

## Women Entrepreneurs in Jakarta and South Tangerang: Exploring Exhibition Stand Business Models in Shopping-Malls

Christina Liem<sup>1\*</sup>, Mardiana Kurniasih<sup>2</sup>, Janice Santoso<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> President University, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup> University of Adelaine, Australia

<sup>3</sup> National Cheng Kung University, Taiwan

\*[cliem@president.ac.id](mailto:cliem@president.ac.id)

### Abstract

This study investigates the diverse business models adopted by exhibitors operating retail exhibition stands in shopping malls across Jakarta and South Tangerang. Employing a qualitative research methodology, it draws on insights from 29 female informants engaged in a wide spectrum of product categories and business backgrounds. The findings reveal that exhibition stands - whether showcasing affordable or premium products - play a critical role in enhancing sales performance across market segments. The study contributes interdisciplinary value: in the field of business, it offers a framework for developing innovative, exhibition-oriented business models suited to mall-based retail environments; in architectural discourse, it highlights the importance of designing adaptable exhibition spaces that support a variety of retail strategies. The novelty of this research lies in its systematic mapping of business model typologies in exhibition-based retail, identifying three primary forms: stand-alone operations, hybrid models combining permanent stores with exhibition stands, and promotional exhibition models utilized by established brands that an area rarely explored in academic literature. From a practical perspective, the study provides actionable insights for shopping-mall developer and management in designing infrastructure and policies that effectively support and optimize exhibition-driven retail practices.

**Keywords:** *Women; Entrepreneur; Business Model; Exhibition; Shopping Mall.*

### Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of urban retail in Indonesia, particularly within Jakarta and South Tangerang, shopping malls have evolved beyond traditional commercial spaces. A noticeable yet under-researched phenomenon is the presence of designated spots for temporary exhibitions within nearly every shopping mall. These spots, often situated in high-footfall areas such as atriums, hallways, or near escalators, are used by sellers that ranging from micro-businesses to established brands, as short-term platforms to showcase and promote their products. While the function of these temporary exhibition areas may appear straightforward, their strategic significance in brand positioning, consumer engagement, and sales stimulation warrants deeper academic investigation.

Interestingly, beyond these temporary arrangements, some malls have introduced permanent exhibition zones, suggesting an institutionalized approach to transient retailing. This evolution poses critical questions about the business models employed by both sellers and mall management, and the consumer behaviour driving their continued use. Despite the increasing visibility of such practices, scholarly discourse on how these exhibition spots influence retail strategies, brand awareness, and consumer preferences - particularly in Indonesian urban contexts - remains limited.

Motivated by this gap, the current study explores how sellers utilize temporary exhibition spaces in malls to enhance brand visibility and attract consumer interest. At the same time, it investigates a notable behavioural trend among Indonesian consumers: a preference for engaging with temporary exhibition stalls rather than visiting permanent stores, even when product offerings and prices are identical. To uncover the motivations behind these behaviours and their implications for retail practices, this study employs a qualitative research design involving in-depth interviews with sellers and consumers, as well as personal observations conducted across multiple shopping malls in Jakarta and South Tangerang. This approach enables a contextualized understanding of the lived experiences and strategic considerations that shape the use of mall-based exhibition spaces in Indonesia's retail ecosystem.

### Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research design, incorporating semi-structured interviews and direct field observations of 29 female exhibitors who served as female informants, please refer to Table 1 below. Data collection was conducted across multiple shopping centres in Jakarta and South Tangerang. The selected informants represent a wide range of business models and product categories, offering nuanced insights into the operational dynamics and strategic considerations of exhibition-based retailing. The core inquiry guiding these interactions focused on the specific business models employed by each informant.

