

# MERCHANDISE MARKETING


*FIDM's Just for Educators Career Facts & Figures*



## **Definition:**

**“Merchandising** is the main function of apparel retailing. Fashion merchandising is the planning, buying, and selling of fashion apparel and accessories to offer the right merchandise blend to meet consumer demand.” (*Glencoe Marketing Series: Fashion Marketing, Gigi Ekstrom & Margaret Justiss, McGraw-Hill Glencoe Publishers, p.30, Unit 1: The World of Fashion - [marketingseries.glencoe.com](http://marketingseries.glencoe.com)*)

**“Marketing** is the process of developing, promoting, and distributing products to satisfy customers’ needs and wants. Marketing starts at the very beginning of the product development and continues after a consumer purchases that product. It is a series of activities that fashion businesses undertake so that customers will buy products from them instead of their competitors.” (*Glencoe Marketing Series: Fashion Marketing, Gigi Ekstrom & Margaret Justiss, McGraw-Hill Glencoe Publishers, p.26, Unit 1: The World of Fashion - [marketingseries.glencoe.com](http://marketingseries.glencoe.com)*)



“The retail trade sector comprises establishments engaged in retailing merchandise, generally without transformation, and rendering services incidental to the sale of merchandise. The retailing process is the final step in the distribution of merchandise; retailers are, therefore, organized to sell merchandise in small quantities to the general public. This sector comprises two main types of retailers: store and non-store retailers.” *U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Industry at a Glance, NAICS 42-45, Wholesale and Retail Trade.*

### ***Professional Skills, Proficiencies, and Competencies Necessary:***

1. **Written Communication** – letters, memos, reports, presentations
2. **Analytical Ability** – complex problem solving, detail orientation, numerical analysis, systemic, management, financial, customer, color, trend, and silhouette analyses, business practices
3. **Computing Skills & Ability** – software and hardware technology applications and info technology trends
4. **Oral Communication** – active learning, active listening, critical thinking, public speaking
5. **Social Skills** – teamwork, coordination, motivation, negotiation, persuasion
6. **Systems Skills** -judgment and decision making, visioning, systems evaluation, multi-tasking
7. **Resource Management Skills** - business practices, management of materials, people, and time
8. **Business Practices** - management, marketing, financial, promotional, intrapreneurial, entrepreneurial, leadership

## Merchandise Marketing Career Options:

“**Marketing** jobs can be related to data and metrics analysis, statistics, strategic planning, advertising, retail sales, merchandising, media research, market research, product research, telemarketing, brand marketing, e-commerce, product development, ad sales, promotions, community affairs, interactive marketing, events marketing, business development, and consulting.”...Variety Careers—Media and Entertainment Job Site. [www.variety.com](http://www.variety.com)

“**Retail and Wholesale** jobs can be related to sales, store operations, merchandising, customer service, member services, product distribution and production.”... Variety Careers—Media and Entertainment Job Site. [www.variety.com](http://www.variety.com)

### Entry Level (up to 3 years)

Assistant Store Manager

Sales Specialist

Management Trainee

Assistant Buyer

Assistant Planner

Merchandising Assistant

Showroom Assistant

Merchandise Coordinator/Field Merchandiser

### Mid Level (4+ years)

Area Sales Manager

Assistant Store Manager

Department Manager

Associate Buyer

Buyer

Showroom Manager

Sales Representative

Retail Sales Analyst



Trend Research Administrative Assistant

Merchandise Coordinator

Trend Researcher

Market Research Analyst

Color Forecaster

Freelance Stylist

**Senior Level (10+ years)**

Director of Stores

Regional Sales Manager

District Manager

Vice President of Sales

Store Manager

Trend Research Director

Owner

Apparel Showroom Owner

Divisional Merchandise Manager

Director, Internet Marketing and e-Retailing

General Merchandise Manager

Interactive Marketing Manager

Manager of Planning & Allocation

Senior Buyer

Account Executive



## ***Services performed by this profession:***

***Retailing Management*** - The major routes to top management in retailing are merchandise management and store management. In merchandise management, a person moves from buyer trainee to assistant buyer to buyer to merchandise division manager. In store management, the person moves from management trainee to assistant department (sales) manager to department manager to store (branch) manager. Buyers are primarily concerned with merchandise selection and promotion; department managers are concerned with sales force management and display.” (This information is excerpted from Philip Kotler, ***Principles of Marketing***, 6e, Prentice Hall, 1994, p. A-6-8.)

