

## The American Girl Retail Experience

Michelle Sinagra

*Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University - Daytona Beach*, [sinagram@my.erau.edu](mailto:sinagram@my.erau.edu)

Rachel M. Cunningham

*Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University - Daytona Beach*

Katlin Anglin

*Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University - Daytona Beach*

Christina Frederick Dr.

*Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University - Daytona Beach*, [frederic@erau.edu](mailto:frederic@erau.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.erau.edu/hfap>

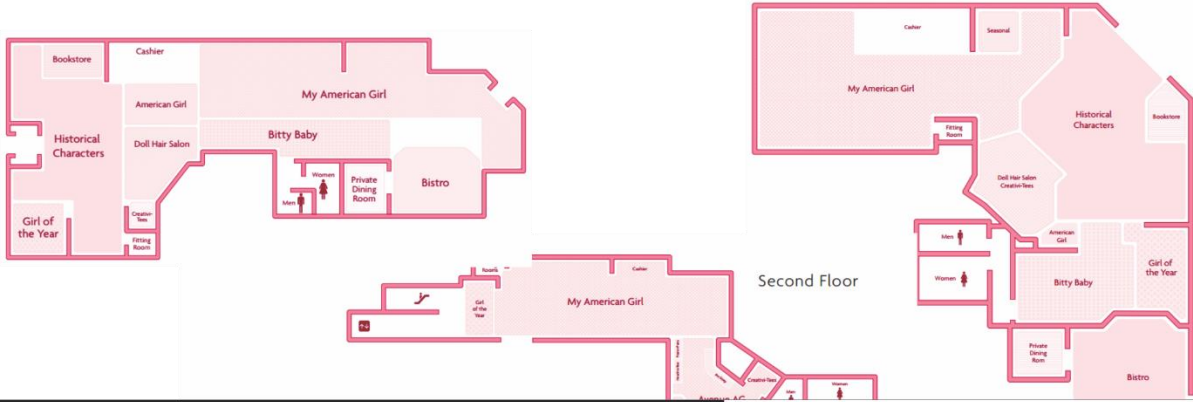


Part of the [Industrial and Product Design Commons](#), [Interactive Arts Commons](#), and the [Other Psychology Commons](#)