Table 1.  
Female Informants' Background

<i>Informant 1:</i>	Commutes approximately one hour by private motorcycle. Sells diamond jewellery from a permanent exhibition stand, closing at 10:30 PM. The business model includes a resale option with a 25% depreciation within the first year and 30% thereafter. Despite operating a fixed store in the same mall, the stand is more successful due to higher traffic and a wider product assortment.
<i>Informant 2:</i>	Travels 1.5 hours home after working at a doll exhibition stand that closes at 10:30 PM. The brand maintains multiple permanent stands across major malls without permanent storefronts. Inventory is consistent across locations, with occasional restocking by the owner.
<i>Informant 3:</i>	Operates a doll exhibition stand permanently located in a single mall (SMS), while the main store is based in PIK. The sales assistant lives nearby and commutes 10 minutes by motorcycle. Stand closes at 10 PM.
<i>Informant 4:</i>	Affiliated with a department store, this mobile stand moves within the same mall—from upper levels to the ground floor to attract more visitors. Compared to the main store, it carries fewer product variations.
<i>Informant 5:</i>	Sells footwear across several prominent malls in Jakarta and South Tangerang. Staff are assigned based on residential proximity, with centralized recruitment. Stands close at 10 PM.
<i>Informant 6:</i>	Occasionally participates in exhibitions to market apparel made by a sibling. Based in Ragunan, the informant promotes products primarily via social media and uses exhibitions to expand customer reach.
<i>Informant 7:</i>	Aims to establish a physical store in BSD and leverages exhibitions to introduce the brand and promote Labubu dolls via Instagram and WhatsApp.
<i>Informant 8:</i>	Second-generation watch retailer with over three decades in business. Joins exhibitions organized by a regular event provider, though locations vary. Combines offline events with Instagram marketing to reach broader audiences.
<i>Informant 9:</i>	Owner of a longstanding branded handbag store in Central Jakarta. Active in Instagram marketing and premium mall exhibitions. Reports that exhibition sales surpass both physical and online store performance by 2–3 times daily.
<i>Informant 10:</i>	Has sold branded bags via exhibitions for five years and opened a physical store two years ago. Focuses on market expansion and brand strengthening.

- Informant 11:* Operates a branded handbag store at Senayan Trade Center and participates in weekly exhibitions. Sales at exhibitions and the store are comparable.
- Informant 12:* Designs exclusive handbags sold via appointment-only store in Jakarta. Joined exhibitions in the past year, reporting the highest sales from these events.
- Informant 13:* A clothing seller active in Jakarta mall exhibitions since 2016. Suspended operations for two years during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite recently opening a store, exhibitions still yield higher sales.
- Informant 14:* A home appliance brand participating in luxury handbag exhibitions. Showcases a humidity-control device for bag preservation. Despite limited participation (three exhibitions), reports minimum daily sales of three units with free delivery.
- Informant 15:* Sells accessories and cosmetics exclusively through exhibitions and Instagram. Reports similar sales volume across both channels.
- Informant 16:* Luxury diamond seller operating a store in PIK since 2020. Joined exhibitions in 2021 to promote exclusive accessories starting at IDR 35 million. Offers 45% buyback depreciation and markets to VIP customers on Instagram.
- Informant 17:* Produces garments from home and runs a permanent mall stand. Accepts custom orders for international resellers through WhatsApp.
- Informant 18:* Specializes in children's and adult sleepwear. Owns a garment factory and maintains permanent mall stands in Jakarta and South Tangerang. Reports highest sales from the SMS location.
- Informant 19:* Sells imported essential oils. Operates a physical store in Central Jakarta but focuses exhibition efforts in South Tangerang and Palembang. Peak sales occur during exhibitions.
- Informant 20:* Previously ran a store in Thamrin City (2006–2016), joining exhibitions in South Jakarta malls. Due to past employee issues during COVID-19, now self-manages exhibition sales. Sells apparel to customers in Malaysia and New Zealand. Offers 10% wholesale discounts for 10+ items and uses outsourced designs.
- Informant 21:* Operates an upper-floor store and joins exhibitions during sales periods in the same mall. The exhibition area receives more traffic. Commutes 30 minutes by motorcycle.
- Informant 22:* This Q-Big-based car dealership participates in mall exhibitions in BSD. While showroom discounts remain the same, exhibitions help boost brand awareness and influence purchasing decisions.
- Informant 23:* A leading property developer based in Alam Sutera. Conducts exhibitions in upscale malls near project sites to strengthen brand image. Many customers are from Sumatra, so exhibitions are also held in Palembang and Batam.
- Informant 24:* A new developer targeting university students from BINUS, UBM, and SBU. Holds exhibitions exclusively at Living World, co-hosted with BINUS events on a cost-sharing basis. Promotes student housing investments.
- Informant 25:* Sells trendy sleepwear from two permanent stores in Mangga Dua and PIK. Uses exhibitions as supplementary sales channels.
- Informant 26:* Sells batik apparel from both a store and an exhibition stand in the same mall. Despite identical discounts, sales are higher at the stand due to greater customer volume.
- Informant 27:* Markets apartments near Soekarno-Hatta Airport, highlighting rental appeal for airline personnel. Supported by a reputable Singaporean developer, the team joins monthly week-long exhibitions in premium malls.
- Informant 28:* Sells traditional Yogyakarta apparel via Shopee and exhibitions. Has no permanent Jakarta store and operates a warehouse in Depok with production in Yogyakarta.
- Informant 29:* The Giordano brand uses exhibition stands offering the same 25% discount as its physical store in the same mall. However, exhibitions generate more foot traffic and higher sales

