

# Consider the consumer too

By JANET KIRKBRIDE

Retail marketing strategies should not exclusively target shopper triggers – consumer considerations are equally important.

## Consumer versus shopper

Manufacturers and retailers operate in a symbiotic cycle of demand involving consumers (those that consume/use products) and shoppers (those that purchase the products). While consumption can only happen after shopping, sustainable growth is only possible if the products bought are consumed.

Motivating shoppers to buy items that consumers never consume, or that consumers don't like, will not translate into repeat purchases.

It follows therefore that understanding of and distinction between consumers and shoppers in retail marketing strategies allows one to fine tune promotional messaging and offers, and maximise the associated Return on Investment (ROI).

Grocery shopping largely forms part of a mother's role of taking care of the family – satisfying their common needs (e.g. clean and comfortable home, tasty healthy



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meals) as well as the personal wants and needs of individual family members (e.g. personal hygiene, clothing, treats).

## Influencing the decision

Even in situations where the shopper and the consumer are one and the same, the motivations and influences on each facet of the individual differ. For example, consider buying a cold drink for immediate consumption – Certainly shopper focused levers can influence the choice of beverage:

- **Visibility** – Posters, wobblers and shelf protectors at the primary shelf, off-shelf displays, cross-merchandising units
- **Availability** – Range of segments, brands, variants and pack sizes available on-shelf

- **Shopability** – Ease of navigating the category and finding familiar solutions
- **Affordability and value** – Discounts, value-added packs, coupons
- **Excitement** – Competitions, collectibles, rewards
- **Direct engagement** – Demonstrations, samples

While these factors are all relevant and influential, the shopper will also take into account their needs and preferences as a consumer such as to quench their thirst with something that is preferably cold, tastes great, possibly is healthy, perhaps has no bubbles, is in a resealable bottle that fits the cup holder in their car, and is made by a trusted manufacturer or brand. ▶



Retailers need to build their knowledge of consumers in their key categories in order to more effectively select products to sell and design marketing campaigns.

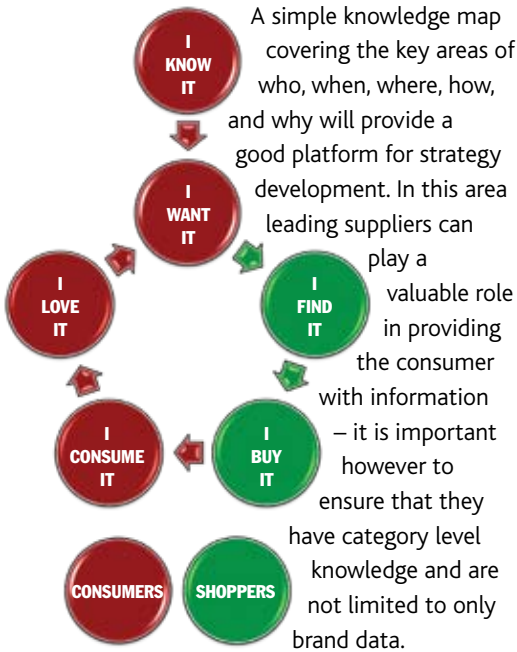


Brands need to stand out from the rest in order to be chosen by the shopper to fulfil a particular need, such as keeping a home clean.

## FACING THE SHOPPER ►

Consumer considerations directly impact purchase decisions, so retailers need to build their knowledge of consumers in their key categories in order to more effectively select products to sell and design marketing campaigns.

### Tracking the consumer



Increasingly, examples of consumer orientated messaging can be found in Point of Purchase (POP) activations that speak to specific needs in order to motivate purchase. Such messaging can be expected to protect and even build category value and subsequently profitability as opposed to the shopper focused mechanics of price discounting that is so commonly employed.

Over and above referencing consumer needs, activations that speak to or motivate constructive new consumption behaviours are powerful in stimulating incremental business that will most likely deliver sustainable gains as opposed to the tactical short term lifts driven by 'buy one get one free' (BOGOF) promotions or competitions.

In summary therefore, retail offers and marketing campaigns should be designed to activate specific areas of the consumer knowledge map – targeting specific consumers, consumption occasions or locations, applications, and underlying motivations, as well as the relevant shopper levers (visibility, availability, shopability, affordability/value, excitement, and engagement) in order to deliver competitive, profitable results.



Consumer orientated messaging is increasingly found in Point of Purchase (POP) activations.



Janet Kirkbride has worked for more than 25 years in the FMCG industry with diverse experience across marketing, sales, manufacturing, and retail. She now runs Red Jersey Consulting specialising in category management/ marketing, shopper and channel marketing, shelf optimisation, and customer management. Visit her website – [www.redjc.com](http://www.redjc.com), or give her a call for more information on the services that she offers – 082 491 8003. 



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