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HOW TO "HOOK" SHOPPERS

EXCLUSIV EP Piața

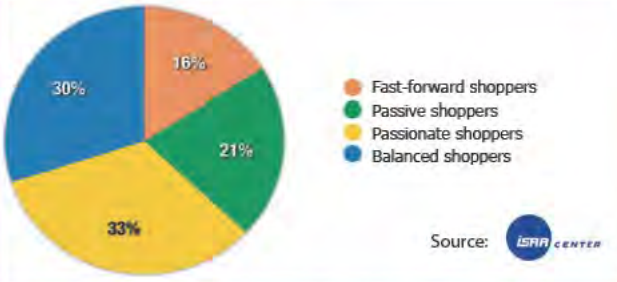
A research conducted by ISRA Center Marketing Research, exclusively for Piața magazine, has identified four segments of shoppers, starting from the attitudes they have during the purchase of consumer goods as well as the opportunities these groups generate for retailers.

Maria Vaschi

"Passionate shoppers" – could also be called addicted could also be called addicted shoppers - represent 33% of the urban population, most of them being women. They like going from store to store, shopping being considered a good opportunity to relax; that is why they prefer hypermarkets and supermarkets, where they can find a diversified offer of products. They are up to date with promotions, they like being among the first to test new things, they pay attention to ads, ask for information on the products they purchase, choose based on brand and quality and prefer to go shopping accompanied, so as to have someone to confer with.

These shoppers spend the smallest sums of money in traditional stores – 21 lei at one purchase occasion, compared to the national mean of 23 lei -, but in discount stores, expenses go higher – 79 lei, compared to the sample mean of 77 lei.

SHOPPERS SEGMENTS



Married persons are found especially in the group of "balanced shoppers", and persons with lower education level and lower incomes fall in the category of "passive shoppers". Banat and Transylvania shoppers are the most balanced

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

While women are passionate and addicted to shopping, men don't like to spend too much time in stores, forming the great majority of fast-forward shoppers.

Although one could expect these shoppers to spend the highest sums of money in stores, the fact that they are well informed and always in the loop with promotions makes them careful with the budget they allot to shopping.

OPPORTUNITIES CREATED BY "PASSIONATE SHOPPERS"

- Since they are rather adopters of modern retail, the presence in this retail format of the brands that want to attract these shoppers is important.
- A wide range of products and a nice environment that allows them to relax are important premises to draw and keep their attention for longer.
- Very well informed on prices as well as products, these shoppers rapidly detect "fake" offers, so it is important that offers be truly special.
- "Passionate shoppers" are drawn to innovation, are interested in new products that they often try out, being early adopters.
- A strong and differentiating brand image is essential for the shoppers in this segment and weighs in the purchase decision, as these persons consider brand to be a quality guarantee.

At the opposite end are "fast-forward shoppers" (16%), most of them men, who do not like to spend a lot of time in stores. These shoppers choose a product in haste, without being interested in looking for a less expensive version of it or obtaining more info on it, relying more on a moment's instinct.

If they don't have enough money, "fast-forward shoppers" prefer to buy a smaller quantity from the first product they assess as having high quality. Comparing prices and identifying promotions and special offers are not focus points for these categories. For them, the traditional store is the main location they go for shopping (39%), standing out from the mean of the population.

GOING SHOPPING TIRES "FAST-FORWARD SHOPPERS", REASON FOR WHICH, MOST OF THE TIMES, THE PURCHASE DECISION IS MADE IN THE SPUR OF THE MOMENT

Those who do not appreciate this sale format choose the hypermarket (38%) or the supermarket (22%), but it is worth highlighting that they frequent these retail channels more rarely (3 times, 4.5 times respectively per month, compared to the population mean of 4.2 times).

On average, they spend 27 lei upon one visit to the traditional store, this being the highest amount spent in this retail format by any of the four segments of shoppers identified. Moreover, the persons in this category allot the highest budgets in all store types compared to the rest of the shoppers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample

- The research was conducted on a sample of 1,100 respondents, representative for the urban area – cities with over 50,000 inhabitants -, aged 20 to 60.

Data collection period

- August 4 – 19, 2011.

Research method

- Omnibus survey, via face-to-face interview at respondent's home.

Specific objectives

- Identification of shoppers segments starting from their attitudes towards consumer goods purchase;
- Segments description from a sociodemographic perspective;
- Segments description concerning purchase habits.

Sampling error

- +/- 2,9%.

EACH SHOPPERS CATEGORY CAN CREATE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR RETAILERS

Good shopper knowledge is necessary for the best decisions on marketing investments. In addition to exploring purchase habits and behaviors, a good understanding of the attitudes towards shopping allows a correlation between shoppers' mindset and the way they are likely to react in the real environment. The segmentation on the purchase attitudes eases the outline of a few consistent groups of shoppers, each of them with its different approach, the four categories reacting to different stimuli.

Alice Mihai, Business Development Director, ISRA Center Marketing Research

Most of them are aged under 40 (60%), live in medium and large cities (88%), are located especially in Moldavia and less in Oltenia, and an important part of them are not married (39) and are smokers (49%).

