoppers could also be a part of the projecting system by transmitting their selected advertising image. This means that when a visitor enters the space, the store sends him/her a welcome message that has the images of new products. By replying back to this message and selecting an image, the customer is the one who changes the color of space. At the same time the store locates that person and lightens up the cubes that person stands on. This type of technology makes the space more interactive and engages visitors with the retail more than before.

The idea of transparency can be followed in materials but it is also demonstrated in special design. Creating openings between the floors adds another layer of transparency to the space as it lets the shoppers visually and sonically connects to both levels. Moreover, the continuation of materials and spaces between levels makes the space legible for users, because

Figure 64: Section A-A

SCALE IN METER

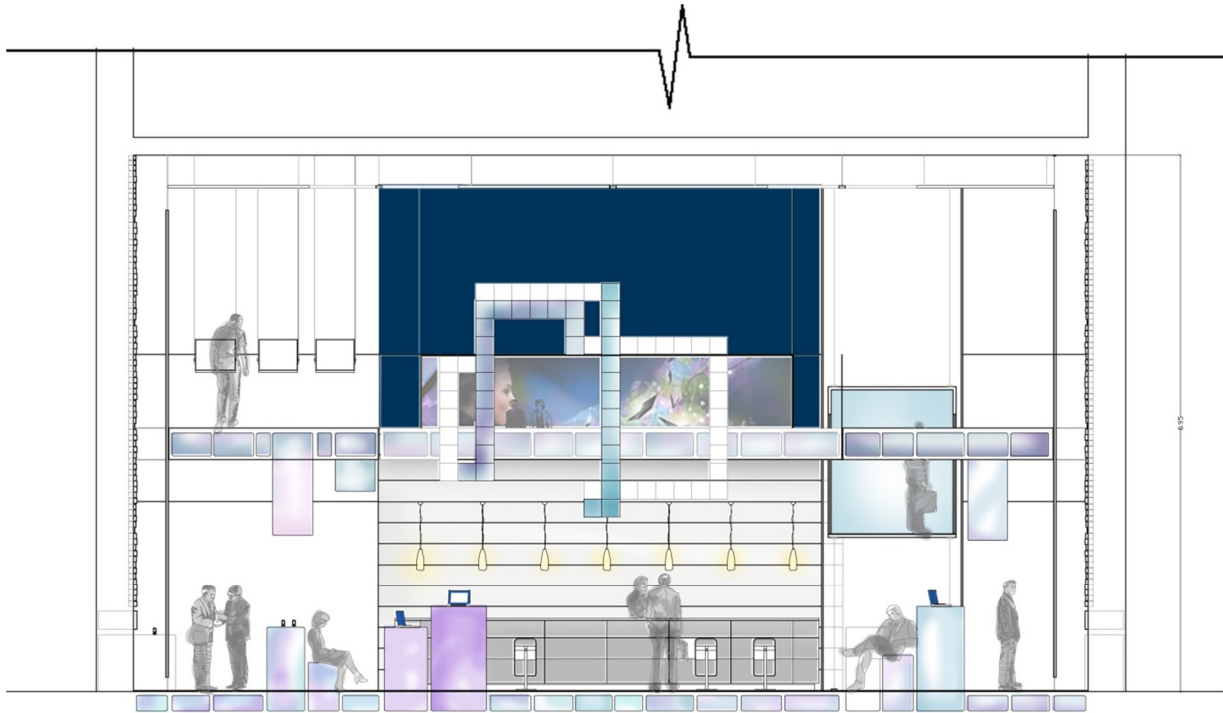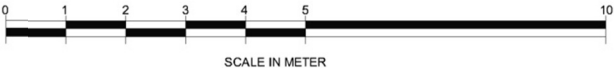they can project how the space looks on both floors at one time. The images following show sections and the ceiling plan. Although the store was formed by simple cubes, looking thorough sections shows how dynamic and alive the space is. The sections show how the design elements from each floor penetrate between them.
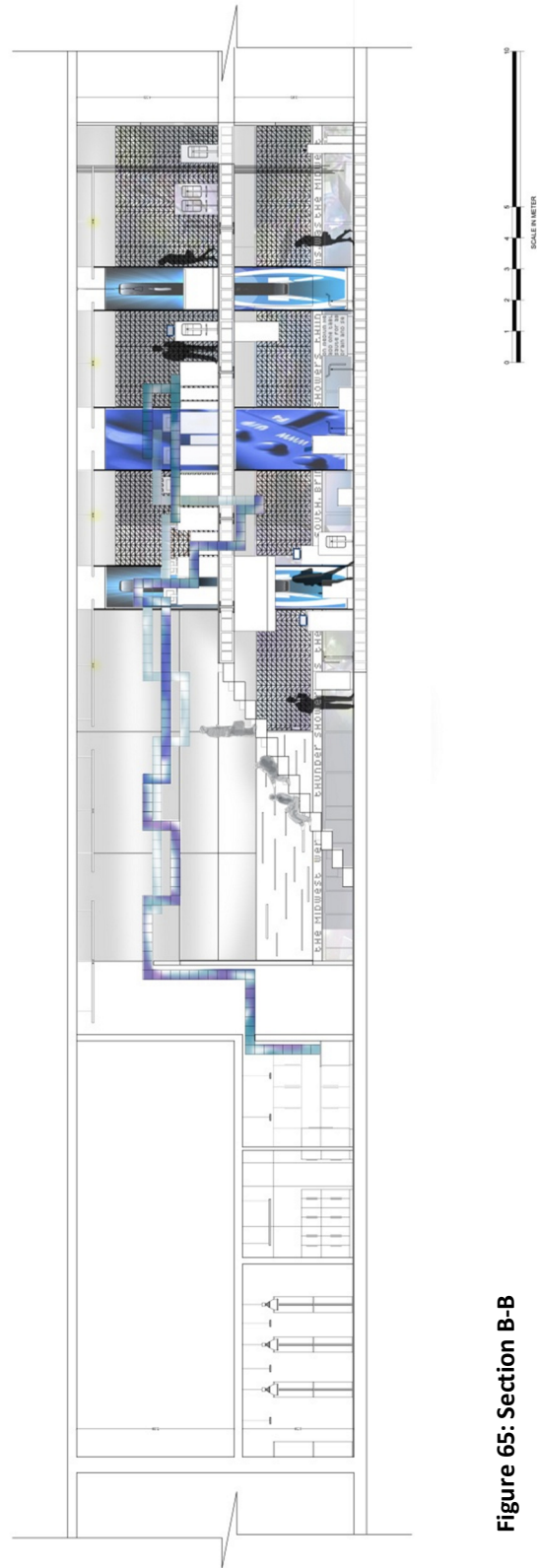
Figure 65: Section B-B