## ***Median Annual Income:***

Salaries vary with type and volume of merchandise bought, sales volume of the store, location, and seniority. In addition to basic salary, Buyers may receive bonuses, such as commission on sales and stock and profit-sharing options. Hours and days worked depend on the establishment and geographic area. Buyers frequently work more than eight hours per day and sometimes on weekends, owing to special sales, conferences, or travel.

### ***Annual Starting Salary Ranges:***

0-3 years = \$19k to \$60k

---

4+ years = \$30k to \$120k

---

10+ years = \$45 to \$150k

---



## ***Retail Employment:***

The retail industry accounts for about 11.7 percent of U.S. employment. Annual retail trade employment averaged 14.9 million people in 2003.

## ***Estimated Number of California Workers:***

According to the California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information, Buyers (Retail Trade) Occupational Guide #118, Interest Area #8, [www.calmis.cahwnet.gov](http://www.calmis.cahwnet.gov)

***Employment Outlook*** - The following information is from the California Projections of Employment published by the Labor Market Information Division. These figures represent the broad occupational group Wholesale and Retail Buyers, *excluding* farm products, which includes Buyers (retail).

- Estimated number of workers in 1990: 18,100
- Estimated number of workers in 2005: 22,840
- Projected Growth, 1990 to 2005: 26%
- Estimated openings due to separations by 2005: 6,040 (These figures do not include self-employment nor openings due to turnover.)
- Employment for Buyers is expected to grow slightly faster than all other occupations taken as a whole. Competition for buying jobs is expected to be keen, as merchandising attracts many college graduates.
- Prospects are likely to be best for well-qualified applicants who enjoy the competitive, fast-paced nature of merchandising.
- The California Labor Market Information ([www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov](http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov)) - Occupational Guides Greatest Growth Index (Guides with Greatest Estimated California Growth from

2002 to 2012 - [www.calmis.ca.gov](http://www.calmis.ca.gov) ) in Guide #242 indicates that the growth of retail store managers between 2002 (116,400 jobs) and 2012 (141,200 jobs) or a 21.3% increase.

## ***Professional Organizations & Associations:***

National Retail Federation - [www.nrf.com](http://www.nrf.com)

The Fashion Group - [www.fgi.org](http://www.fgi.org)

The National Shoe Retailers Association - [www.nsra.org](http://www.nsra.org)

Hong Kong Trade Development Council - [www.tdctrade.com](http://www.tdctrade.com)

International Council of Shopping Centers - [www.icsc.org](http://www.icsc.org)

Retail Industry Leaders Association - [www.retail-leaders.org](http://www.retail-leaders.org)

National Sporting Goods Association - [www.nsga.org](http://www.nsga.org)

Direct Marketing Association - [www.the-dma.org](http://www.the-dma.org)

Electronic Retailing Association - [www.retailing.org](http://www.retailing.org)

Interactive Media in Retail Group - [www.imrg.org](http://www.imrg.org)

American E-Commerce Association - [www.aeous.org](http://www.aeous.org)

U.S. Internet Industry Association - [www.usiia.org](http://www.usiia.org)



## ***Student Competitions – FIDM:***

**National Scholarship Competition:** Six [6] one-year scholarships to attend FIDM/ Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising. Scholarships are available to High School students. The deadline is April 30th of each year.

- Fashion Designer of Tomorrow<sup>SM</sup>
- Fashion Merchandising Executive of Tomorrow<sup>SM</sup>
- Graphic Designer of Tomorrow<sup>SM</sup>
- Interior Designer of Tomorrow<sup>SM</sup>
- Visual Designer of Tomorrow<sup>SM</sup>
- Digital Media Artist of Tomorrow<sup>SM</sup>

See **For Your Students** for additional student scholarship opportunities.  
[educators.fidm.edu/educators/student-services/fidm-scholarships.html](http://educators.fidm.edu/educators/student-services/fidm-scholarships.html)