

History and evolution of shopping malls

[Design](#), [Architecture](#)



History and Evolution of Shopping Malls This paper aims to investigate the history and evolution of shopping malls which have now gained significant position in human lives. Research indicates that the current form of shopping centers has undergone extensive change which shall be further explored in terms of floors and designs. The history of shopping malls is as old as the trade itself. Magnificent malls have been identified in the archeological studies which substantiate the fact that the idea of combined shopping experience is not novel. As far as floors are concerned then they were significantly altered in the middle ages during the regime of Emperor Trajan. His forum actually introduced the splendid arrangement of dually shared buildings for commercial purposes. It was the initial foundation of shopping malls which took place back in the ancient times (Kocaili). These were divided into different floors primarily for two uses i. e. the first floor was used for the administrative purposes whereas the ground floor provided a huge passage way for the customers. Moreover, the ground floors were essentially designed to make an extension to the main market place. The following picture clearly depicts that commodities were showcased on small detachable stalls. After some time these stalls were transformed in to shops mainly located at the ground floor. This particular form of shopping malls was later followed by most of the European shopping centers until the modern era (Kocaili). By the end of 16th century town halls were introduced in the European trade market. These were having open stands for selling purposes on the first floor while commodities were mainly presented on the ground floor (Kocaili). In addition to this these town halls were specified for different activities including the stock exchange. In the later centuries luxury

items also made their way in to the shopping malls. Hence the floors were made on the basis of departmental stores and arcades. In 19th century the structure of shopping malls was once again changed since now the first floors were used for storage purposes. This was followed by the introduction of glass and steel structures in buildings for enhancing the exhibition of different goods (Kocaili). Source: Mall Express 1 However, in the contemporary world the concept of Shopping Malls emerged in America mainly in the early 20th century. It was basically a result of increasing demand for different products and the transformation of retail stores (DeLisle). Mass production and the use of automobiles changed the entire business environment which was also influenced by the changing societal norms and customer choices (Sedlmaier). Hence in 1920 shopping centers primarily with a drug store and a super market were opened in the suburban areas. These were simply designed with small shops in rows along with a parking lot. Ten years later, in 1930, the concept of night shopping was introduced and then in 1950's small shops in the malls transformed into huge departmental stores (Sollner). Their main function was to facilitate the shopping experience and also to alter the traditional business settings (The History and Evolution of the Shopping Mall). In 1956 shopping malls were made in two level buildings so as to cater the needs of large number of customers. For instance, the Southdale Center of Edina in Minnesota was the first centrally air conditioned shopping mall along with a common room for people (Sollner). Later on the number of shopping malls kept on increasing which were built upon huge lands with the latest facilities and equipment. In the late 20th century there were around 16000 shopping malls in America

alone (Sollner). Moreover, these malls were not only limited to the shopping experience but they had restaurants, amusement parks and night clubs. Today in the 21st century shopping malls have turned into entertainment platforms with the addition of cinemas (Shopping malls evolving into entertainment destinations). Source: Growth Media North America 1 The floors and the architectural designs of shopping malls are inspired by skylights and high tech interiors. Moreover, the rooms are now interconnected with one another while the roofs are illuminated with decorative lights (Kocaili). It can be closely observed from the above picture that the modern shopping malls are covered with glass walls and designed floors. These are further linked with the aesthetic sense of modern architects. There are now specified rooms for the display of different products while the entertainment area and parking lot is separated from all these merchandizing shops. The shopping malls are still going under transformations as per the progress in technology. No wonder what future shopping centre would be having for its consumers a part from exceptional shopping experience and entertainment. Works Cited DeLisle, James R. " The Evolution of Shopping Center Research: A 12-year Retrospective." Journal of Shopping Center Research (2005): 1-82. Kocaili, Buket E. " Evolution of Shopping Malls: Recent trend and the question of regeneration". Cankaya University (2010): 1-160. Sedlmaier, Alexander. From department store to shopping mall: transnational history of large- scale retail. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2005. Print. Shopping malls evolving into entertainment destinations. REUP Lifestyle by Growth Media North America. 2012. Web. 4 Oct 2013. Sollner, Tabea. The History of Shopping Center Development. Norderstedt:

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