

## **AISLES OF TEMPTATION**

Most of us walk through the aisles of the supermarkets almost everyday without realizing the hidden tactics used by these grocery stores to tempt shoppers to pick more than what's' on their list. Supermarkets aren't haphazard things. They are deliberately designed to get shoppers to buy as much as possible. When a store is being planned, careful consideration is given to product location. Some might say this is performed for the benefit of the customer. Others maintain that stores use basic psychology to entice consumers to spend more money.

When a supermarket's layout is initially generated, aisles are established which contain similar products. Pasta and pasta sauce, for example, are generally found in the same aisle. This certainly makes shopping easier for the consumer but there is also a distinct benefit to the store. If a consumer enters the market intent upon purchasing a jar of pasta sauce, he might realize the need to buy some more pasta, too.

Beyond the layout of the entire store, there is a method to a layout of the products on the actual shelves. The items with high profit margins, and usually a higher price tag, are specifically placed at, or close to, an average shopper's eye level. The less profitable brands are generally located at the top shelves or the bottom. A store's rationale for doing so is to capture your eye and draw you into buying the higher priced items.

Supermarkets realize that some products are more frequently purchased than others. These "essentials" are often placed in the back of the store, so customers will have to walk past, and be tempted by, all the other products in the store. As such, rice, flour, peas and sugar usually find their home towards the back of the store.

If one is looking to purchase only a candy bar or pack of gum, they needn't go much further than beyond a store's checkout. Of course, very few people go to the grocery store for only candy and gum. People shop at the supermarket for the essentials. But these items are placed right by the checkout because there will be lines and, as consumers wait, they will see the candy and might feel the impulse to buy some. By having these particular products in this location, a store is able to generate even more revenue.

The reason why the layout of supermarkets is like this is to make all available products seem so enticing, that unless you come with a premade list of items, chances are you'll be leaving with more than you ever thought possible.

## **SUPERMARKET LAYOUT**

**The layout of the supermarket is designed to prolong your trip. Watch out for these tactics on your next shopping trip.**

- 1) **Shelf-positioning** is very important. Prime selling space is at eye-level. Top and bottom shelves tend to be for slower-moving sports. On the bottom shelves you'll often find necessary, low-profit products like sugar and salt – retailers know you'll bend down to pick up what you really need. For example, milk which comes in many varieties. Some milk are even flavored but are more expensive than the others. This expensive milk is placed at eye-level as opposed to their non-flavored counterparts which are either placed higher up in the shelves or at the bottom.
- 2) **In-store sampling** is designed to tempt you to buy new products you may normally not buy.
- 3) **Gondola ends** are always full of special offers, impulse buys, or themed foods. They can also be a destination for products nearing their shelf life, so always check the expiry dates.
- 4) **Cross-merchandizing** is where related products are placed together, partly for convenience but also to stimulate impulse buying. How often have you decided to buy French Onion Soup and Reduced Cream when you've bought your chippies. Positioning these natural combinations is likely to increase the sales of both.
- 5) Most **checkouts** have unhealthy snacks and sweets on display to tempt you and encourage your kids to pester you for treats. High-margin items like batteries, chewing gum, and magazines are also at the checkout. What's another few dollars when your trolley is full?
- 6) You always need **essentials** like bread and milk. These are usually at the back of the store, so that you need to walk all the way through to get to them. If they were at the entrance, people would just pop in to get them-and then leave.
- 7) **Kid's products** are normally on lower shelves. In most of the supermarkets we visited, Coco Pops and other sugary cereals were on the bottoms shelf, an easy grab for little hands.
- 8) **Line extensions** create a bigger shelf presence. For example, one size and variety of yoghurt doesn't take up much room in the chiller – and doesn't do much to make the brand stand out. But combining different sizes, flavors, and low-fat variants gives the brand much more impact.
- 9) **Perishable foods** from the deli, seafood, and meat sections are usually around the periphery of the supermarket. The sights and smell grab your interest as you're led through the supermarket to the less interesting packaged goods.
- 10) Where are the **eggs**? Probably nowhere near the bread. Separation of popular staples is a common element of supermarket design. You'll spend more time wheeling past the other temptations.

## **RENT THIS SPACE**

It's not simply a matter of supermarkets positioning healthy foods in the high traffic spots. If you ever see a product sitting in a prime location, you can be sure the manufacturer or distributor has paid "rent" to be there.

These are known as trading terms and are confidentially negotiated with each supplier.

By offering good deals for the store and consumers, sales increase and store data is used to show one company's products are selling better than a competitor's/

Trading terms may also influence where a product is placed on a supermarket's layout planogram. This maps, for example, where all the cereals, muesli bars or bottled waters will go. A carefully planned planogram aims to maximize the supermarket's profitability with the best-selling and most profitable products at eye-level.

## **TIPS FOR BEING A SAVVY SUPERMARKET SHOPPER**

- Make a list and stick to it – it's the key to avoiding impulse buying.
- With specials, check the regular price to see how much you're really saving.
- Check prices and sizes. Smaller sizes sometimes work out cheaper than the larger size.
- Does the special really offer you something? Or is it on a more expensive brand than you would normally buy? Don't buy it just because it's a "bargain".
- Don't go shopping when you're hungry. With a full stomach you're less susceptible to the free samples and promotions designed to tempt you with extra purchases.
- Get to know your local supermarket layout. You'll be able to hone in on the things you really want and avoid the temptations.