



The right shelf-image

Budgets may be taking a battering, but customers still want the products they know and trust – so an informed, accessible health and beauty fixture could avoid that ugly mark on your profits sheet, says STEFAN APPLEBY

HEALTH and beauty is a sector in which independent retailers can – if they focus on merchandising a range containing key products and bestsellers – make huge gains.

Although the health and beauty (or 'personal care') sector is very large and contains many differing sub-categories – it does pay to look more closely at the top-sellers and main products in each one.

According to Unilever's independent convenience advice service, Partners for Growth, the market value of the skin cleansing and care section alone is £1.28billion; while the total market value of deodorants is £525million, and male toiletries is £319million.

Paul Lettice, trade communications manager at Procter & Gamble, says that getting the health and beauty section right will see an immediate benefit: "In the convenience channel, the average health and beauty category shopper visits their local store approximately four times a week and spends roughly £32.82 in that period."

"If you compare this with the average convenience store shoppers' weekly spend of £20.16, you can clearly see the importance of getting the category right in terms of ranging, layout and value. Particularly when the

overall health and beauty category is worth an incredible £7.8billion in the UK."

What's new in health and beauty

The key driver in health and beauty is routine – customers are keen to stick to a small selection of brands they trust for their daily routines. Therefore, Unilever suggests, customers will shop elsewhere if they can't find what they're looking for, either due to unclear store signage or a poor range.

Kimberley Green, Partners for Growth's manager, says: "Everyone uses toiletries and most people have a specific routine that they follow day in, day out. Some toiletries, such as toothpaste, shower gel and deodorant, are used so often that routine dictates, if you run out or are running low, you will pop into your local store to top up."

Julie McCleave, senior category manager at Unilever UK, says: "Female personal care is a hugely exciting market where brand loyal consumers demand more from the products they use on a daily basis. They look for products with the right combination of mood-enhancing fragrances and textures to make them feel good."

Unilever is supporting this with the launch of Dove Intensive Range for extra dry skin. Dove recently launched the Go Fresh range of shower gels and deodorant, which brought £5.5million in sales to the category, and it hopes for more success with the Intensive range.

A new Impulse body spray fragrance, Romantic Spark, has also been launched – coinciding with a relaunch and re-design for the entire Impulse range.

The start of this year also saw a relaunch for P&G's Herbal Essences range, backed by huge TV, radio and print support. Paul Lettice says: "We are positive that



Retailer viewpoint Nick Fraser, shops development manager, Fraser Group

"Health and beauty is a very important part of our stores – it contributes to customer satisfaction and general well-being. In our one Lovis and five Spa stores in the Oxford area, we devote 15q of shelf space to the health and beauty range.

"Sales within our stores are consistent at the moment, with the focus on offering customers good value for money.

"Our wholesaler, Spar Capex, provides us with all our lines, and if we need to acquire additional lines, we ask them to do the purchasing on our behalf.

"They also provide very good merchandising advice and are willing to visit our stores to show us ideas for planograms and merchandising, which we readily take on board."

consumer awareness around the relaunch will be high due to the increased campaign, as well as the bold new packaging providing better visibility on-shelf. Both should drive trial purchase and build basket spend, in turn increasing hair care category value and profitability for the retailer."

Shaving, across both sexes, has seen constant innovation over the past few years, and 2009 is no different.

Female shaving brand Gillette Venus has recently launched Embrace, a new five-blade razor. The female shaving market is worth £14.2million – and with Embrace, Gillette aims to

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STOCKING WHAT SHOPPERS WANT

The column that lets you know which brands customers expect to see on your shelves

Your cut-out-and-keep guide to help you master the health & beauty category. Take this to the cash & carry so you can be sure that you are making the right purchasing decision and will be stocking the brands that your customers want to buy.

- 1 Dove Intensive Lotion Extra Dry Skin 250ml**
RRP £4.99
- 2 Dove Hair Minimising Deodorant 150ml**
RRP £2.99 (APN), £2.49 (roll-on)
- 3 Vaseline Aloe Fresh Gel 200ml**
RRP £4.99
- 4 Lynx Bullet – Instinct**
RRP £0.99
- 5 Sure Maximum Protection**
RRP £4.99
- 6 Dove Go Fresh Body Wash 250ml**
RRP £2.25

Bought to you by Driving growth in the health & beauty category

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demand more from the products they use on a daily basis. They look for products with the right combination of mood-enhancing fragrances and textures to make them feel good."

Partners for Growth's seven steps to success

Unilever's Partners for Growth scheme aims to help convenience store retailers cash in on the 34 per cent of shoppers who are looking to buy health and beauty products.

Stephen Moodie (pictured), Unilever's customer director for the convenience sector, says: "Partners for Growth is a great tool for convenience retailers. Follow the seven steps to success and you could grow health and beauty sales and increase profits."

1 Make customers aware you stock toiletries 18 per cent of shoppers don't realise that toiletries are sold at their local store, so place them in a highly-visible top-to-area. If practical constraints mean some high-value products need to be behind the counter, use visual prompts to ensure customers ask for what they need.

2 Availability is crucial If shoppers can't find what they want, they will often defer the purchase. For example, 36 per cent of shoppers would go without or go to another store if the deodorant they wanted isn't available.

3 Use point-of-sale to signpost your fixture Shoppers are often in a hurry, therefore

make sure your toiletries fixture is well-signposted and attractive so shoppers can find it quickly.

4 Stock the bestsellers 55 per cent of shoppers intend to buy a leading toiletries brand. But, with limited space and so many products to choose from, stocking the top brands in each sector is a must. Range simplicity is key – so you should stock the bestselling lines in the bestselling toiletries categories.

5 Clearly divide the fixture into sections This can be a complicated fixture to present, so it's important that you merchandise logically. Men, in particular, are more comfortable if their products are separate from women's ranges.

6 Stock vertically by brand People are very loyal to particular brands. So keep your shelves full and double-face the bestselling lines even if this means removing some of the slower-selling brands.

7 Place your bestselling product at eye level This is a very useful method – placing your bestselling lines at eye level on the fixture will help maximise sales.



Supplier viewpoint

Julie Watson, customer marketing director, Unilever UK



"Health and beauty shopping is all about routine – so knowing your customer and understanding when and how they shop is hugely important in this category.

"People shop for food with meals on their mind, but shop for personal-care products with their routine in mind. In fact, everybody has at least seven personal occasions in an average week – and some have more than 250 occasions!"

"Loyalty is key in this category, as consumers mainly stick to a small repertoire of big-name brands that they know and trust. Because of this, availability is also crucial

and shoppers are more likely to defer purchase or go to another store if they cannot find what they are looking for.

"Health and beauty is a hugely exciting category where brand-loyal consumers demand more from the products they use on a daily basis. Unilever continues to make significant investment in the category, with innovative new product launches, memorable advertising campaigns and targeted in-store activity to ensure that we are always evolving to meet shoppers' needs and drive category growth.

"Unilever also works closely with retailers to ensure that they merchandise the category effectively to grow their personal-care business through the Partners for Growth merchandising programme."

Essential guide

- Stock the best-selling brands in each category
- Ensure that you are fully stocked so that shoppers can choose their preferred brand
- Merchandise by brand and format
- Support the category with engaging PoS
- Make sure you are stocking the most relevant products for your customers