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TOP RETAIL MERCHANDISING SOLUTION 2025

MERCHANDISING SERVICES, CO.

THE UNSUNG ARCHITECTS OF RETAIL

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Most people walk through a store without thinking about the layout. Successful retail merchandising isn't just about getting products on shelves—it's about crafting a presentation that captivates, streamlines, and sells. Merchandising Services Company (MSCO) delivers on every front: smart strategy, smooth execution, and a polished final look that makes the store shine. With a laser focus on efficiency and visual impact, it empowers businesses to thrive and profits to climb—because when a store tells the right story, customers listen.

Founded in 2008, MSCO began as a small team servicing 300 convenience stores in the Southeastern U.S. Fast-forward to today, and the company operates in 48 states, serving over 7,000 stores across 30 retail chains. While the scale is impressive, its success is rooted in more than numbers. It lies in a unique blend of high-level execution, extensive outreach, accountability, precise project management and implementation, and thorough cross-training across all merchandising teams and projects.

"We are focused on bringing the best product and doing the things we know truly make a difference in the retail space," says Michael Buschelmann, President/Owner.

THE BLUEPRINT BEHIND SEAMLESS EXECUTION

Execution is where MSCO excels. Its clients often have complex demands, such as tight deadlines, strict planograms, and equipment rollouts that need to happen across hundreds or thousands of stores. The response is never outsourced or improvised. It is handled in-house by teams trained across multiple types of merchandising work, capable of handling resets, installations and specialized builds with equal confidence.

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Every project begins with a clear communication structure. Each initiative is assigned a single point of contact who oversees planning and keeps the process flowing. That is paired with a suite of internal tools that allows the team to collect data, monitor progress, and provide real-time updates to clients through shared dashboards. Retailers can see where teams are scheduled, review before-and-after photos, and track progress by location.

Speed is essential, but so is accuracy. That is why test scores are conducted before any major rollout. These early visits allow the team to study how long the work will take, what resources are needed, and how to best deploy their workforce. The goal is always to match the client's timeline with a game plan that ensures consistency across the board.

TRAINING THAT BUILDS CONFIDENCE, NOT JUST CAPABILITY

One of the strongest aspects of MSCO's model is its investment in people. Every team member is cross-trained to handle multiple service lines, making it easy to shift between projects without skipping a beat. This also ensures that retailers get the same team members returning to their stores again and again, building trust and familiarity among retail staff.

Training is structured, hands-on, and highly practical—complete with detailed manuals, walkthrough videos, and supervisor-led coaching. Teams are not siloed into single functions; they are equipped to handle beverage resets, center store resets, and installations of complex cooler racking systems and center store gondolas.

"We have built our teams to be flexible and cross-functional. So no matter who reaches out, retailer, vendor, or customer, we are ready to step in and handle the project without any slowdown," says Alan Chafin, Vice President.

This level of flexibility is uncommon in the industry. Most merchandising companies rely on third-party labor that rotates frequently, resulting in inconsistent execution. MSCO takes the opposite approach. Its employees are permanent team members, hired to grow with the company and the clients they support.

Alan Chafin,
Vice President

And it is not just about job skills. The company culture emphasizes accountability and a family-like support system. Employees are encouraged to take ownership of their work and are supported professionally and personally. That culture of ownership and care shows up in every finished project.

BUILT TO PARTNER

Every client relationship starts with listening—really listening. The team meets with retailer leadership and division-level managers to understand each organization's structure, priorities and go-to-market strategies. From there, they tailor a plan that aligns with timing, store layouts, and merchandising goals.

In many cases, suggestions from learned insights are also offered. For example, if a retailer is launching a new beverage system but has not optimized the racking design, MSCO steps in with data from past projects, suggestions for improvements, and may even collaborate with the equipment manufacturer to redesign parts of the system.

One notable example involved a rollout of a flexible beverage racking system across 5,500 stores. The original design presented some practical challenges upon installation. Rather than blindly following specs, the MSCO team worked with the retailer and the manufacturer to help redesign parts of the system, making it more durable and functional in real-world environments. The revised design was piloted in select markets, refined further, and successfully rolled out nationally.

Another instance involved installing queue lines across more than 2,000 stores. Early equipment versions did not hold up well to heavy foot traffic. The team gathered feedback, observed how the systems held up over time, and helped the manufacturer improve the design before continuing with broader deployment.

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TECHNOLOGY WITH A PURPOSE

Coordinating thousands of store visits takes precision. MSCO leans on tools like Smartsheet to keep everything on track. The system allows both internal teams and client partners to view project calendars, monitor progress, and receive automatic updates when changes occur.

Each completed job is accompanied by documentation that includes photos, surveys and performance reports. Retailers can view execution details down to the individual store level, making it easy to confirm completion or identify areas that need attention.

This tech-driven system improves accountability and visibility. Every project is tied to a dedicated merchandising manager who oversees a territory of 60 to 80 stores. That manager becomes the go-to contact for those stores, building relationships with local staff and serving as a consistent, knowledgeable resource.

GROWTH THAT FOLLOWS DEMAND

As its clients have grown, so has MSCO. What began as mostly organic expansion has become more demand-driven in recent years. New referrals and long-standing partnerships have pushed the company into new markets and retail environments.

The team services 7,000 convenience stores. There are another 130,000 nationwide, offering considerable expansion potential. MSCO is focused on expanding its fixture installation services, which now include beer caves, walk in cooler shelving systems, electronic shelf labels and queue lines. It is also exploring opportunities to support non-convenience retailers who are looking for the same kind of speed and reliability.

That growth is managed with care. MSCO ensures that expansion does not come at the expense of quality by investing in additional staff, training and leadership as needed.

A QUIET ENGINE BEHIND RETAIL SUCCESS

The work MSCO does is not flashy, but it is essential. Every display, shelf and newly installed system plays a role in a retailer's performance. When those elements are handled well, they improve traffic flow, product visibility and, ultimately, sales.

MSCO stands out for its ability to act as an invisible partner—one that retailers can trust to get the work done without constant oversight. Its teams do not just show up, complete a task, and leave. They plan, adapt, communicate and own the outcome, from start to finish.

As retail reinvents itself, MSCO stays grounded in the essentials; people who care, systems that deliver, and partnerships that endure. In an industry where conversion can easily be overcome by chaos, MSCO is the quiet constant keeping retail on track. RB