97
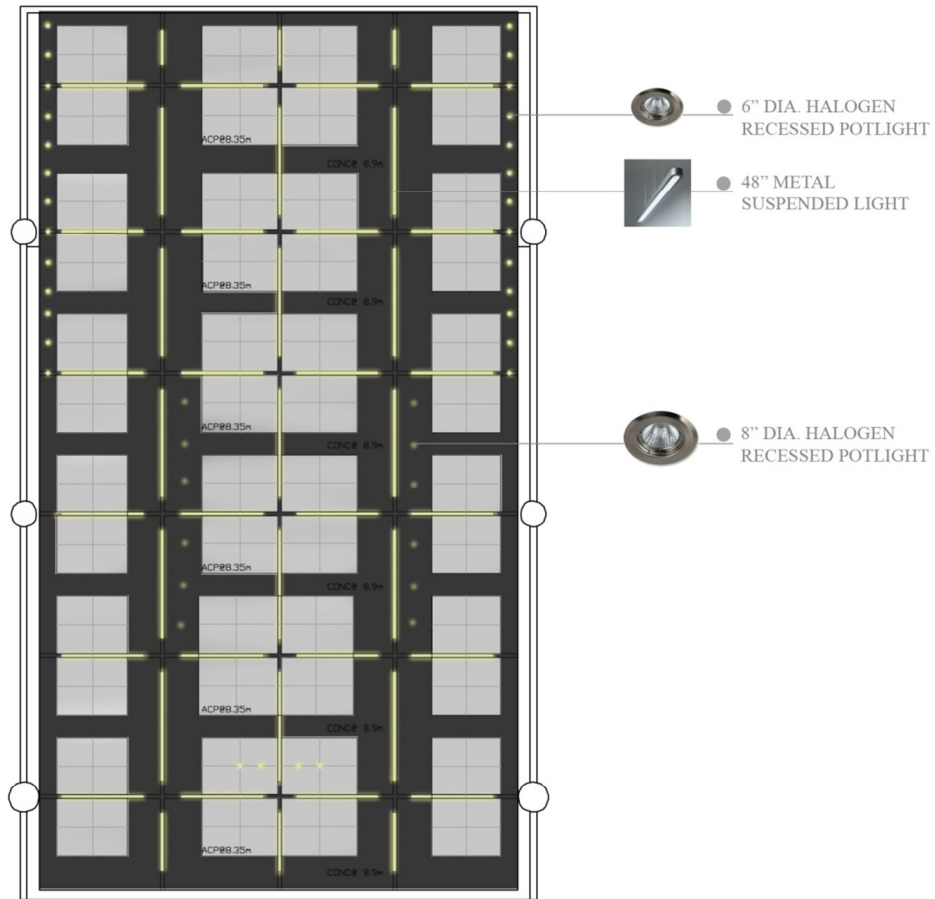
Figure 66: Second Plan Reflected Ceiling Plan

E. Experiential Stations

Designing the experiential stations is the other part of the project. The journey starts from the entrances and extends to the public path where large numbers of shoppers pass by. These stations are internal attractive/interactive nodes that act as experiential stations for digital products. Products include televisions, laptops, cameras, cellphones and mp3 players which each have their own station. I was trying to distribute all five stations on each floor and make them accessible both physically and visually. The stations are mostly located in places where there are openings between floors. They visually connect stations and let the public know what is on the other levels.

Figure 68 shows the distribution of stations various floors. Each color represents a specific type of product. Those colors are also going to apply to the design to make the stations color coded and give identity to each one, aiding customers, ability to find the stations easily. The design language stays the same for all the stations except the one located in center space at the main atrium. This central element is the "Bubble Tech Station" as I wanted to highlight it as exceptional to draw people's attention.

The form, floor pattern, surfaces and digital equipment of stations encourage all users to pass through the stations. Although I named each experiential station, there is no defined boundary between them and the public path. However, an entertaining fluid path is created that motivates shoppers to pass through and get informed about new products.
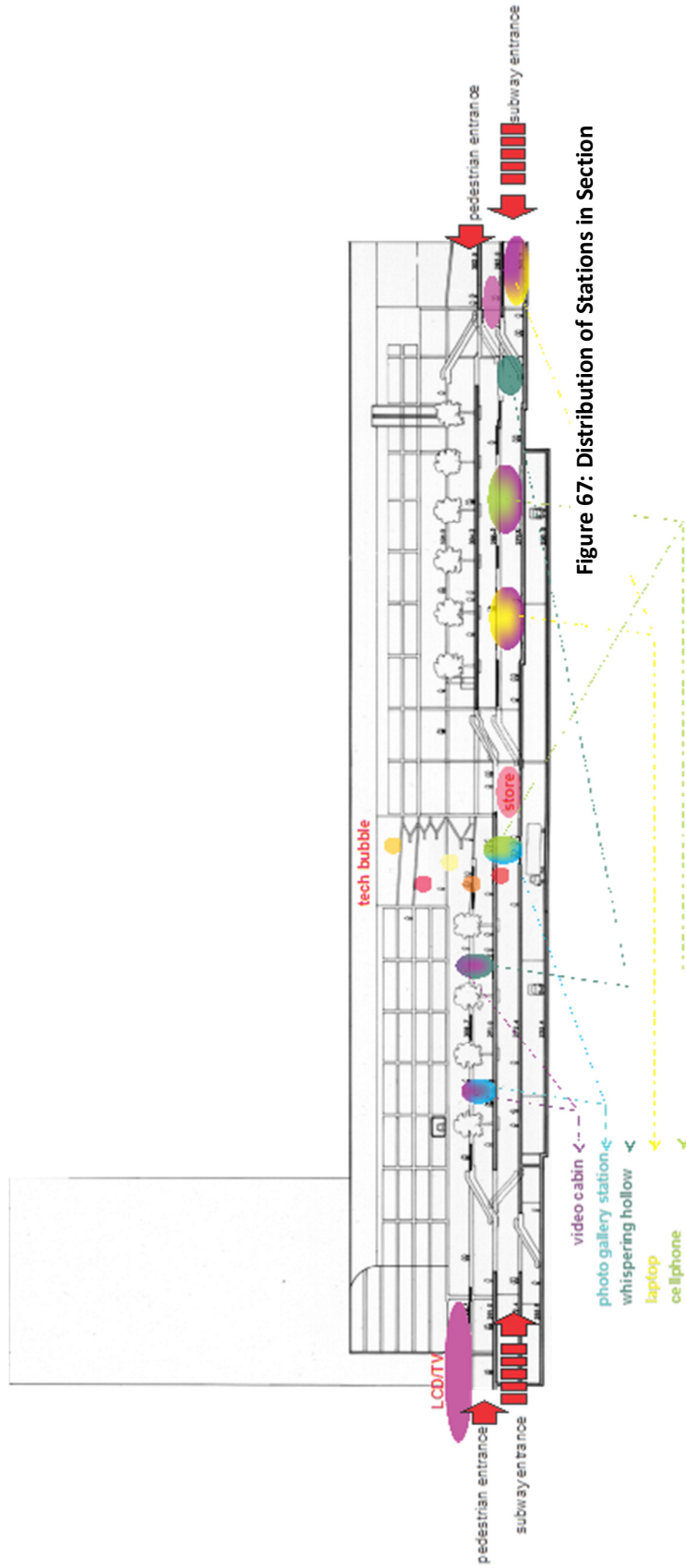
Figure 67: Distribution of Stations in Section