---

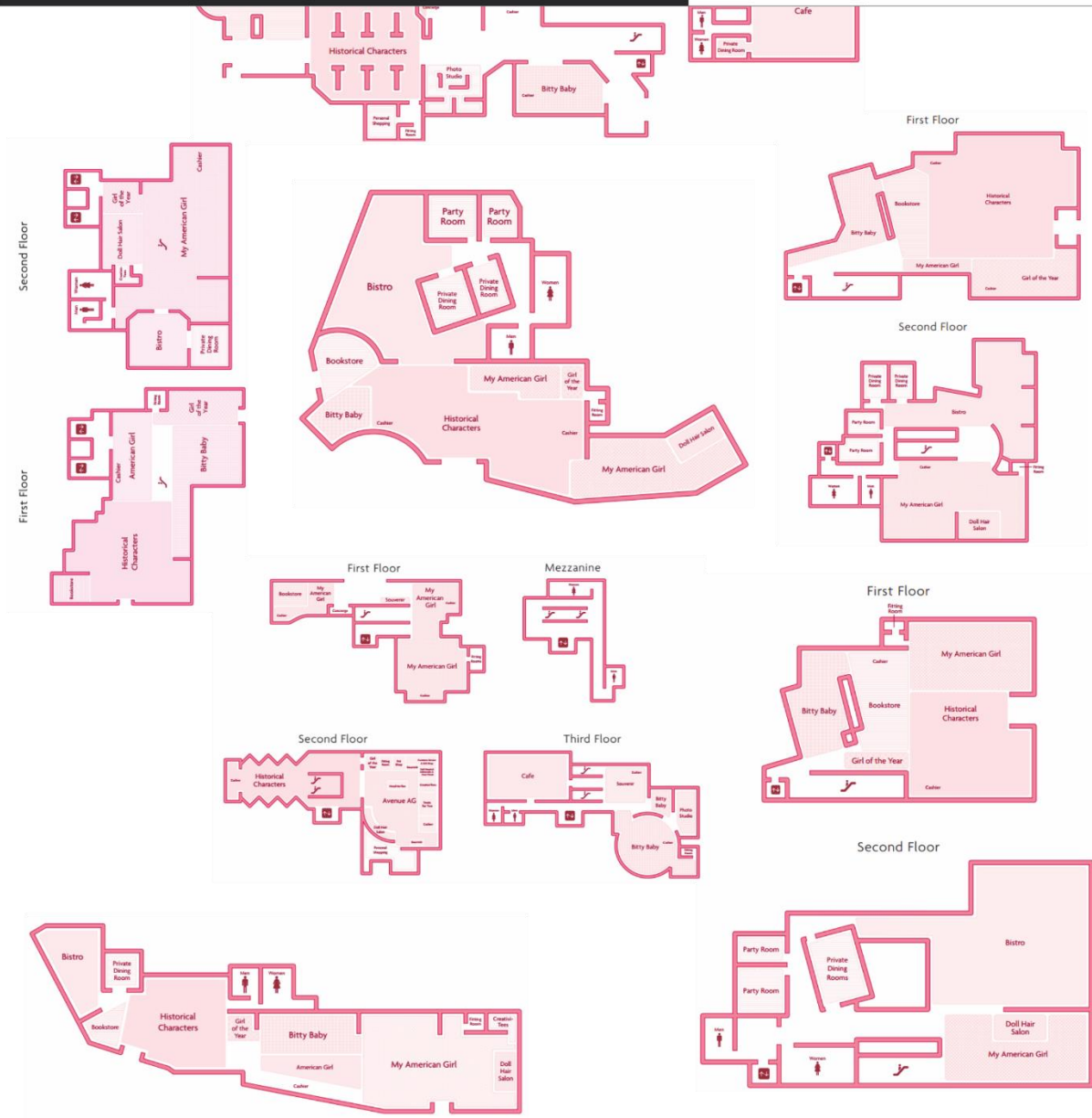
Sinagra, Michelle; Cunningham, Rachel M.; Anglin, Katlin; and Frederick, Christina Dr., "The American Girl Retail Experience" (2016). *Human Factors and Applied Psychology Student Conference*. 16.  
<https://commons.erau.edu/hfap/hfap-2015/posters/16>

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the Human Factors and Applied Psychology Student Conference at Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Human Factors and Applied Psychology Student Conference by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact [commons@erau.edu](mailto:commons@erau.edu).



**American Girl®** Follow your inner star®

Response to Mattel, Inc. Request Number N538976  
 Performance Stage Proposal  
 Authors: Michelle Sinagra, Rachel Cunningham,  
 Katlin Anglin, Dr. Christina Frederick



Mattel Inc. Request Number N538976  
American Girl Retail Experience

Performance Stage Proposal

Authors: Michelle Sinagra, Rachel Cunningham, Katlin Anglin, Dr. Christina Frederick

Affiliation: Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Game-Based Advanced Research Simulations Lab

Submitted: January 28, 2015

1.0 Project Background, Description, Objectives & Recommendations

2.0 Performance Stage Drawings and Space Plan/Traffic Diagram

3.0 Project Budget Estimates & Cost Projections

4.0 References

## **SECTION 1.0 Project Background, Description, Objectives & Recommendations**

### **SECTION 1.1 Project Background**

The American Girl brand is characterized by its ability to promote identity development in young girls through play and educational experiences. Due to the accessibility of smart-devices (e.g. mobile and web based technologies) and the frequency of their use, recent trends in toy designs have shown an increase in digital/technology features. Taking this into consideration, American Girl has continuously emphasized doll-centric products and experiences that also satisfy consumer's digital interests. Interactive digital resources include: the entire American Girl website which features a wide selection of Games, Apps, activities, and e-cards, as well as the InnerStar University.

American Girl exceeded projected retail sales in FY2013, providing evidence that the best success is yet to come. (Mattel, 2013) Our method for developing this proposal came from observations of the American Girl Place in Chicago, Illinois and the American Girl Store in Orlando, Florida as well as review of digital resources such as the American Girl website, 2013 Mattel Annual Report and press releases. This proposal provides a promising platform for the future of American Girl in the realm of the performing arts and, specifically, bringing the existing American Girl Fashion Show in-stores.