Source: Interview Results (2025)

## Research Findings

### *Overview of Business Models at Exhibition Stands in Shopping Malls*

Exhibition stands located in Jakarta and its surrounding cities, including South Tangerang, demonstrate a diverse array of business models shaped by factors such as product type, the presence or absence of permanent retail stores, customer engagement strategies, and operational flexibility.

These models can be broadly classified into the following categories:

*1. Stand-Only Model (Absence of Permanent Store)*

This model involves businesses operating exclusively through exhibition stands, often rotating between different malls to maximize reach. The primary objectives include increasing market exposure, testing product reception, and minimizing fixed operational costs. For instance, Informants 6 and 15 represent home-based or primarily online sellers who participate in exhibitions to attract new customers. Similarly, Informant 28, a traditional apparel producer from Yogyakarta, utilizes a warehouse in Depok and engages in exhibitions across Jakarta and Yogyakarta to access broader markets.

*2. Hybrid Model (Permanent Store Combined with Exhibition Stand)*

This approach integrates a permanent physical store with exhibition stands located either in the same mall or across different locations. The dual presence aims to boost foot traffic, enhance brand visibility, and ultimately increase total sales volume. Informants 1, 3, 21, and 26 maintain both store and stand within the same mall, reporting higher customer traffic at the exhibition stand. Informants 18 and 25 operate stores and stands in separate malls to extend their market reach. Informant 16's diamond business exemplifies this model by using exhibition stands to engage a wider VIP clientele beyond their exclusive store.

*3. Exhibition-Focused Brand Promotion*

Well-established brands utilize exhibition stands predominantly as platforms for marketing and brand awareness rather than direct revenue generation. These exhibitions serve as venues for visibility enhancement, lead generation, and soft selling strategies. For example, Informant 22's car dealership participates in exhibitions to elevate brand recognition, while Informants 23 and 24 leverage exhibitions for property project promotions and educational housing campaigns, respectively.

*4. Temporary-to-Permanent Evolution*

Some businesses adopt exhibitions initially to validate market demand before investing in permanent store establishments. This model mitigates risk and supports organic growth. Informants 10 and 13 exemplify this trajectory, having commenced with exhibitions and subsequently opened physical stores. Informant 7 similarly uses exhibitions as preparatory steps toward launching a permanent retail location.

*5. Premium Circuit Model*

Certain sellers consistently engage in premium exhibition circuits within high-end malls, catering to loyal, often niche, customer bases. The objective is to elevate brand prestige, achieve premium sales volumes, and secure targeted exposure. Informants 8, 9, and 12 operate within this category, offering high-value branded products such as watches and handbags that consistently outperform online and in-store sales.

