

DE-BRIEF

– N° 17

2015 Short Run Permanent Display Gold Winner

In each issue, In-Store Insights takes a moment to explore retail activations that have triumphed in headline categories at the POPAI Awards. For this issue, we take a look at Nixon's visually impactful 'Watch Wave' Feature Table display, exploring the concept, rationale and construction that saw it win Gold in the Short Run Permanent Display category at the 2015 POPAI Awards.

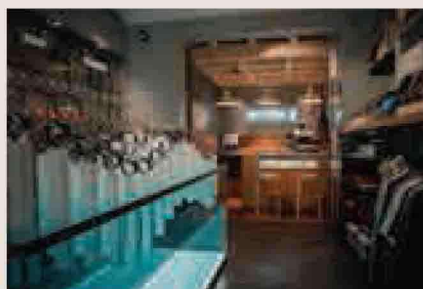
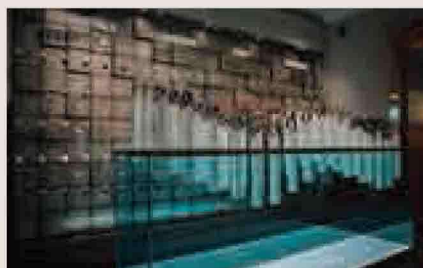
Campaign:

Nixon 'Watch Wave' Feature Table



Created by:

Checkland Kindleysides



Line marketing concept – a subtle nod to the diverse environments of surfing, snowboarding and skateboarding that would become the canvas for the Nixon story, allowing it to showcase its products in a bold, distinct way.

The challenge was to find a new and innovative solution for displaying watches – one that would not only engage shoppers, but also fully display its brand DNA, as well as the breadth and depth of its product offer. The display concept would first debut in Paris, in autumn 2014. The chosen location would bring its own pressures, demanding the brand's design partner to help Nixon successfully transition between the world of sport and fashion in what is, arguably, Europe's most style-conscious city.

Analysis

Challenging the status quo of how watches are typically displayed, the innovative open merchandising 'Watch Wave' Feature Table ignores traditional conventions – bringing watches out from behind glass to optimise their presentation. The result is a much more inclusive approach to product merchandising.

Designed and manufactured by design firm Checkland Kindleysides, the emphasis of the uncluttered 'Wave' display is not necessarily merchandise. It has not been designed to show all variations of the line. There are no drawers or cabinets for backup stock. Nor was it designed with cases and locks for the products, which can range from £60 to over a £1,000. Rather than a workhorse of merchandising, it's a symbolic reference to beach life. As such, it tells the Nixon story, a Southern California brand showcasing 'surfer cool'.

With no glass to come between the shopper and Nixon's watches, the display provides an immersive, accessible and engaging premium retail experience that allows shoppers to not just look, but touch and feel and interact freely with Nixon's products.

Facts & Figures

Concept:

To challenge the way that watches are merchandised, finding an innovative way to present 'newness' from the latest Nixon collection and delivering a more immersive shopping experience.

Format:

An innovative open merchandising solution that delivers a powerful focal point at the front of the store and allows shoppers to not just look, but touch and feel the 'new' from Nixon.

Materials:

The display features the steel base and section frames finished with clear matt lacquer, with 13mm blue laminated glass comprising of two layers of 3mm Optiwhite clear glass and one inner layer of 1.5mm Aqua marine coloured Vanceva interlayer. The undulating watch blocks were made using satin white sprayed MDF risers secured to satin white acrylic mounting blocks, bonded above and below the top piece of laminated glass.

Rollout:

This premium retail display formed the centrepiece of Nixon's very first branded flagship retail stores in Paris and London in 2014. It has since featured in other Nixon stores, including its latest Australian store in Chadstone Shopping Centre, Melbourne, which opened in April.

Impact:

New store openings have realised above-target growth, with strong footfall and positive feedback on the shopping experience. Press and social media coverage around new store openings has been valued in excess of £200k.

Overview

Founded in 1998, Nixon is a Californian retailer best known for its premium watches and accessories for the youth lifestyle market.

