



Designers' approaches to retail display continue to evolve, along with our changing notions of what constitutes a store. Large spaces – think big box stores almost as sprawling as the suburbs they serve – demand large, striking centrepieces that focus consumers' attention, like Eventscape's central island at a Harley-Davidson showroom in Edmonton. But smaller streetside boutiques in increasingly dense urban centres require a more delicate approach: consider, for instance, Perennial's design of a Mendocino store on Toronto's bustling Bloor Street, where simple, understated platforms built from salvaged wood prop up the merchandise to draw shoppers' attention. The use of salvaged wood also points toward the greening of retail design – a welcome development.

Retail display fixtures reveal trends in the industry, too. Many new lines, such as Mobile by Alu and Scissy by B+N Industries, can be assembled and modified quickly, allowing shop owners to change their display systems to reflect new product additions or larger inventory changes. And the Blaster by Finnish architecture and design firm Valvomo for Nokia points to another trend: mobile retail display, where companies (especially those catering to youth) send street teams to concerts and festivals to show off cellphones, portable gaming systems and food and beverage products. Just another sign of retail design on the move.

Toronto design firm 3rd Uncl employed modern materials very basic-looking furniture to display designer baby gear at lo boutique Ella + Elliot. Custom display walls and simple platfo (constructed by Parallel Gene Contractors) were positioned to create a wide, gallery-like p running through the store, its polished concrete floors easi navigable by baby strollers. In the centre, adjacent to the wa room and change tables, a curv Douglas fir veneer wall - with lacquered cubbyholes for m chandise - creates a sort of wa play area, all under the glow Frank Gehry's Cloud lamp by A digital screen projects mar facturers' product info, along music videos and films for kid