### **SECTION 1.2 Description of Base Activity**

A portable performance stage/runway will be set up to promote an in-store American Girl Fashion Show. The performance stage/runway would be temporarily displayed in the Bookstore area of stores. The first in-store "Fashion Show" could potentially partner with Project Runway/The Fashion Institute of Technology for the "Grand Opening In-store American Girl Fashion Show." Thereafter, runway photo shoots will be individualized events, by appointment and available only on key dates during the first or second quarters of the FY. An alternative to the individualized events would be to have a special fashion show for the BeForever™ product line. The BeForever™ inspired Fashion Shows would include multiple girls versus the individual runway photo shoots. The in-store American Girl Fashion Show experience would flow as follows:

1. Make reservation with payment
2. Arrive to store
3. Select an outfit
  - a. Phase I: Selections from clothing lines available in-store
  - b. Phase II: Co-branded "Project Runway" line of American Girl clothing
4. Model the selected outfit (with doll) on the stage/runway while photographer takes photographs
5. Select photos for print
6. Schedule photo pick up

## SECTION 1.3 Project Objectives

**Objective I.** Cultivate an artistic themed learning environment that engenders creativity

This space is designed to increase attention to the performing arts including: fashion, visual artistry, theatre and literature. American Girl promotes the performing arts on a smaller scale through some of the current in-store events (e.g. jewelry making, valentine card decorating, etc.) in comparison to available products listed in the online catalogue (e.g. school and music accessories), but the overall performance experience would relate to the development of identity in young girls with influence from model American Girl doll characters. The performance stage would provide additional recognition to the performing arts and open possibilities for expanding connections to creative communities nationwide!

**Objective II.** Create a versatile space that is adaptable as interests and needs of the consumer evolve

The materials and design of the space would not be a permanent installation, unless selected as so. A versatile design will allow for multiple uses of the space (e.g. American Girl Fashion Show/runway, literature readings/story time, and small scale theatre performances). This proposal will provide long term growth for the brand and be a platform for future developments in the arts sector of the American Girl brand.

**Objective III.** Provide an engaging entertainment experience that drives profit

This proposal was developed with considerations for: recent trends in shortened lifecycles of toy products, promotion of sales outside of the traditional holiday season, the provisions of the Consumer Product Safety Act, and promoting an experience that cannot be matched by competitors. (Mattel, 2013) We understand the impact that these factors have on profit and that offering the performing arts experience for a limited time (e.g. during key dates) will promote the sense of urgency to participate. Although, this activity would be temporary as many seasonal activities, it would not be designed to occur during the seasonal time frame when profits are highest (e.g. third and fourth quarter). The purpose of this experience is to generate profits during the first and second quarter of the FY. The performing arts experience will enhance use of currently available products and services (see Section 1.4 for supporting explanation).