pedestrian entrance

subway entrance

tech bubble

LCD/TV

store

video cabin
photo gallery station
whispering hollow
laptop
cellphone

pedestrian entrance
subway entrance

100

1.   First Level Experiential Stations

First Floor Plan
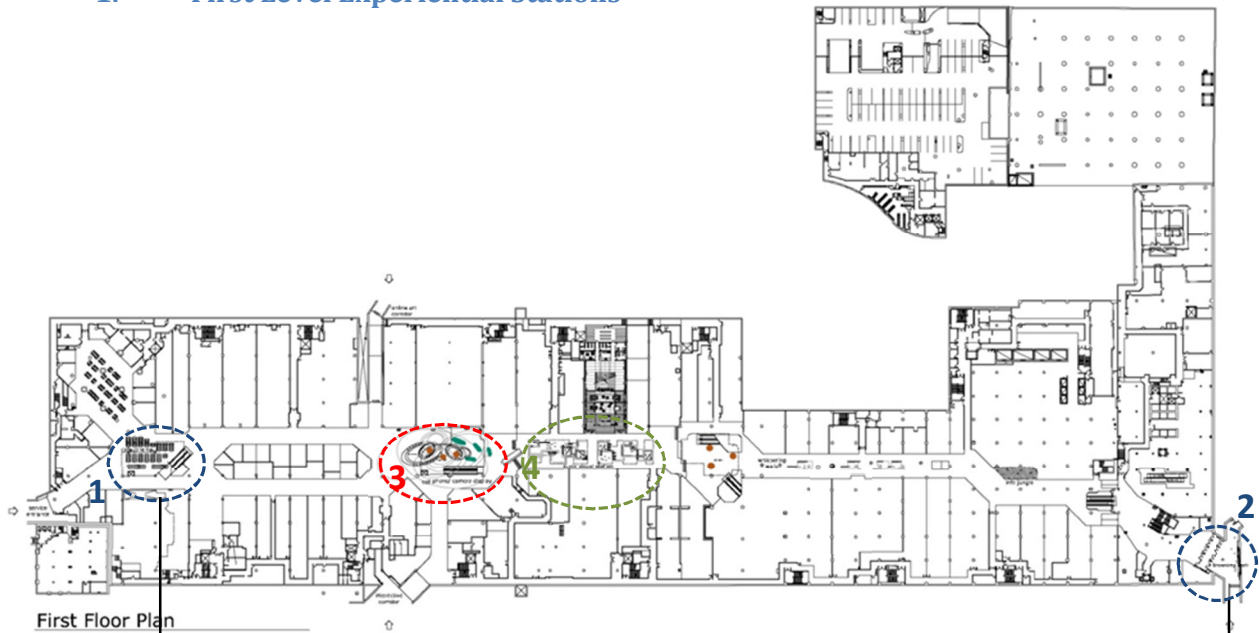
Figure 69: Cafe Cinema, Image by Author

1. Café Cinema Station

The crowded food court at the Eaton Centre could be more organized and fun by providing digital menus on the tables or stand panels. Screens installed in the food court display sport; movies or news to make the space more entertaining and pleasurable.
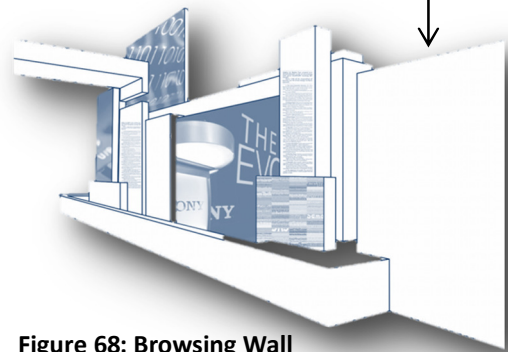
Figure 68: Browsing Wall

2. Browsing Station

Browsing panels at the entrance let shoppers search the stores and products they are looking for. The stores' location can be displayed electronically and directions can be provided.

**3. Bubble-Tech Station
(Cellphone/Camera display)**

This station is located in the middle of the first level of the main atrium of the shopping center and is visible from all the levels. The atrium

First Floor Plan
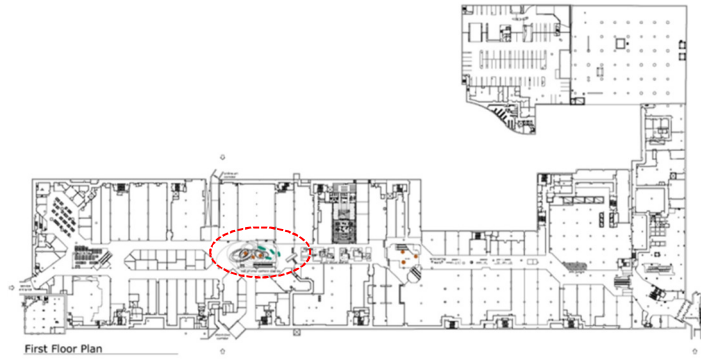
has a great volume that lets the design extend vertically. Elliptical displays, circular seats and a rotating fountain are the curvilinear design elements applied in this station. They are different from the linear design I suggest for the rest of the stations.
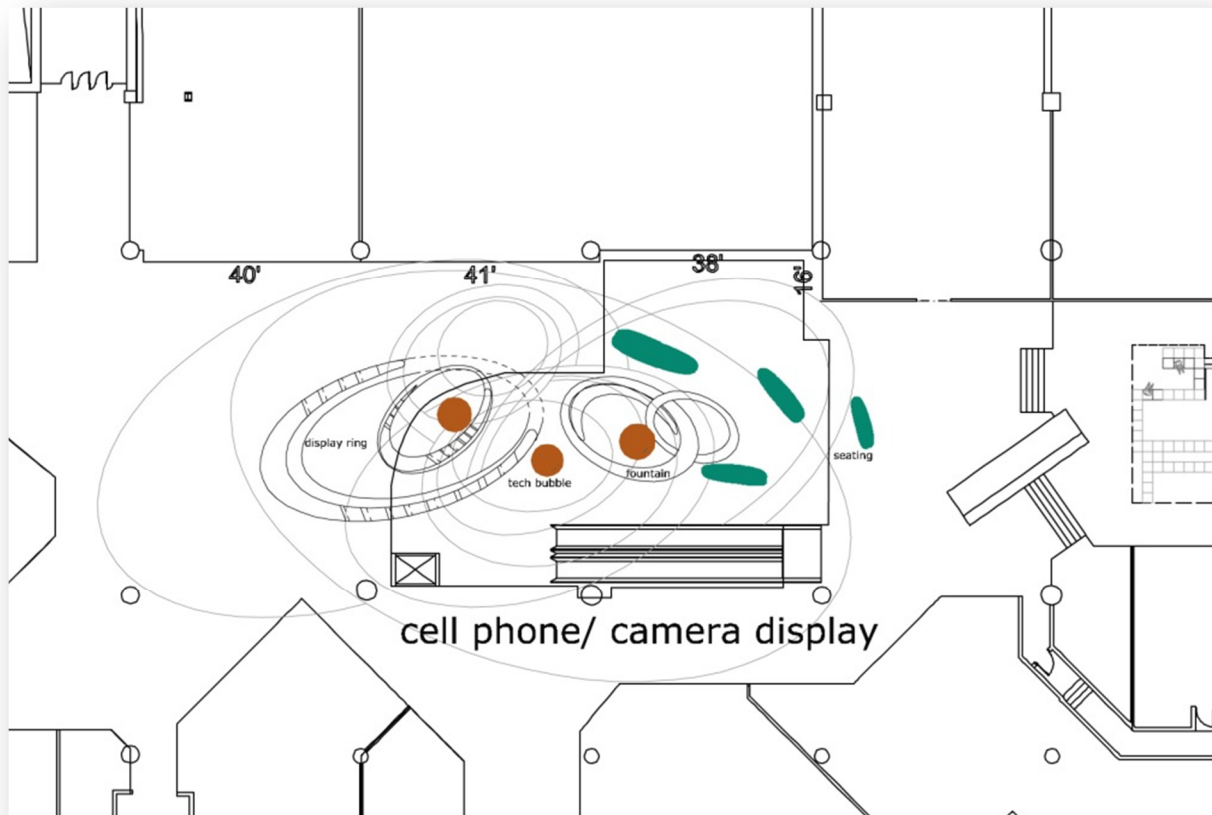
Figure 68: Bubble-Tech Station Plan

Bubble-tech cabins are the entertaining/ experiential part of the design. They let the users examine new products while they travel vertically in between floors. They are visually connected to the other stations when these bubbles move between floors. The movement of these bubbles is controlled by an operating system located in the main store.
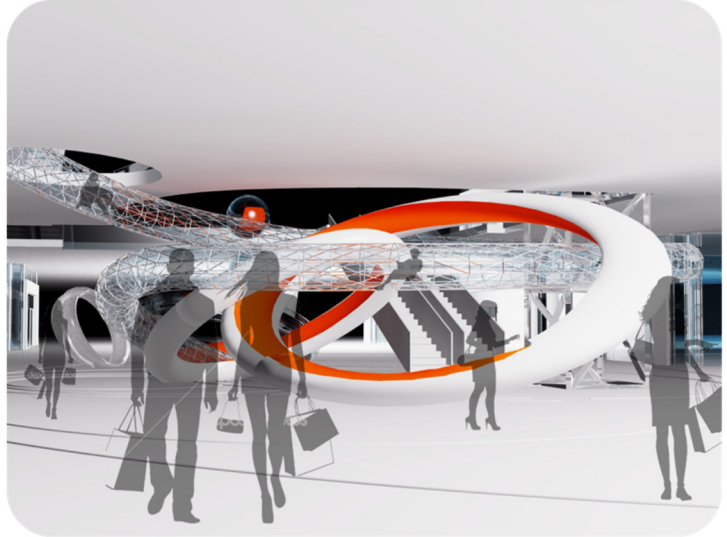
Figure 69: Bubble-tech station

