

Winning at the Shelf: Retailers invest in merchandising systems to drive sales as economic recovery begins to take hold

When the Great Recession hit, retailers responded in a variety of ways. Some went into hunker-down mode, reducing capital expenditure budgets and waiting for an upturn before investing in remodels and new store construction. Others across a wide variety of retail channels invested in new categories, primarily food and other grocery staples, to drive consumer traffic to stores.

North American chains, including Canadian Tire, Dollar General, Menards, Target, Walgreens and others, have all either tested food sales or engaged in strategic rollouts of grocery departments, according to press reports.

Among those that pulled back, there is a new sense of needing to grow their top line business as cost savings have been fully explored. Many are now looking to shopper marketing and in-store merchandising programs to improve the customer experience and drive add-on sales.

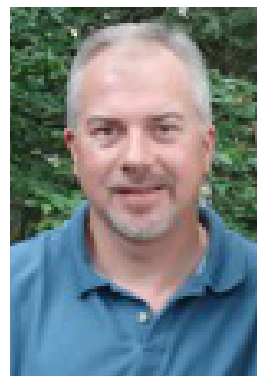
Manufacturers of retail merchandising systems have seen an uptick in activity as traditional food retailers are reinvesting in growing their businesses while others move aggressively into grocery.

One leading supplier, Trion Industries, could not discuss specific accounts citing confidentiality agreements, but did confirm the company has seen an increase in orders for merchandising systems from convenience, drug and a number of big and small box discounter formats.

Rich Wildrick, director of sales and business development for Trion, mentioned Trion's Wonder Bar

merchandising system as being particularly popular with retailers looking for solutions in multiple categories, including refrigerated and frozen foods.

“Our Wonder Bar merchandising system stands the product up and keeps it pushed forward for the shopper to easily see and make a decision without opening the freezer door.



RICH WILDRICK

This ensures the branding message the CPG company intended is visible to the consumer as opposed to often being lost when stacked on a shelf without any kind of shelf management system,” said Wildrick. “There will also be energy savings for the retailer as the door will be open for less time

as the consumer can make their purchase decision without having to open the door and search through products to find what is available.”



WONDER BAR MERCHANDISING SYSTEM

Improved presentation increases shopping satisfaction among time-pressed consumers who are looking to find what they need and move on to the next task. It also assists in add-on sales as shoppers are able to easily see all product selections in front of them.

“Before and after surveys of customers in stores show they prefer the product presentation in our fixture compared to product simply merchandised on the shelf alone,” said Wildrick. “The advantage of the Wonder Bar Merchandising system is that it always offers a consistent presentation as the product is pushed forward as it shops down. The system also allows for fewer products to be placed on the shelves and still gives a fully stocked appearance. Overstocking can lead to poor product rotation and ultimately to out of date product needing to be discarded.”

“The bar ships completely assembled allowing for fast installation at the store. We offer hooks, pusher hooks, auto feed trays and baskets to merchandise most any product, the most popular being the auto feed trays. We have customers using trays to merchandise candy, gum, meat, cheese, salad, frozen food, coffee, curtains and even clothing,” said Wildrick. “The trays come in six depths and are adjustable in width to adapt to most any product. One benefit of the Wonder Bar tray system is the ability to get more product in the existing footprint. By eliminating the shelving, we can generally add additional rows and sometimes product to the existing rows. The spring fed system also allows

for less perishable shrink as the product does not get buried in the back of the shelf and forgotten.”



AMT - ADJUSTABLE MERCHANDISING TRAY SYSTEM

While retailers are making the investment to upgrade the shopping experience, Wildrick maintains that return on investment is a major consideration before any project moves forward. Trion succeeds, he maintains, because its various systems are designed around the products they are intended to merchandise.

“Our AMT adjustable merchandising tray system was designed for yogurt and other refrigerated items merchandised in similar packaging. It is intended to allow for better product presentation for the consumer and allow easy restocking and product rotation for the retailer as it simply lifts off the shelf. The units are adjustable in width to accommodate various products and are also able to have the depth cut down in the field to allow for use on 18, 20 or 22” depth shelves,” said Wildrick.

For case studies and more information on Trion’s merchandising solutions, check out the company’s website at www.triononline.com

For sales inquiries, winning@triononline.com
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