*6. Factory-to-Exhibition Pipeline*

This model leverages owned production facilities, such as garment factories, to supply multiple exhibition points. The strategy supports both business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) channels, providing flexible inventory management. Informant 17 produces clothing for both direct sale and resellers via exhibitions, while Informant 18 manages a garment factory and distributes through permanent stands in multiple malls.

---

### *7. Event Organizer-Based Mobile Model*

Sellers in this model participate in curated exhibitions or premium bazaars organized by event planners, enabling them to capitalize on existing customer traffic flows and event branding while minimizing logistical challenges. Informants 8, 9, 10, and 13 regularly join such scheduled events in prestigious malls. Informant 20 collaborates with three event organizer networks, extending sales reach internationally.

### *8. Product-Specific Niche Marketing*

Niche brands design their exhibition strategies around specialized products, focusing on consumer education and live demonstrations. Informant 14 markets humidity-control devices tailored for luxury handbag preservation, while Informant 27 promotes apartment units targeted at flight attendants through strategic exhibition placements.

### *9. Brand Expansion via Multichannel Synergy*

Businesses employ exhibitions alongside digital platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, and Shopee to foster omni-channel customer engagement and expand demographic reach. Informants 6, 9, 10, 12, and 17 actively promote their social media accounts directly from exhibition stands, effectively integrating offline and online sales channels.

### *10. Franchised or Chain Exhibition Stands*

Corporate-owned or franchised brands operate multiple identical stands across various malls, ensuring brand consistency and uniform pricing. Informants 2 and 5 represent doll and footwear brands with standardized products and pricing across all locations. The global fashion brand Giordano (Informant 29) also exemplifies this model by offering identical discounts at both stores and stands, yet experiences higher foot traffic at exhibition stands.

## **Research Discussion**

The findings from 29 female informants involved in various exhibition stand businesses and retail stores within Jakarta and adjacent urban areas reveal several critical dimensions shaping contemporary retail strategies, consumer behaviour, and business operations in a dynamic mall environment. These dimensions include mobility and location strategy, customer engagement and brand expansion, operational challenges, and the evolving role of digital marketing and social media integration.

### *Location Strategy and Mobility*

A salient theme emerging from the data is the strategic significance of exhibition stand location and mobility in driving customer traffic and sales performance. Informants operating permanent stands within malls (Informants 1, 2, 3, 17, 18, 26) reported leveraging their fixed presence to cultivate customer familiarity and convenience. However, even among permanent stands, foot traffic variations influenced business decisions; for instance, Informant 1's diamond jewellery stand remained viable due to higher traffic despite the presence of a permanent store nearby. This finding aligns with retail location theory that emphasizes foot traffic as a critical driver of sales (Teller & Schnedlitz, 2012).

Conversely, mobility within a mall, as exemplified by Informant 4's mobile stand relocating between floors to capture more visitors, underscores a tactical adaptation to spatial consumer flows. This mobility strategy appears to optimize exposure but may limit product variety, suggesting a trade-off between accessibility and assortment breadth. This dual approach aligns

---

with insights from adaptive retailing, where flexible spatial strategies are employed to navigate fluctuating consumer densities (Helm et al., 2020).

#### *Brand Consistency and Multi-location Operations*

Several informants (Informants 2, 5, 8, 9, 22, 23) manage multi-location stands or exhibition participation across various malls. Uniform pricing and product offerings (Informant 2) facilitate brand consistency and consumer trust, crucial in multi-site retail formats (Block et al., 2022). The strategic deployment of exhibitions as extensions of flagship stores - particularly in the case of high-end or branded goods (Informants 8, 9, 10) - illustrates how such platforms can significantly enhance brand visibility and expand customer reach. In several cases, exhibition stands have even surpassed standalone stores in sales performance, a trend that aligns with Redstone's (2016) findings on the effectiveness of experiential retail environments.

This observation supports the concept of omnichannel retailing, where physical, exhibition, and digital channels operate synergistically to enhance reach and sales conversion (Jocovski et al., 2013). The significant sales uplift in exhibition settings relative to stores, noted by several informants (e.g., Informants 9, 12, 13), indicates exhibitions' effectiveness in creating experiential retail environments that stimulate impulse buying and customer engagement (An & Han, 2020).