Figure 70: Bubble-Tech station
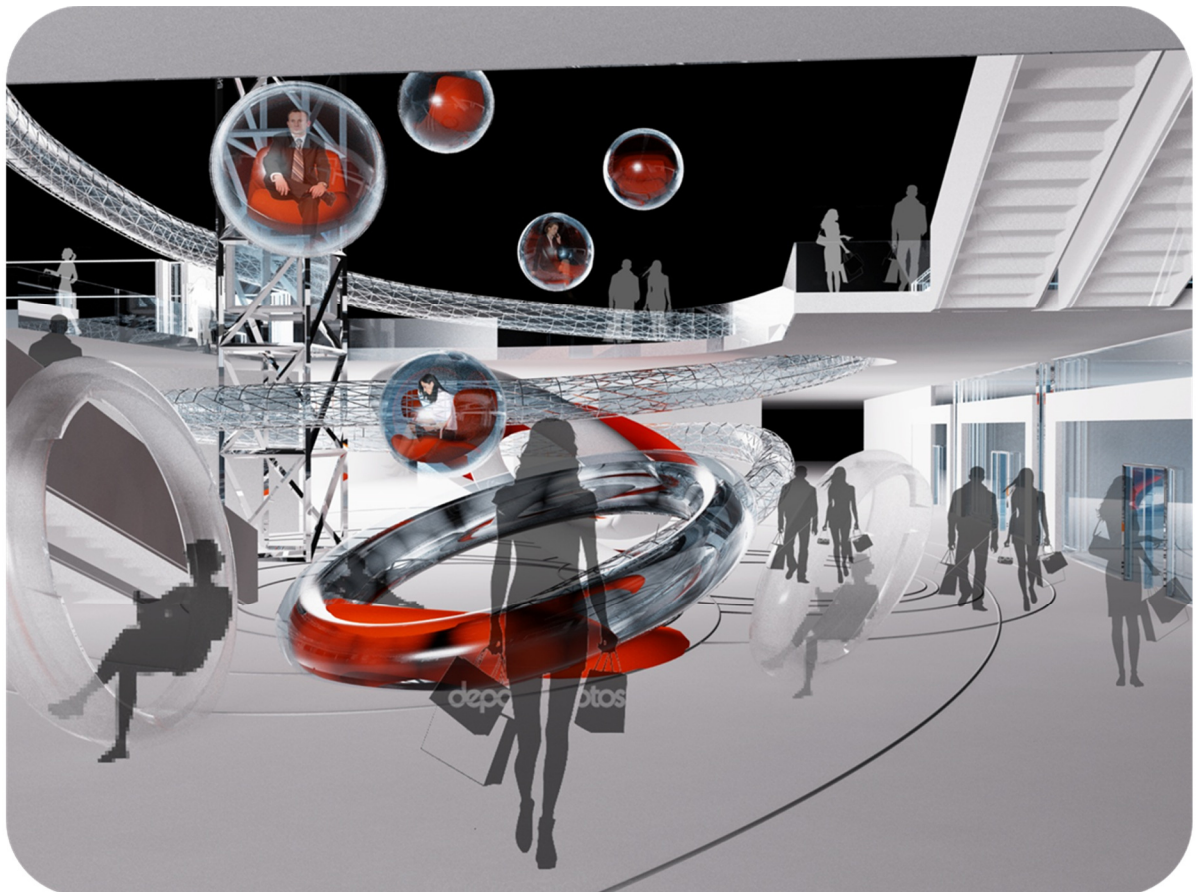
4. Audio Visual Station (TV/ Screen Display)

The Audio Visual station is located in the public corridor of the main level. The way this station is designed lets shoppers pass through the space without blocking the corridor. The space is defined by rectilinear channels with cubes rotate that between floors. These cubes are the places for storing products. They are circulating products between floors and make them accessible for staff to deliver to customers. The conveyer system in each node is under the control of the advisory station located in that station. It means that the person who is in charge of the station can stop the system from circulating to get the product to a customer or to load these storing boxes.
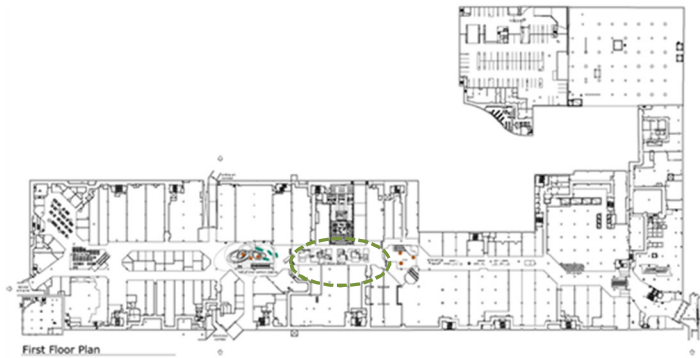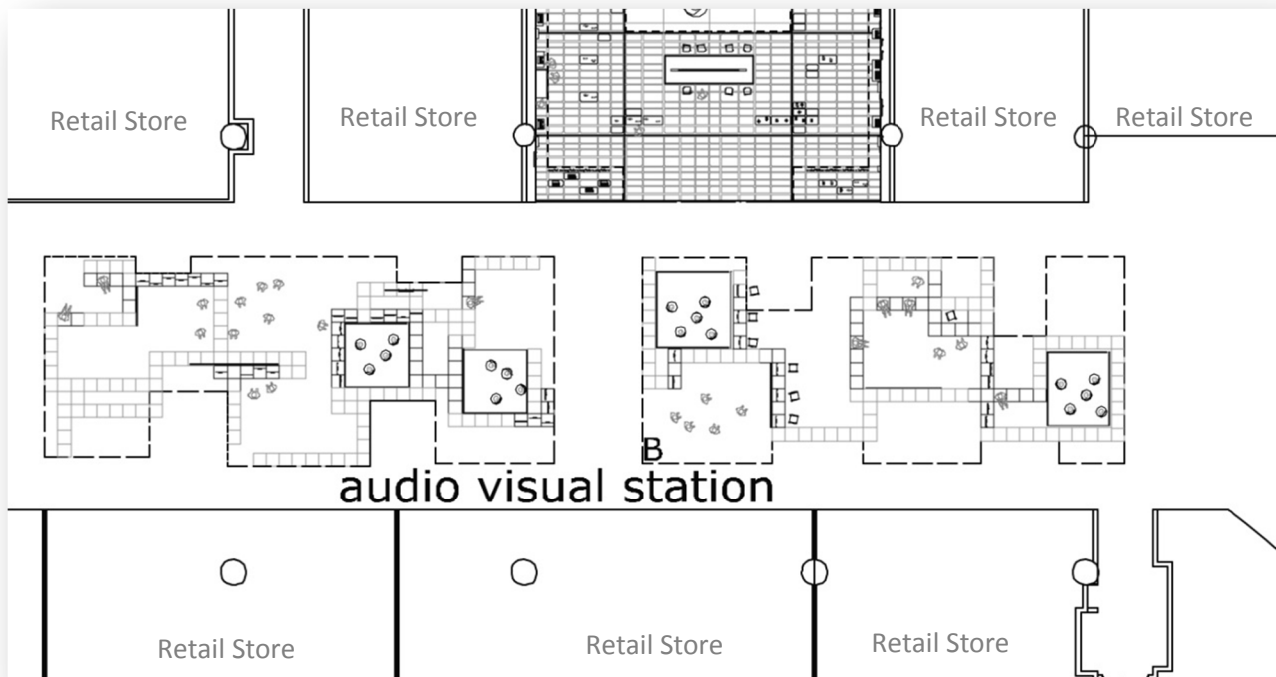
Figure 71: Audio Visual Station Plan

The system I suggest for this design is the Z-conveyor from the TGW Company. The rigid carrier grids are capable of handling a variety of goods from one horizontal conveyor system to another at the opposite end of the C/Z-conveyor. This system lifts up to 1500 items per hour with lift distances of up to 11 meters. It has a self-supporting construction with an integrated side panel. Depending on the design, panels could be solid, transparent or interactive digital surfaces. It is possible to change the configuration of these channels and change the layout of the space. It means that the space is not the permanent one and can be reshaped every four or five years based on the companies who want to lease the space.

