

MY FIRST EXPERIENCE WITH HOME DEPOT

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Wow! I exclaimed on entering Home Depot for the first time. What a resurrected feeling of manhood and power, while my eyes gazed the powerful display of man's fabricated ingenuity and dynasty: tools and gadgets.

Each aisle was over fifteen feet tall with all the tools necessary to build almost anything. There were chain saws, power drills, knobs, bolts, lawns, lawn mowers, bulbs, lumber, antennas and many more items in all sizes, shapes, color, models, versions, complexities, numbers and variations.

I couldn't take it! It was enough to drive my instinctive machismo wild. There were enough tools, equipments and infrastructure to build a complete house; without leaving the store. Each aisle was completely different and specialized. There were aisles for appliances and their necessary parts, plumbing infrastructures, furniture repairs, household electrical maintenance, roofing, painting and even a section for the ladies, gardening.

The smell of lumber, fresh paint and new gadgets simply exuberated my soul and reinforced my masculinity. The sound of wood being freshly cut, machines being tested, some falling and crashing, flicks of switches, cans being opened, keys being cut, metals rubbing and more productive sounds of a real symphony and live rhythms of melodious music; orchestrated by the unknowing Beethoven of Home Depot's staff and visitors. I can see the imaginary conductor pointing to the chatter, the thrust, the crash, the clank and the grrrrrrs! Who could not beckon at an attendee (adept in hardware knowledge) over and over again with the bubbling curiosity to explore all the strange gadgets. Ah, the mechanical atmosphere of human innovation, our maker must be proud.

What a supernatural ambiance of work ethic, power, blood and sweat; and it sure beats some sports. It makes one think of a revolution, 'a cause' or 'a purpose'. The general euphoria sprouts patriotism, American pride, goals, achievement and high idealism.

Chandeliers, ceiling fans, window blinds, kitchen sinks and more are all arrayed in an attractive pattern that taunts one to buy. Fixtures, fittings, bolts, screws, nails and other things are all so varied and detailed, one would think of an extremely great masterpiece.

What significance of energy, stamina, vigor, progression, pro-action and drive. Such an outlay of unique positions, specialization and groups. Nevertheless, it still seems a little confusing in the vast content of this super store.

Even the ant in the anthill or the bee in the hive would pause to admire the mechanical fabrication of Home Depot. How could any man resist the temptation of not "revving up" a chain saw, feeling the overlay of a popcorn ceiling sample, or handling an all purpose screw driver.

I must confess, Home Depot is the place to be for all your housing, building, gardening and renovating needs. Home Depot has all the excitement and thrills of a theme park; only this time, it's not solely for fun, but production. The wooing agenda of marketers and inventors have made work enticing. Why didn't I think of that?

Home Depot to guys is like a beauty parlor to some women. We go there to be what we were created to be, builders. God created the heavens and the earth, and by his grace, “we took over from there!”

It might seem strange to most that a simple hardware store could have such an impact on me. However, I’m from a little island in the Caribbean and seeing such magnificent display or hardware was new to me. I had never been in a store this big, with so much variety of items for one purpose. It was bigger than three jumbo airplane hangers and filled from left to right with everything you need. While in the island, I’ve heard of super stores and mega malls, but I’d never imagine a store, one store, with this magnitude. I guess it probably impacted me greatly because it didn’t look humanly possible. And, coming from a third world country, such human dynamic had never been displayed to me. What further ‘blew me away’ and inspired my outlook on the human race, is that they are many Home Depots across America. That’s enough hardware to practically build and do anything, no wonder it is said, “God bless America!”

Being enthralled by this luminous mega hardware store, I decided to visit their website; just curious to see if has the same impacting ambience. To my delight, it was as expected – displaying all the store had to offer. It had the same look and feel, with dashes of orange and white everywhere, to resonate the company’s color. As a graphic designer, the site was not only aesthetic, but functional. This is a huge part of any website, especially one with such vast content. It was functional in the sense that it was easily navigated; like an adept Home Depot assistant, you could find what you want. I decided to click on the “building and remodeling” link. I was again enthusiastic by a picture of a man in a red and white baseball cap working hard on a huge window. I then saw a link that says, “View your local stores latest circular.” I decided to click it. Not expecting to be “blown away,” I saw the best display of online cataloging and flash exploits. As a graphic designer, I see a lot of websites and flash works, but this is the best flash composition I’d ever seen. To even begin to describe how this online flash catalogue works is no easy task. Each page skips like a real book, and there’s a cursor to show which page you’re browsing and how many are left. Also, the items on the page are clickable. When clicked, a small window appears with the same Home Depot look and feel; giving the description and price of the item. What further blew me away was the options it had. Click the second option and you get the catalogue in small thumbnails. Click the third option and it magnifies the entire page from normal view. The last option is what got me excited, it is a magnifier. When you click on it, a small transparent window appears that says, “Click and drag edges to move magnifier.” When I did, each section I browsed over was magnified to a better viewing. The exact thing that happens when one opens a book and passes a magnifying glass over it. So, basically, the online catalogue was design to look and feel like the actual paper ones distributed in the stores. It not only achieved this purpose, but added much excitement, ease, aesthetics and added functionality – all done in flash.

What the website also gave, was added information. It further blew me away by declaring that Home Depot is not only in America, but there have been expansions to Canada, Puerto Rico and Mexico. That was it, I couldn’t take it any longer – the mega super store has gotten larger, spanning North America and North America’s tip. Plus, with their website, it has automatically become worldwide. It behooves any Home Depot lover to browse the pages of www.homedepot.com.

If I could attribute my experience at Home Depot in one word, after seeing both the store and the website, that word would be “_____.” No, nothing was left out and there is nothing to fill in, you saw correctly. There is no one word I could use to describe this magnificent human ingenuity called Home Depot. Thus, for the lack of a descriptive word, I’m left speechless. Again, the impact Home Depot has on various persons might differ, especially in my case. But as for me, I know what I saw, I know what I felt and I know the human race has reached a great deal in their production of planet earth. No one, as late as the 1800’s, could have predicted that such a store would exist. A store that

makes a man proud to be a man and enables a housewife to be all she can be. That's what I felt at Home Depot, empowerment. The infrastructure, mobility and gadgets to fix or create anything is all in reach. It made me feel I could build or do anything. That is what empowers a man, the sense that he has the freedom to create or build. I saw that freedom at Home Depot. I saw within my grasp everything I needed to create. I guess being at "home" with "mother" and "family," plus coming from a third world country, has created that sense and yearning to be free, to be independent. Having or building my own house would be that first step. With it I would not only be independent, but have the freedom to enjoy the freedom that Home Depot gives. I did get that chance once, but in the "transitions" and empathy to what I thought was a grieving dad, voluntarily lost it. It is now I realize even more what Home Depot means to me and what everybody should have – FREEDOM – especially from things that cannot be explained humanly. For what it's worth, God bless America – home of the free!