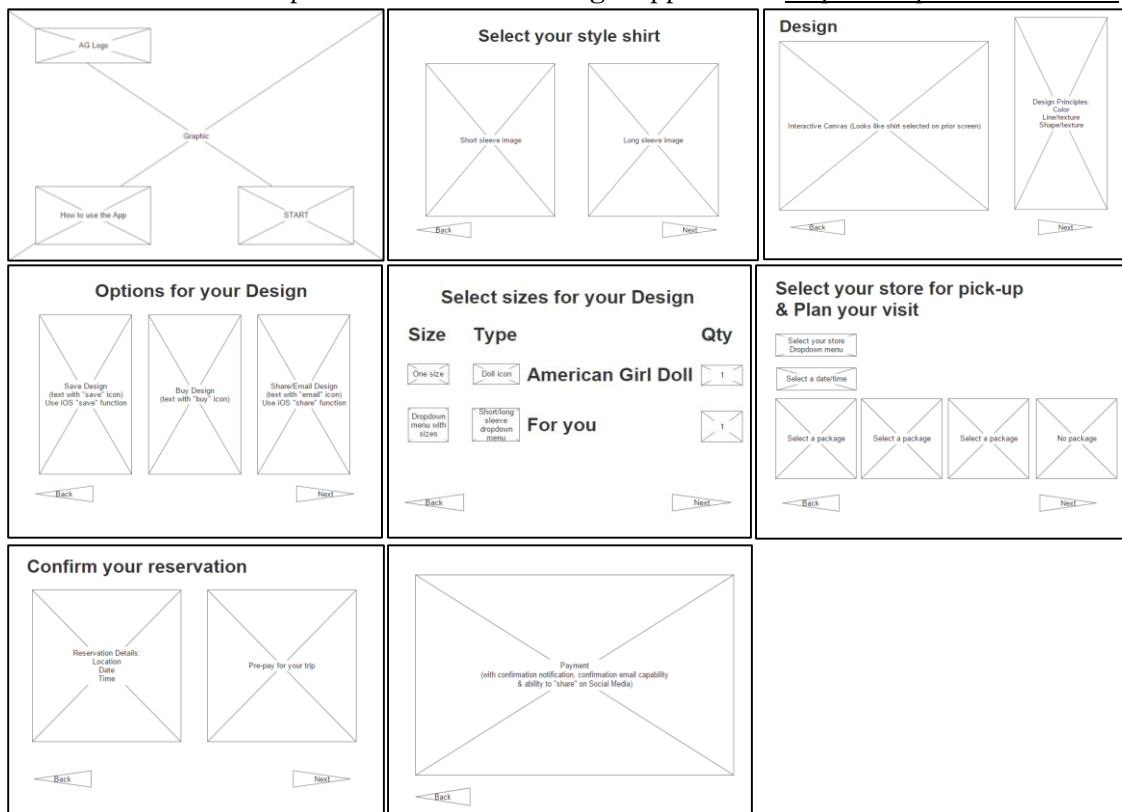
## SECTION 1.4 Recommendations

In addition to the base activity, other itinerary/package deals may be incorporated into the in-store American Girl Fashion Show at either the time of implementation or delayed to phases of implementation. The majority of these recommendations make good use of currently available products and services, which would not directly add to costs.

Additional benefits of this proposal include the promotion of existing experiences and products, with the possibility for product extensions such as:

1. Photo Studio (as discussed above)
2. Hair Salon
3. American Girl Cafe, American Girl Bistro, Avenue AG
4. In-store experiences: Story Time, Ballet Story Time
5. Book sales
6. Sample products to be promoted with this new design: Spotlight Stage Set (Item# F1853)
7. Sample products to be promoted with this new design with respect to the BeForever™ Collection: Rebecca's Director Set (Item# BKF73), Rebecca's Costume Chest (Item# F9693)
8. Creativi-tees
  - a. Customizable "Creativi-tee"