What is most interesting about these channels is that they could create vague boundaries. The areas of the design where the cubes reach the floor could also be used as seating; however, in other parts they could work as product displays, counter bars or tables.
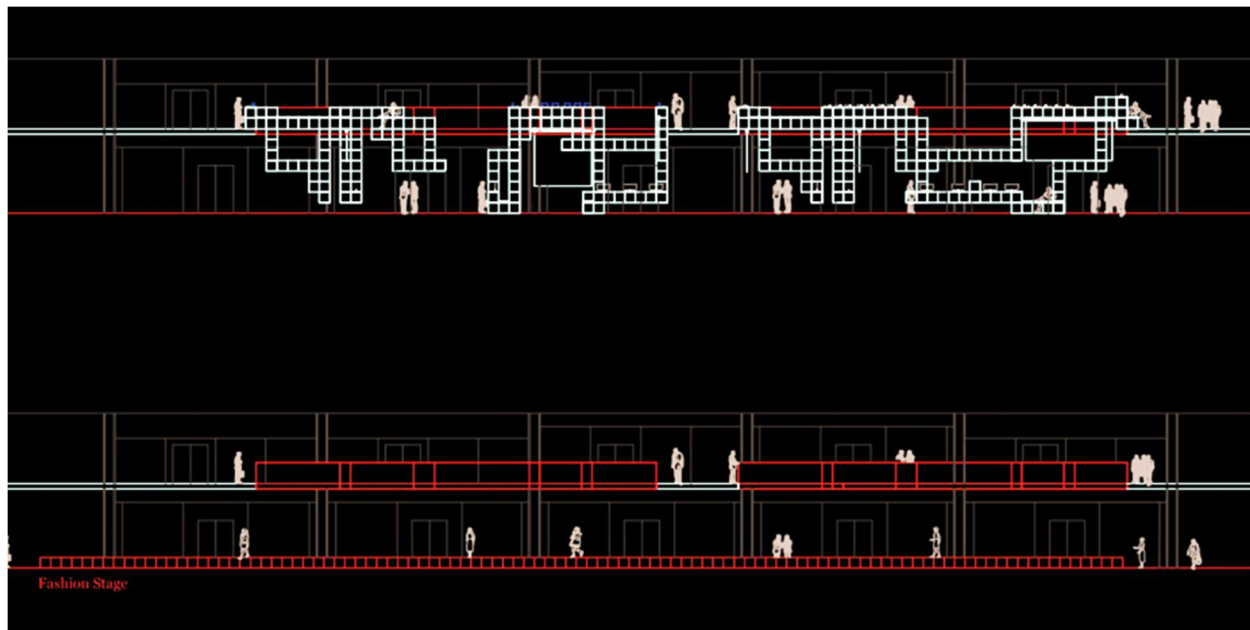
Figure 72: Audio Visual Station, Section

The spaces created between channels can be made more private and flexible through the use of drop-down screens that are installed underneath the cubes. These semi-close spaces could turn into movie rooms, music rooms, class rooms or meeting rooms. Customers could select a movie and display it on the screen to check the quality of the screen or the sound system. These spaces are not only practical for customers who want to examine and buy the products but also they provide pleasurable environments for visitors who come to the shopping center to have fun.

Figure 73: View from Audio Visual station

2.   Second Level Experiential Stations
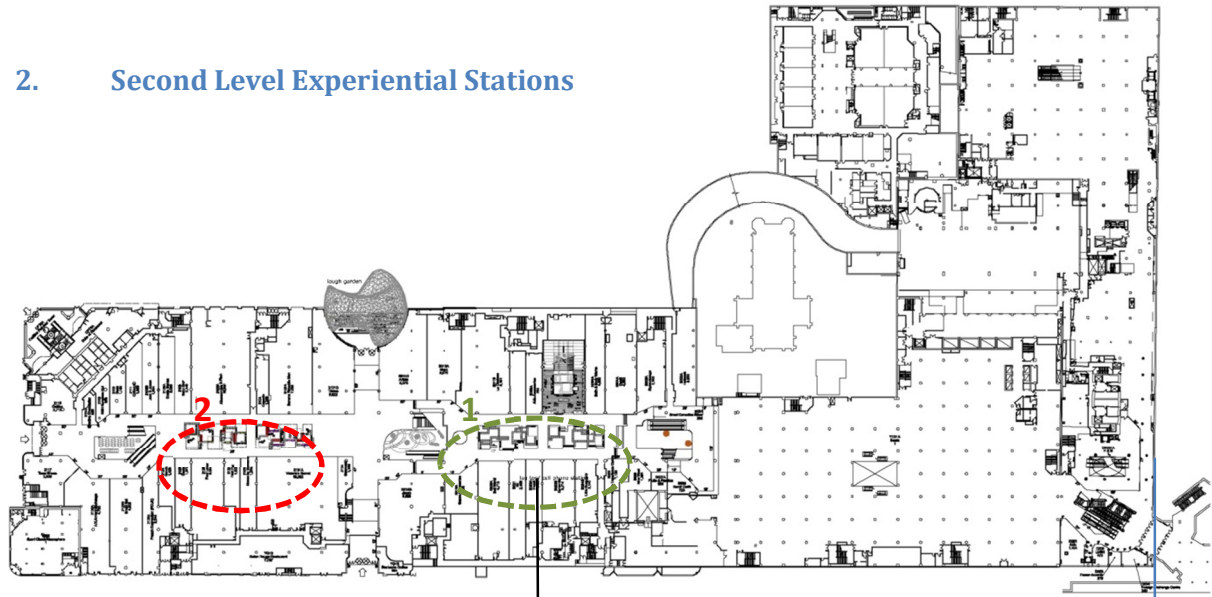
Second Floor Plan

Figure 74: Cellphone Display

1.   Laptop/ Cellphone Station

This station is designed above the Audio/Visual Station. Cell phone and laptop computer displays are placed around the opening and visually connect visitors and products from the other levels. The products are available for use by the public.

Figure 75: Laptop Display

Customers could connect to the internet to check their email; or to listen to music or news on the laptops displayed there. They could also use cell phones to transmit texts or make local calls. Those are some of the activities this retail environment provides to inform visitors and let them examine products. All the stations have an "Advisory Bar" to help customers to what they are looking for and to assist them to use the products.

2. Photo Gallery Station (Second Floor)

The photo gallery station is also placed on the second floor under the south opening in the Eaton Centre. This is the place for customers to look for cameras and MP3 players.