OPPORTUNITIES CREATED BY "FAST-FORWARD SHOPPERS"

- Very good shelf presence is needed where these shoppers usually go to– traditional retail being considered the most at hand, even if they spend the highest sums of money in hypermarkets – or in other places they get to (gas stations).
- Not having the time or the patience to search for too long, they often choose the products that come in their way. That is why products in secondary placement areas can be very useful, shoppers being thus able to rapidly indentify the items they need.
- Good shop organization, through the presence of visible signs and well-placed shelves, can be important for these shoppers.
- Since they do not pay much attention to price, they way a product is packaged and presented could play a great part in catching their eye.
- They may not be impressed by price discounts, but focus on quality may very well open up their appetite for shopping.
- It would be advisable to make the quality indicators easy to identify, as the shoppers in this segment do not have time to go through the ingredients list. If the packaging offers these shoppers the impression that they have a product worth the money in front of them, they would be willing to pay even more than usual.
- Any element that quickly draws attention to a product – promoters to invite to the purchase, special flags – is welcome.

In between the two segments are "balanced shoppers" and "passive shoppers". The former category comprises 31% of the urban population. These buyers can be characterized as having a rather rational attitude towards shopping, their behavior including "counterbalancing" elements, so the overall picture is that of attentive shoppers, aware of the decisions they make, without making any exaggerations.

Although they don't like spending too much time shopping, "balanced shoppers" are interested in promotions, most of the times trying to find the best price offer. They can be engaged in prices comparison between stores and prefer to go shopping during sales season. However, they try not to buy very cheap products, considering them to be low quality. They are informed shoppers as they pay attention to the product label, are careful about the product content and country of origin, watch ads, but they are not necessarily the first to try new things. The frequency of visits to the four types of retail format comes close to the mean, with a slight increase in the case of hypermarkets and a significantly lower preference for traditional retail. This segment includes fewer young shoppers (aged under 30), but we find more married persons (67%). A higher number of "balanced shoppers" live in Banat and Transylvania.

OPPORTUNITIES CREATED BY "BALANCED SHOPPERS"

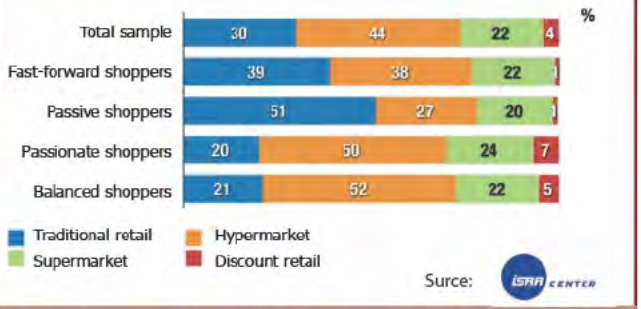
- Attentive to spending as they are, these shoppers appreciate a fair price policy, but without turning towards cheap brands.
- Although not liking to spend a lot of time shopping, they tend to compare prices between stores and get informed about products, their decision being based on rational elements. To this respect, the highlight of the actual advantages they get by purchasing a specific brand or by choosing a specific store will be appreciated by the shoppers in this group.
- Their desire to get informed makes them carefully read the label. So, mentioning important details on the packaging will help them make a choice they would be satisfied with.
- Ads also contribute to influencing the purchase decision, but promotion needs to be backed by products' real success on the market, these shoppers looking for safe choices.
- Mostly married shoppers, products and campaigns addressed to families may have a positive impact on balanced shoppers.

BALANCED SHOPPERS" ALWAYS TRY TO FIND THE BEST PRICE OFFER

MEAN AMOUNT SPENT (LEI)

Out of the four groups, "fast-forward shoppers" spend the highest sums of money in traditional as well as modern retail: the former is preferred for its proximity, the latter – for its rich and at-hand offer.

MAIN RETAIL (HIGHEST AMOUNTS ARE SPENT IN)



Traditional retail has the most adopters among the "passives" and the fewest among the "shopping addicts ". "The balanced" prefer modern retail, being interested in promotions and in finding the best price.

Passives" are shoppers that seem to find no pleasure in going shopping, considering this activity tiresome. Just like "fast-forward shoppers", they choose not to spend a lot of time in stores, but this segment includes especially elder people – 37% are aged over 50 -, with low incomes, who prefer traditional retail or the market, so as to confer with the sales persons.

"Passive shoppers" are not interested in products quality and are not willing to pay more for higher quality. In addition, they do not usually get informed beforehand about what they are buying, do not read product label, do not pay attention to the brand, are not oriented towards natural or healthy products and do not pay attention to product content. The lower incomes and lower education level than the other groups correlate with their disinterest in these aspects.

Although preferring traditional retail, they try to limit their visits to these retail formats (17.6 visits, compared to a national mean of 18.4). However, they spend more than other categories in traditional retail: 26 lei at one purchase occasion, compared to the mean of 23 lei.

These shoppers are less encountered in Bucharest. They generally have low (28%) and medium education level and among them are fewer Internet users than in the other segments.

MOST OF THE "PASSIVE SHOPPERS" ARE LOCATED IN DOBROGEA, THE FEWEST BEING IN BUCHAREST.

OPPORTUNITIES CREATED BY "PASSIVE SHOPPERS"

- Although these shoppers seem to represent a low-potential category, marketing activities adapted to their needs can make them react and gratefully turn towards the brand or retailer that helps them go through the maze of modern retail more easily.
- As they are people with lower incomes, a good price policy will definitely attract them.
- They prefer small stores and markets so as to confer with the sales person. Product shelf presence in these locations is a must-have for the brands that wish to attract this group of shoppers.
- Modern retailers can prove versatility and adaptability by including traditional retail elements that draw these shoppers, especially by offering them the possibility to talk to a sales person who guides and advises them.

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