- Mock up for American Girl Design Application: <http://45kpie.axshare.com>



## SECTION 2.0 Performance Stage Drawings and Space Plan/Traffic Diagram

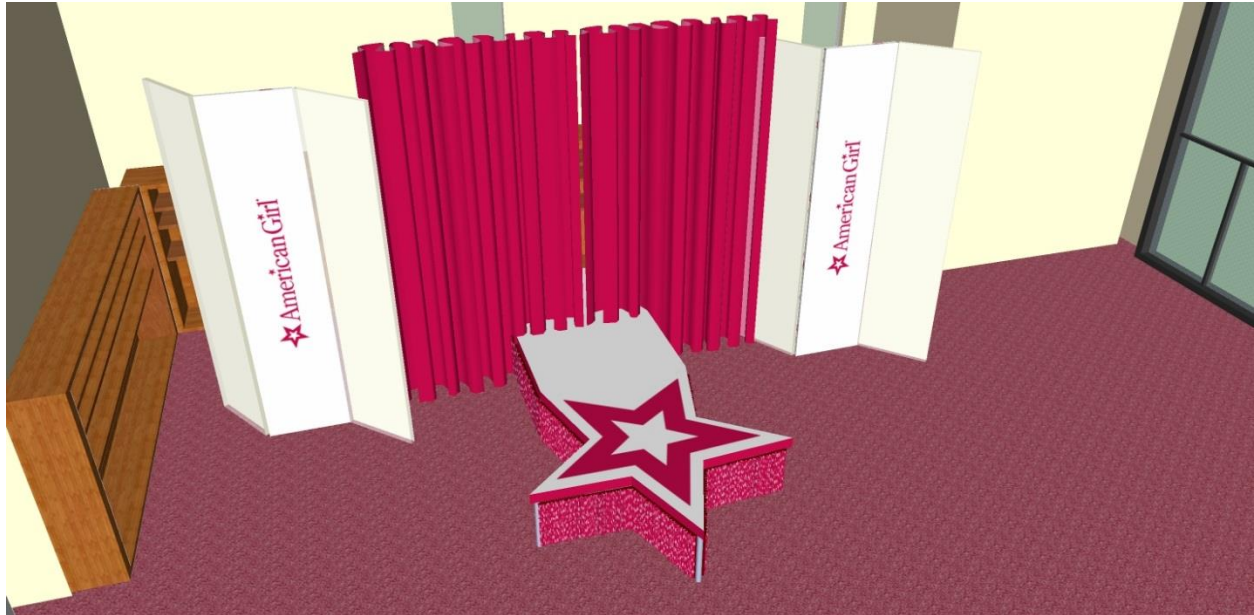


Figure 1.0 Front view: Performance Stage and supporting structures.