Second Floor Plan

ADVISORY STATION .1	ADVISORY STATION .1
PRINT STATION .2	ONLINE STATION .2
PHOTO SHOT .3	LISTENING WALL .3
SEATING .4	SEATING .4
CAMERA DISPLAY .5	MP3 PLAYER DISPLAY .5
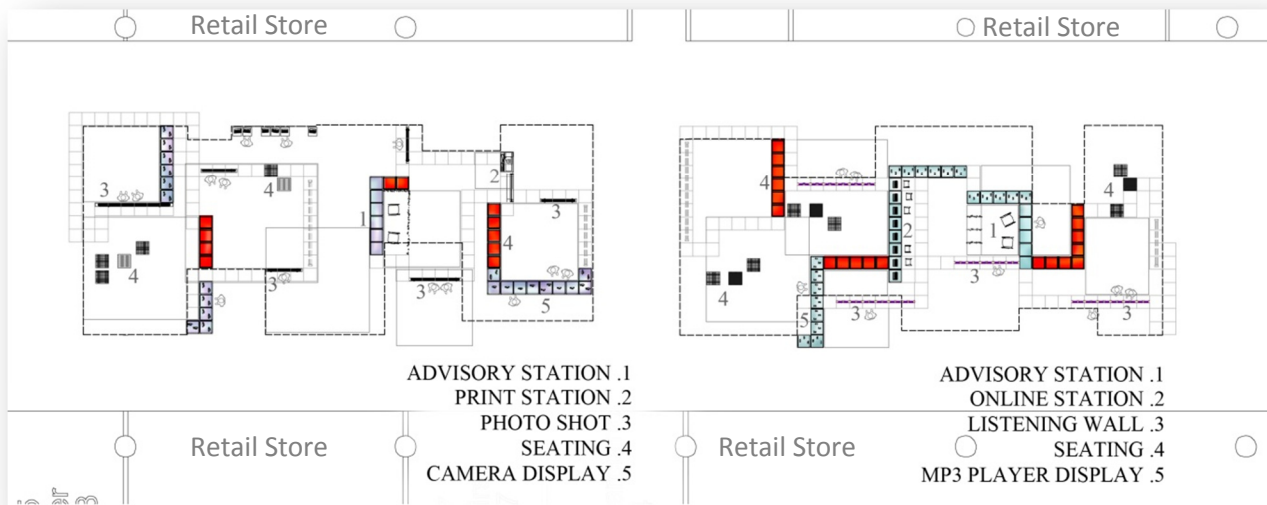
Figure 76: Photo Gallery Station

A "listening wall" is used for the display of MP3 players. They are installed on the gridded-frame wall that let the customers plug in earphones and listen to music.

Figure 77: Listening Wall, MP3 Player Station

Figure 80: Mp3 Player Station

The other part of the station is where cameras are displayed. Visitors to this space can use the cameras to take pictures and can also print them there. Also, there are digital panels provided at the station for photographic backgrounds. Customers can select an image background and stand in front of it to have their taken photos. The last image taken would be displayed on cube panels to make the space more interactive and dynamic.

Figure 81: View from Photo Gallery Station

Figure 82: View from Photo Gallery Station
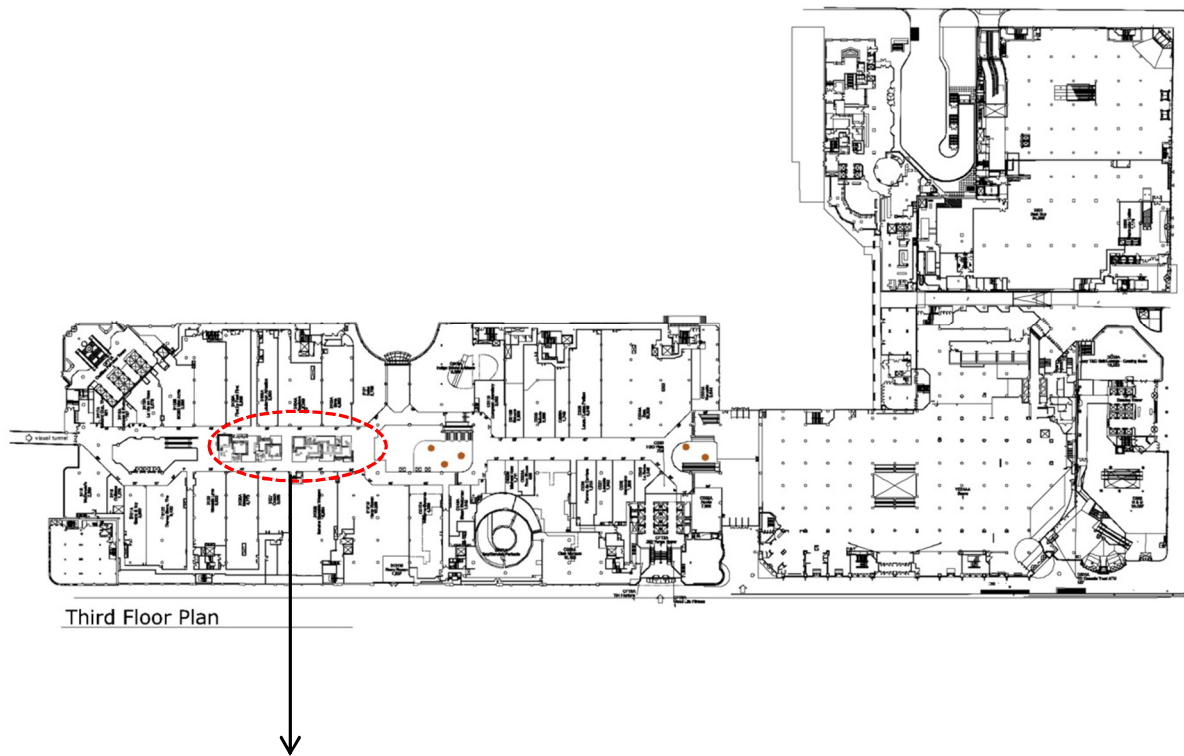
Third Floor Plan

1. Video Cabins/ Online Station

Above the Photo Gallery Station, around the opening on the Third floor, there are some empty spaces. I suggest taking advantage of those spaces and constructing Video Cabins. Those cabins are transparent cubes equipped with sound systems and televisions. Cabins provide private space for 4-5 people to rest, watch a movie or listen to music. They are great places either for customers to examine the products installed there or for shoppers who get tired and want to refresh themselves. Also they could be used as meeting rooms for the companies represented in these interactive retail environments or the rest of the stores in the Eaton Centre to introduce and advertise their products.

Here is a plan showing video cabins and an online station located in that vicinity.