Made for surfing, Nixon's expansive line of tide watches are all custom built. No detail is too small, no detail overlooked. The brand required a showpiece display that would reflect these qualities and create a powerful focal point within its first own-branded stores. These new locations would also premiere Nixon's new Horizon

CAMPAIGN ANALYSIS



"Shoppers know that if they don't see the product on display, the retailer can deliver it to their home by the end of the day. But they want fun and information, a hands-on experience, a reason to come into the store," says Jeff Kindleysides, founder of Checkland Kindleysides.

Presenting 'newness', watches from the latest collection are displayed rhythmically on white blocks, partially immersed below the surface of an under-lit aqua-blue tank, that undulate in a way that suggests ocean swells; punching through the glass top, they appear to float on the surface – like surfers on the waves. Each block is equipped with a cuff holding a single watch, but it's the overall effect of the waving motion that supports the Nixon story. The artful 'Watch Wave' display provides an impactful, sculptural centrepiece in the store that is fundamental to the brand's new retail design language.

Constructed from a mix of cold rolled steel, mirrored stainless steel and laminated glass, the base and section frames were complemented by satin white sprayed MDF risers and white acrylic to form the undulating blocks, with cold rolled steel and clear lacquered cuffs. The attention to detail afforded to the display's production also saw side panels' corners mitred at 45° to give clean sharp corners and avoid exposing the edges of the laminated glass. Subtle LED plinth and base lighting, featuring a white opal acrylic diffuser, completed the look. The display also featured a Sensormatic tagging system – vital with such an open



merchandising solution, to protect against possible product theft in-store. "The design was meant to emphasise informality and accessibility," says Charlie Ellis, design principal at Checkland Kindleysides. "The retailer wanted to break down barriers. Shoppers shouldn't feel like they have to ask to touch a watch, or be stopped by intimidating barriers."

The flexibility and scalability inherently designed into the concept also ensured that it could successfully retain the display's core functionality and deliver a consistent brand experience in a variety of retail locations, as well as within wholesale. This is clearly demonstrated in the different sized Watch Tables on display in Nixon's London and Paris flagship stores. Before final production, the concept was prototyped at the design firm's offices, providing design development and production parties, as well as the client, with an opportunity to appraise all aspects of the concept, in terms of aesthetic, functionality and manufacture.

Speaking at the time of the first store launch, Tom Jones, Nixon creative director said: "In an often overly-cluttered retail landscape, the new Nixon in-store environments are simple, bold and curated; allowing for a more immersive and inspiring retail experience. This new visual language, paired with industry firsts – such as the above glass merchandising – clearly express the brand's confidence and point of view. We think these new ideas will create a more inclusive shopping experience creating deeper connections with our product."

As well as winning Gold at this year's POPAI Awards, the display's success was also recognised with the Fixture of the Year Award from the Association for Retail Environments (A.R.E.), back in March.

Why it worked

On-brand

The display celebrates the core and spirit of who Nixon is: subtly telling a story around the brand's roots in surfing and its coastal location.

Accessible

The 'Watch Wave' Feature Table display challenges traditional category merchandising techniques with most watches at this price point, 'inaccessible' to shoppers as they are typically displayed behind glass.

Immersive

The Nixon concept has created a simple, bold, curated and distinctive merchandising feature, allowing for a more immersive and inspiring retail experience.

Integrated

The Horizon Line concept of which this forms the integral element, has been adopted by all other areas of Nixon's marketing communications, including brochures, website and exhibition stand design.

Scalable

For future rollout, consideration had already been given to value engineering the units in order to achieve cost savings that would make the display commercially viable on a much larger scale.

Each issue, we ask a lead judge from the Awards for their expert view on our featured campaign.

EXPERT DIAGNOSIS

Simon Appleby, manager - retail experience, for Ford of Europe



"Original, compelling and effective, the installation creates an in-store feature almost like a piece of art in itself. Reflecting the brand's surfing

heritage beautifully, the combination of hardware and visual imagery is used to great effect. A truly stunning store display."