

When the retailer says NO! How to get a YES from a retailer

When you are selling to retailers, what to do when
it feels like retailers will never support you?

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-|- A long while ago, bread was sold in supermarkets in little packets. The bread was all the same size, and was made in a bakery far, far away. Retailers wanted to entice people to do more of their daily shopping at the supermarket.

And one day, someone suggested an in-store bakery. Can you -|- imagine?

“We’re going to knock down the wall, and build a bakery. We’ll have bread ovens, and ingredients delivered to the store. We’ll employ bakers. We’ll make many different types of bread and we’ll have to forecast accurately as it will be out of shelf-life after one day.”

How crazy must that have sounded when the idea was first suggested?

And yet – retailers did it.

Take Heart – Retailers Will Support You If It Is In Their Interest



Can I guarantee that you can turn a retailer's 'no' into a 'yes' every time? I'm afraid not. But there are some actions that will certainly improve your chances. If you're finding it hard to get a retailer to say yes to anything other than price cuts; then take heart

So how to improve the chances of getting a 'yes' from a retailer?



Sense Check Your Story

Retailers don't support your initiatives for many reasons, but the most common one is that it simply isn't valuable enough. And I don't mean valuable to you, I mean **valuable to them**.

Whatever you want them to do is going to require effort, and so we need to make sure that there is enough value in the proposition to make all the hassle worthwhile.

And the more effort that is required the bigger the prize needs to be. Check that you've really used the power of shopper insight to build a brilliant value proposition for the retailer.



Make Sure You Understand The Reasons Why They Say No

There are lots of reasons, and the more we understand the reasons, the better the chances of overcoming them. But also remember that (almost) all reasons can be overcome if there is a good enough reason to take on the challenge.

Remember the in-store bakery. There will have been myriad objections, for sure.

One of the most common, “It goes against our policy”, is just another hurdle to overcome. It ‘costs’ your buyer (time, reputation) to even attempt to do something which goes against the norm, so you’d better make it worth her while!



Talk To The Right Person

People are different. They have different personalities, different attitudes, and different roles. Make sure you are pitching your proposition to the right person. Too many key account managers we meet simply don't know enough people in their customer's business.

Consider who your initiative will impact. Does it impact beyond your category? Store operations? Marketing? Who in the customer's business has a track record of buying similar ideas? Is there anyone in the retailer who might support you? How senior do you need to go?



If You Get It Right, You Can Change Things In A Store!

A more recent example – draft beer being sold in a hypermarket. That isn't easy for a retailer – lots of operational challenges and costs

Barrels being delivered. Waste. A barman!
All good reasons for the retailer to say “no” and yet – there was clearly enough perceived value to turn that no into a yes.



✱ Build the strongest value proposition

✱ Understand the key obstacles, challenges and objections, and plan how you will overcome them (and make sure your value-add is sufficient)

✱ Work out which person or people are critical to getting a yes.

✱ And take heart!

A great value proposition, worth more than the cost, pain and work it creates, sold to the right person, always has a chance!



An important part of the shopper marketing task is to ensure that retailers will support your initiatives.

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