Figure 78: Video Cabin/ Online Station Plan
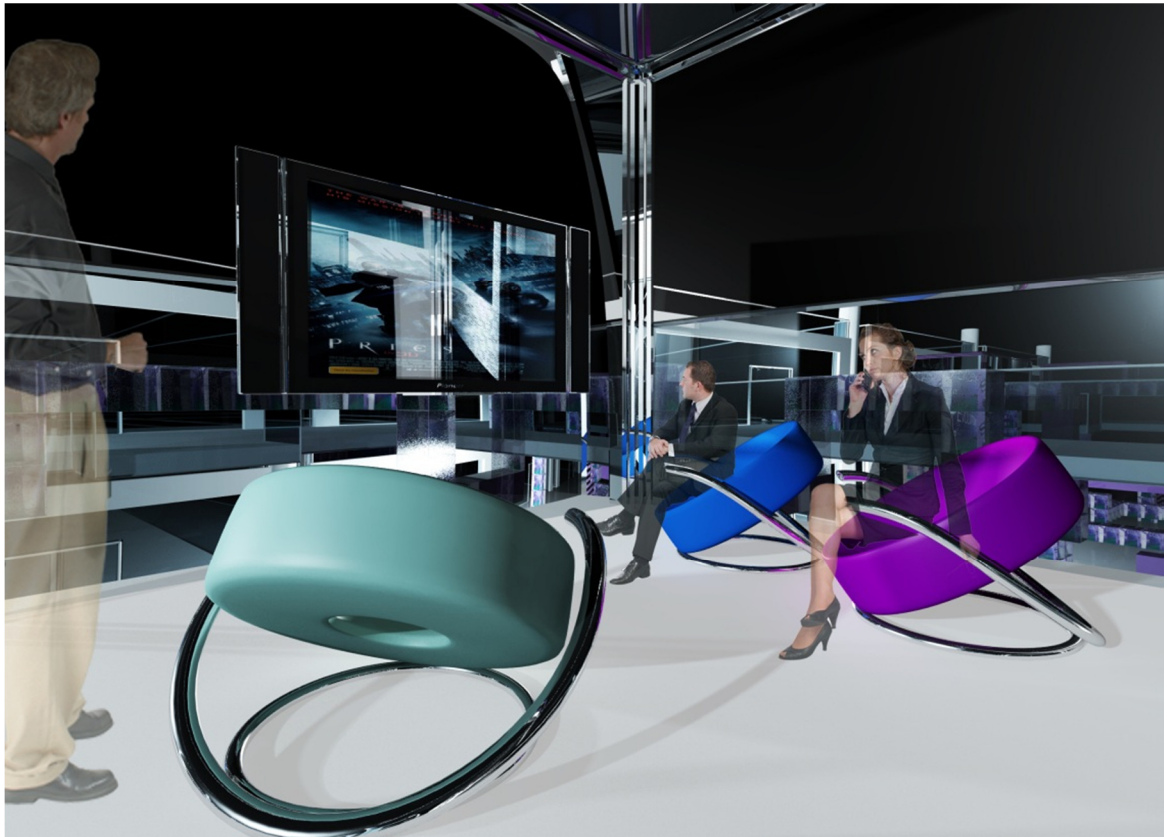
Figure 79: View from Video Cabin

Figure 80: View from Third Floor Opening
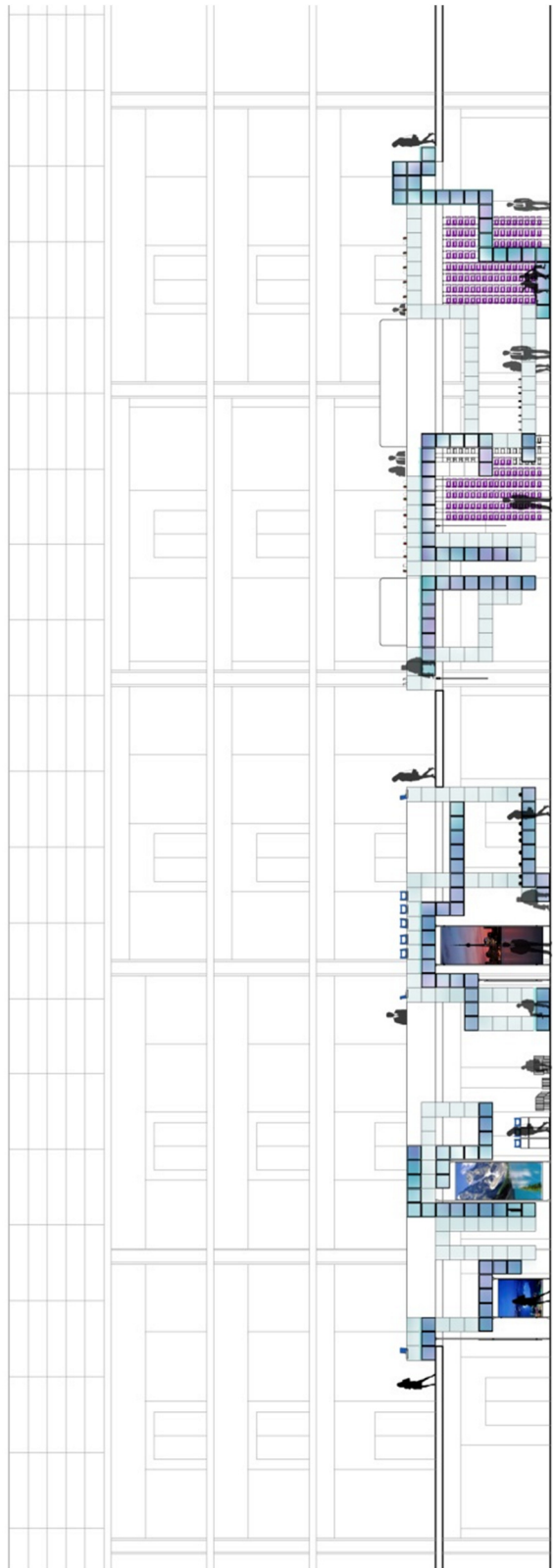
Figure 81: Section

F. Material, Furniture and finishes
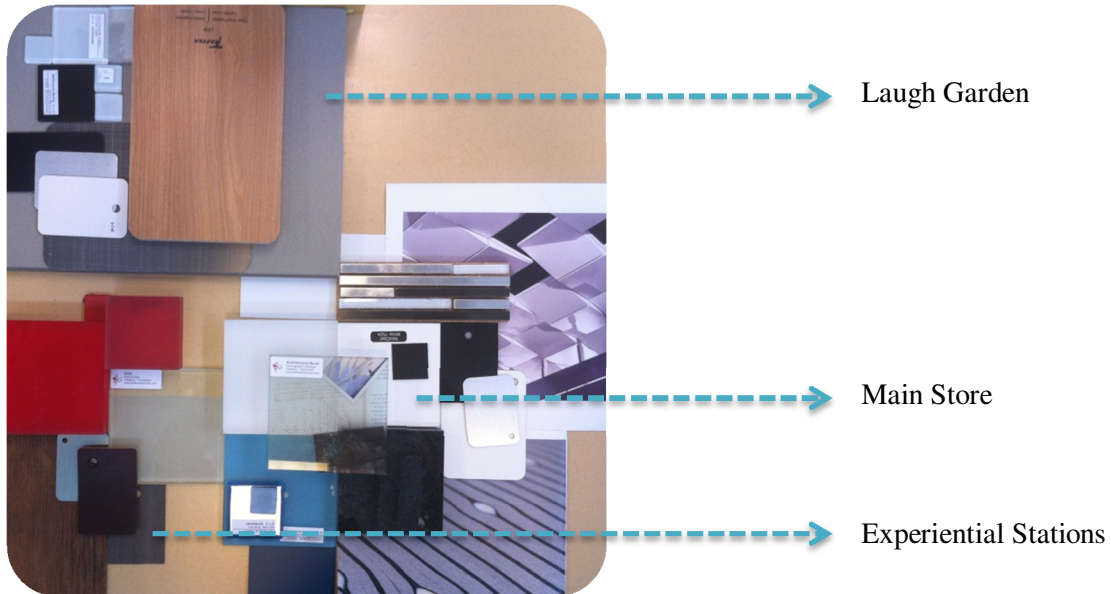
The criteria for selecting material and furniture are:

- Use transparent materials such as glass and acrylic to have more visual connection between spaces

- Try to make the interiors more sustainable and green by using recycled materials

- Exploit contemporary high-tech materials and furniture

- Use material and furniture that is neutral in color sothat digital screens and advertising panels would make the space colorful

G. FFE

Item #	Manuf.	Style	Color	Location	Website
1	Steelcase	Scoop	White, Black Red, Blue	Audio visual Station, Photo Gallery station, Advisory Station	http://www.steelcase.com/en/products/category/seating/stools/scoop/pages/overview.aspx
2	HighTower	Turner	White, Black Purple, Blue	Main store display show, Advisory Bar, Snack bar	http://www.hightoweraccess.com/pricelist/new/pdf/turner.pdf
3	ADELTA	Bubble Chair	Transparent cover with Red, White, Blue, Purple Seats	Main store Communication space	http://www.eero-aarnio.com/23
4	Sonic Chair	Sonic Chair	Red, Blue, Purple	Main store Communication space	http://www.sonicchair.de/english/index_engl.htm
5	Hermanmiller	Tato	Red, White, Orange	Main store Communication space	http://www.hermanmiller.com/Products/Tato-Tatino-Tatone
6	homeandfurnituregallery	athena-multimedia-sofa-integrated-computer	White, Black	Experiential Stations	http://homeandfurnituregallery.com/multimedia-integrated-sofa-called-athena
7	Haworth	Very Wire Stacker	White, Red	Staff Room	http://www.haworth.com/en-us/Products/Furniture/Seating/Stack/Pages/Very.aspx