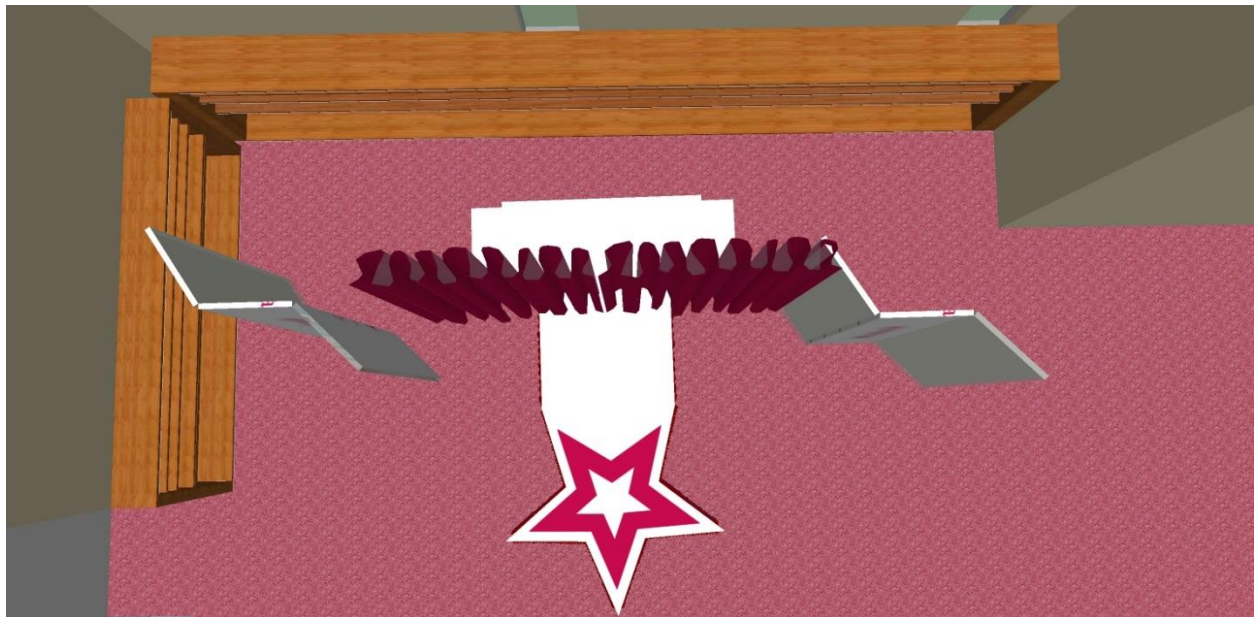


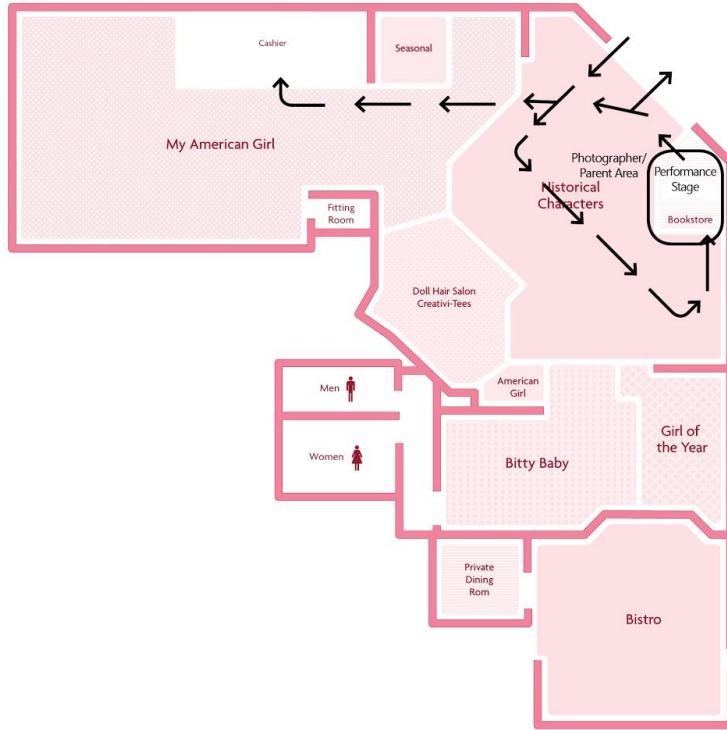
Figure 2.0 Aerial view: Performance Stage and supporting structures.