#### *Customer-centric Business Models and Resale Policies*

Informant 1's unique buyback policy for diamond jewellery, incorporating depreciation rates tied to ownership duration, reflects an innovative customer retention and trust-building mechanism. This buyback scheme can be seen as a form of risk mitigation for buyers and a strategic tool to encourage repeat purchases and maintain product liquidity in a luxury market segment (Curto, 2024). Such policies may enhance customer loyalty and differentiate the business in competitive marketplaces, aligning with the principles of relationship marketing (Soeharso & Wikantari, 2022).

#### *Role of Social Media and Digital Marketing*

The integration of social media marketing and online platforms emerges as a pivotal complement to physical exhibition participation for many informants (6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 17). Platforms such as Instagram and WhatsApp serve dual functions: expanding market reach beyond physical constraints and facilitating direct communication with customers, thus personalizing service and building community (Bellaaj, 2023). This hybrid approach exemplifies the convergence of traditional retail and digital commerce, reinforcing findings from recent studies on the role of social media in retail innovation (Dolega et al., 2021).

#### *Operational Challenges and Adaptive Responses*

Extended commutes reported by informants (e.g., Informants 1, 2, 5, 21) highlight logistical challenges inherent in retail operations spread across multiple mall locations. This factor influences staffing and scheduling decisions, with some businesses placing employees closer to work sites to enhance operational efficiency (Informant 5). Additionally, businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic (Informant 13, 20) demonstrated resilience through operational pivots such as direct owner management and increased reliance on exhibitions

---

(Redstone, 2016), and online sales channels (Reardon et al., 2021), reflecting adaptive capabilities critical to retail survival in crisis contexts.

#### *Exhibition as a Platform for Product and Brand Diversification*

A diverse array of product categories, from luxury diamonds and branded handbags to sleepwear, essential oils, and even real estate (Informants 16, 19, 23, 27), utilize exhibitions not merely as sales outlets but as strategic branding and market expansion platforms. The adoption of exhibitions by established brands (Rentschler et al., 2014), as well as emerging businesses underscores exhibitions' versatility in facilitating market penetration, customer education, and cross-category exposure (Cunningham & White, 1974).

The participation of non-traditional retail sectors (e.g., home appliance brand promoting a humidity control device for handbags - Informant 14) reveals innovative cross-sector marketing leveraging exhibition audiences for niche product introduction, resonating with co-branding and cross-promotion strategies in marketing literature (Wu, 2013).

#### **Conclusion**

This study has explored the diverse business models employed by women entrepreneurs operating exhibition stands in urban shopping malls across Jakarta and South Tangerang. Through qualitative insights drawn from 29 female informants, the research revealed that exhibition stands function not merely as temporary sales outlets, but as dynamic, multi-purpose platforms for market testing, brand positioning, and strategic consumer engagement. The findings demonstrate the prevalence of three primary business model types:

- Stand-only operations
- Hybrid models combining permanent stores with exhibition stands
- Promotional exhibition models adopted by established brands

A key insight emerging from the study is the notable consumer preference for exhibition-based interactions over traditional storefronts, even when price points and products are identical. This behavioural pattern underscores the strategic retail value of visibility, accessibility, and novelty embedded within temporary exhibition spaces. The entrepreneurial agency of women exhibitors is also evident in their adaptability and creativity in leveraging these spaces to scale operations, diversify markets, and test product innovations.

Beyond the business dimension, the study contributes to interdisciplinary discourse by offering implications for architecture and retail design. It calls attention to the need for mall infrastructures to accommodate more versatile and inclusive exhibition environments that align with the evolving landscape of urban retail and women-led entrepreneurship.

This study repositions mall-based exhibition stands as critical nodes in the urban retail fabric of Jakarta and South Tangerang - serving as adaptive, cost-efficient, and highly visible channels for women entrepreneurs to thrive in a competitive marketplace.

#### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

*For Shopping-Mall Developers and Management:*

---

- Integrate permanent yet flexible exhibition zones into architectural planning to accommodate evolving business models and encourage repeat participation from successful vendors.
- Establish affordable and tiered rental schemes that cater to both emerging micro-entrepreneurs and premium brand exhibitors, thereby ensuring inclusivity and tenant diversity.
- Provide infrastructure support such as storage, power supply, and promotional tools to enhance operational efficiency for stand operators.

*For Women Entrepreneurs and SME Practitioners:*

- Leverage exhibitions as strategic platforms for market testing and customer engagement, especially in high-footfall locations where consumer responsiveness is immediate and measurable.
- Adopt hybrid business models that combine online presence, permanent outlets, and rotational exhibition stands to maximize visibility and resilience across market conditions.
- Collaborate with other exhibitors or event organizers to co-brand and cross-promote, particularly for niche or luxury products.

*For Future Research and Academic Institutions:*

- Further explore the spatial and architectural dimensions of temporary retail in malls, especially in relation to gender, mobility, and adaptive retail environments.
- Investigate the longitudinal impact of exhibition-based business models on business sustainability and income generation for women entrepreneurs.
- Expand comparative research to other Indonesian cities or Southeast Asian urban centers to enrich understanding of exhibition-based retail ecosystems.

## Acknowledgement

This research was supported by funding from President University in 2025. The authors extend their sincere gratitude to the university for its financial support and institutional encouragement, which made this study possible.

## References

- An, M. A., & Han, S. L. (2020). Effects of experiential motivation and customer engagement on customer value creation: Analysis of psychological process in the experience-based retail environment. *Journal of Business Research*, 120, 389-397.
- Bellaaj, M. (2023). Why and how do individual entrepreneurs use digital channels in an emerging market? Determinants of use and channel coordination. *International Journal of Emerging Markets*, 18(9), 2735-2764.
- Block, S., Friebel, G., Heinz, M., & Zubanov, N. (2022). Mystery Shopping as a Strategic Management Redstone, S. E. (2016). The exhibition business. In *The movie business book* (pp. 401-420). Routledge.Practice in Multi-Site Firms.
- Cunningham, M. T., & White, J. G. (1974). The role of exhibitions in industrial marketing—an evaluation of the international machine tool exhibition. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 3(4), 229-241.
- Curto, A. A. P. (2024). The Allure of Luxury: exploring the investment power of Art, Fine Watches and Diamonds.
-



- Dolega, L., Rowe, F., & Branagan, E. (2021). Going digital? The impact of social media marketing on retail website traffic, orders and sales. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 60, 102501.
- Helm, S., Kim, S. H., & Van Riper, S. (2020). Navigating the 'retail apocalypse': A framework of consumer evaluations of the new retail landscape. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 54, 101683.
- Jocevski, M., Arvidsson, N., Miragliotta, G., Ghezzi, A., & Mangiaracina, R. (2019). Transitions towards omni-channel retailing strategies: a business model perspective. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 47(2), 78-93.
- Reardon, T., Heiman, A., Lu, L., Nuthalapati, C. S., Vos, R., & Zilberman, D. (2021). "Pivoting" by food industry firms to cope with COVID-19 in developing regions: E-commerce and "copivoting" delivery intermediaries. *Agricultural Economics*, 52(3), 459-475.
- Rentschler, R., Bridson, K., & Evans, J. (2014). Exhibitions as sub-brands: an exploratory study. *Arts Marketing: An International Journal*, 4(1/2), 45-66.
- Soeharso, S. Y., & Wikantari, M. A. (2022). Customer Loyalty Factors: The Influence of Brand Semiotics, Brand Meaning, Relationship Marketing, Customer Trust and Customer Satisfaction. *American Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research*, 6(6), 111-120.
- Teller, C., & Schnedlitz, P. (2012). Drivers of agglomeration effects in retailing: The shopping mall tenant's perspective. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 28(9-10), 1043-1061.
- Wu, X. (2013). *Importance-performance analysis for niche marketing: the case of a museum exhibition* (Doctoral dissertation, Kent State University).
-