Item #	Manuf.	Style	Color	Location	Website
8	Hightower	Myflower High Chair	Black	Task chair for office spaces	http://www.hightoweraccess.com/pricelist/new/pdf/mayflower_hb_swivel.pdf
9	Hightower	Myflower Chair	Red, Black	Guest chair for office spaces, Snack Bar	http://www.hightoweraccess.com/pricelist/htmayflower.html
10	Enricopelliz Zoni	Amaranta	Black, White	Stool for Snack Bar	http://www.architonic.com/pmsht/enrico-pellizzoni_proref/1134374
11	ARTIFORT	Ribbon Chair	Lime, Green Apple, Navy blue, Purple	Video Cabin	http://www.modernnest.com/Products/Artifort/Ribbon_Chair.asp
12	Herman Miller	Canvas Office	Walnut	Store operation	http://www.hermanmiller.com/Search?topSearchText=teneo+storage
13	Hightower	Chat Table Desk	Black	Manager's Office	http://www.hightoweraccess.com/pricelist/new/pdf/chatdesk.pdf
14	Hightower	Concorde	Black	Manager's Office	http://www.hightoweraccess.com/pricelist/htcoffee.html
15	Hightower	Icicle Tables	White, Gray	Staff Room	http://www.hightoweraccess.com/pricelist/new/pdf/icicle.pdf

Item #	Manuf.	Style	Color	Location	Website
16	Trendhunter	Sony Fusion Table	Black	Experiential Stations, Snack bar	http://www.trendhunter.com
17	KEYTEC, INC	Touch Screen Kiosk	Black, White, Gray	Experiential Station, Snack Bar	http://www.magictouch.com
18	Atracsys	AtracTable, AtracBar	Black, white, Gray	Snack Bar, Main Store Display shoe	http://www.atracsys.com/is/documents/Atracsys_atracTable_data_sheet_EN.pdf
19	Atracsys	AtracTable, AtracBar	Black, white, Gray	Snack Bar Interactive Menu	http://www.atracsys.com/is/documents/Atracsys_atracTable_data_sheet_EN.pdf

Table 6: FFE Furnishing

H. Lighting fixture

Item #	Manuf.	Style	Color	Website
1	FONTANA ARTE SALE	TUBO LED	Black	http://www.modernnest.com/Products/Fontana_Arte/Tubo_LED_Pendant.asp
2	ITRE LIGHT	0 Sound Ceiling	Silver	http://www.modernnest.com/Products/Itre/0_Sound_Ceiling.asp
3	ITRE LIGHT	Lightline	Black,	http://www.modernnest.com/Products/Itre/Lightline_Pendant.asp
4	ZEROGRAVITY	Cube light	Silver	http://www.modernnest.com/Products/ZeroGravity/Cube_Light.asp
5	AURELIANO TOSO	MIAMI	Gray Silver	http://www.modernnest.com/Products/Aureliano_Toso/Miami.asp
6	Lightsmart	Recessed Round Downlights with LED	Silver	http://www.lightsmart.co.uk/bathroom-recessed-round-downlights-with-blue-leds-ip44.html
7	Elite Trade kitchen	Led Recessed Downlights	White, Silver	http://www.elitekitchens.co.uk/elite-collection-18/kitchen-lighting-7/led-recessed-downlights-317.htm
8	Zero	Stream	White, Gray	http://www.architonic.com/pmsht/stream-zero/1047629
9	BaiZao	n 400mm LED Cube Chair Light BZ-CH002	White transparent cube	http://www.dinodirect.com/led-cube-chair-light-400mm-bz-ch002.html

Table 7: Lighting Fixture

CHAPTER 6: Conclusion

Technology has developed to the point that it is being used in several aspects of real life and it is hard to imagine life without it. The emergence of digital space and the integration of it with physical ones is one of the influences of developing technology on design culture. The integration of technology with design has changed the definition of physical spaces and blurred physical boundaries between the spaces. Hence, technology provides more links to space.

The rationale for this project is the need to explore how an interior offers opportunities for a company to express its brand and products to attract more customers by integrating technology in its design. The verification of this question started with exploring the development of retail interior space and the relationship between retail design and technological, economic and social culture. The concept of combining online with offline shopping suggests a platform for shaping the design. Integrating an on-line platform creates the potential for the creation of a liberated environment that allows more customers to be part of the retail experience. Users have the freedom and ability to enter to the retail environment either online or as a physical experience and through the design I have proposed, they are encouraged to navigate between these two environments. This type of hybrid shopping gives more freedom to customers to connect to or leave the space whenever they want. This is a new way of expanding a market and providing a comfortable environment for customers as well as a more entertaining and engaging environment.

The improvement of technology has enabled progress in the development of visual components, yielding immersive, highly visual, three-dimensional environments. This new technological environment can provide new fantastic forms for visual products that can create a

more attractive, interactive and cooperative spaces to facilitate communication. Applying interactive and responsive materials to the design not only bring more fantasy to the space, but also create an experiential space for the retail space. The entertaining space provided promises to attract more customers and engage more users with products compared to more traditional approaches to retail design. Equipping the space with digital elements makes it an informatory environment. The transfer of information becomes the base of this new form of technological environment. Traditionally, information is seen as a concept detached from materiality. Contrastingly, this new form of retail is mainly immaterial and is structured through components that are extremely visual and reliant on broadcast and projection.

One of the biggest challenges in this project was how each company (Apple, Sony, Toshiba, HP, and Dell) would express their values and brands in this highly visual environment. Since the project proposes the development of a design that communicates with users and provides linguistic signs to outsiders in order to attract customers, retailers are not looking to create places just to sell, but to suggest and evoke the essence of the brand. The new retail brand, the ENEX Store, not only is a representation of each included company, but also an expression of its own values. These values include expressing vibrancy, providing high-tech spaces for high end companies, and creating entertaining and experiential environments that are embedded with a company's brand values.

As technology is improving so rapidly, it is important to understand the challenges that retail environments are facing today. My investigation revealed that developments in consumer's shopping behavior have changed retail stores from functional buying place to a places that are more recreational. Thus, integrating spaces with visual products and interactive materials is one common way that retailers use to provide more entertaining places. The issue is that these type of

spaces address the younger generation more than older adults as youth are more educated with technology and know how to use and engage with it in space. My challenge became how to create a design that could provide a welcoming environment for older adults and encourage them to participate with products in the space. Thus, designing a physical retail store that included a staff of professionals to assist customers is the solution I am suggesting to engage a broader demographic.

I believe that the strength of my project is how the store spreads throughout the shopping center and is located in places where people can be engaged both visually and sonically. It is more like a sequence of spaces that leads its users on a path that passes through each station and informs them by providing signs and symbolic motifs that communicate the presence and purpose of the retail store. Allowing products to be available for use in secure areas creates an experiential path for customers. I believe that the use of visual culture, branding and advertising as part of this path in cooperation with technology provides a tangible environment for conveying brands values and informing visitors.

In conclusion, this new form of retail space dynamically combined physical and virtual spaces by providing a flexible physical environment and presenting new opportunities for social interaction. The project could be developed for individual brands as well for the combination of brands suggested here. The creation of a neutral new brand to be used as an "umbrella" under which the individual known brands can appear takes advantage of technology to create an online and offline identity as retail spaces that provide more freedom to customers. The brand, the ENEX Store, will become recognized as an entertaining series of places for experiencing new digital products.

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