# STORE MAP

Smaller Store Space Plan/Traffic Flow Diagram

ORLANDO

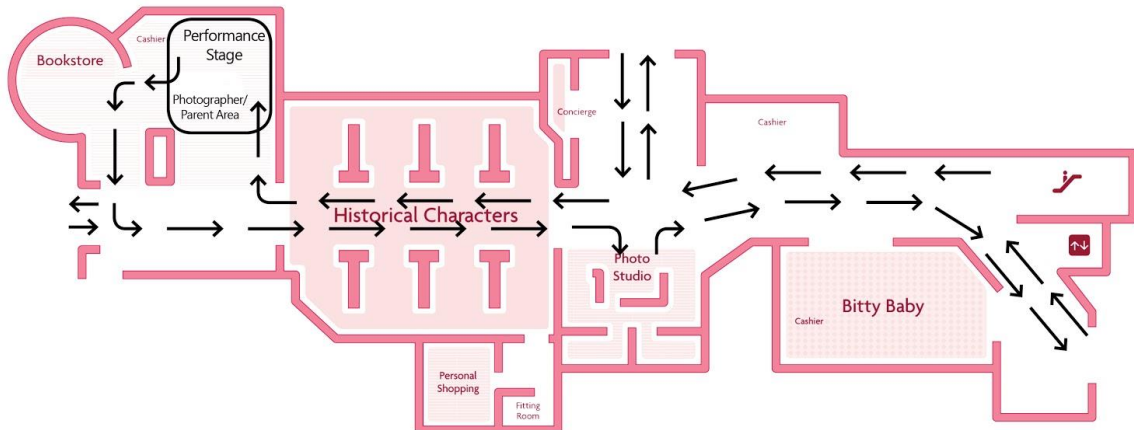


# STORE MAP

Larger Store Space Plan/Traffic Flow Diagram

CHICAGO

First Floor



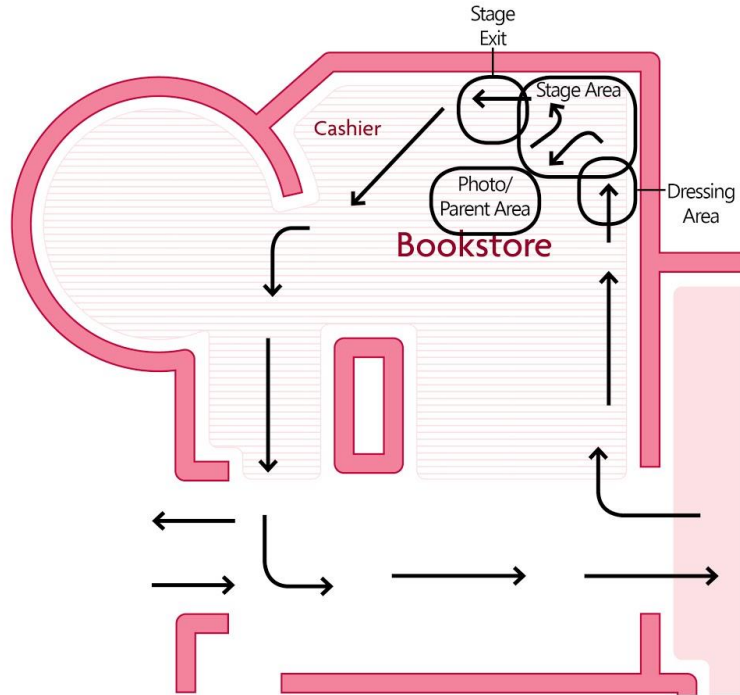




# STORE MAP

Enlarged Performance Stage Area  
Space Plan/Traffic Flow Diagram

# CHICAGO



**SECTION 3.0 Project Budget Estimates & Cost Projections**

***Stage Supplier I: Custom Designs***

Description	Estimated Cost
30" wide x 5' long x 16" high Runway Platform with legs	\$600.40
4' wide x 16" high Star Platform with legs	\$1,305.60
2 Platform Clamps	\$36.00
30' of 16" high Black, pleated Polyester Skirting; attaches to platform with Velcro	\$221.00
Transport/Storage Cart	\$445.00
Weekday Delivery	\$100.00
<b><i>Equipment Total:</i></b>	<b><i>\$2,708.00</i></b>
Low-pile Carpet, (1) standard color, permanently affixed to top of platforms	\$245.00
Wood Grain or Solid Color Kydex Veneer surface for platform tops	\$515.00
Wood Crate for legs and clamps	\$48.00

***Stage Supplier II: Grand Stage***

Description	Estimated Cost
4 ft x 8 ft x 2 ft platform	\$800.00-\$1,000.00
4 ft x 16 ft x 2 ft platform	\$1,600.00-\$2,000.00
<b><i>Installation- 4 hr minimum with 2 workers \$45.00 per worker/hour- \$360.00 min</i></b>	
<b><i>(2) 1 ft stairs</i></b>	<b><i>Approximately \$200</i></b>

***Lighting Supplier I: Homewyse.com***

Description	Estimated Cost- Low	Estimated Cost- High
One Ceiling Light Fixture	\$48.53	\$125.40
One Ceiling Light Fixture Labor- 2.2 hours	\$78.23	\$142.82
One Ceiling Light Fixture Job Materials and Supplies	\$15.00	\$25.00
Three Ceiling Light Fixtures	\$145.60	\$376.21
Three Ceiling Light Fixtures Labor- 5.8 hours	\$205.28	\$377.14
Three Ceiling Light Fixtures Job Materials and Supplies	\$21.57	\$25.00
<b><i>One Ceiling Light Fixture Total</i></b>	<b><i>\$141.76</i></b>	<b><i>\$293.23</i></b>
<b><i>Three Ceiling Light Fixtures Total</i></b>	<b><i>\$372.45</i></b>	<b><i>\$778.35</i></b>

### *Additional Equipment*

Description	Cost
Collapsible changing room/divider	\$80.00
Curtain backdrop- 8'x4'	\$155.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$235.00</b>

### *Supporting Resources*

Description	Cost
Camera & photographer	Already in store
Advertisement via catalog, website, and proprietary retail stores	Already in use

### *Event Cost*

Description	Cost
Fashion Show Package	\$50 per child
<b>Expected Annual Revenue</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>

### *Cost-Benefit Analysis*

Total Implementation Cost	Annual Benefit	Ratio
<b>\$3,875.45-4,281.35</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>0.83</b>

- Annual benefit exceeds implementation cost.
- The project is expected to pay for itself with about 78-86 children.
- Minimum of 500 children are expected to use the runway in the first year through events and appointments
  - The minimum estimate includes an opening event with 150 girls, 6 events with 40 girls each, and the additional girls will be supplemented through appointments throughout the year.
- Annual benefit will remain profitable, and implementation cost will not be a factor in the following years.
- It is therefore recommended that the project be implemented.

### SECTION 4.0 References

- Mattel FY 2013 Annual Report
- American Girl Website ([www.americangirl.com](http://www.americangirl.com))
- Custom Designs (847) 301-6700: 825 Estes Avenue, Schaumburg, IL 60193
- Grand Stage (312) 332-5611: 630 West Lake Street, Chicago, IL 60661