## THINGS TO DO / FASHION AND SHOPPING

## Showcase opens at Smith Haven Mall in Lake Grove



Showcase, the Canada-based retailer that calls itself "home of the hottest trends," has opened at Smith Haven mall in Lake Grove. Credit: Igor Luppa/Anytime Picture

## By Joann Vaglica

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November 25, 2022 5:00 am









Showcase, the Canada-based retailer that calls itself "home of the hottest trends," has made its debut at the Smith Haven Mall, with a second location slated to open at the Walt Whitman Shops this December. The store specializes in social media trends in toys, technology, home, health and beauty.

CEO Samir Kulkarni says that the "retail-tainment" store where in-person shoppers are able to test a majority of its products before purchasing them, is aimed at stocking shelves, "first and fast."

"We have developed proprietary technology over the years to be able to listen in on social media and in different places that consumers share what they're interested in," he says. "So it might be search, it might be social ..." From that data, Showcase is then able to alter inventory in real time, he says. "Our products are changing weekly; our prices are changing weekly. The store layout changes all the time because it's very much a real-time, current store."

Shoppers can expect an inventory of close to 1,000 toys that include trending items like Funko (games, movies, TV, sports and animé), which Showcase restocks daily, Squishmallow plush toys, Sweet Petzzz (realistic-looking plush pets), slime, FIFA World Cup tabletop foosball and Pokémon Go trading cards, a decades-old trend that's back due to the pandemic.

"Pokémon is resurging as an absolutely massive trend. I think the kids were getting tired of being on the screen all day, so various categories started to really take off, like fidget toys and stress balls, but also trading cards and things that are tactile," Kulkarni says, adding that Showcase stocks authentic Japanese cards.

Showcase is at 313 Smith Haven Mall, in Lake Grove. It's open Mondays to Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sundays from noon to 6 p.m. Find it on the main level near Macy's Furniture Gallery; 631-759-5556; <a href="mailto:shopatshowcaseusa.com">shopatshowcaseusa.com</a>

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