

# Aligning The Shopper Marketing Backbone

Optimizing Marketing Success

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Playing to Win in the New CPG Reality

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# Aligning the Marketing Backbone: Optimizing Shopper Marketing Success

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Let's start with a statement of the obvious — over the past decade, the world of consumer packaged goods marketing has changed enormously.

The path to success, while challenging, was **once clear and proven** — take a solid product and build it into a brand with:

- Effective consumer advertising
- Consistent retail presence
- Appropriate pricing
- Occasional national promotions

**Those days are gone.**

Now, media fragmentation complicates delivery and reception of consumer messages. Shoppers demand more personalized & robust shopping experiences. Retailers claim strong ownership of their shoppers and demand more partnership from CPGs. Shifts within marketing and sales budgets stretch resources and cloud focus.

Consider just one fast emerging influence on shopper behavior — mobile devices.

According to Google, 79% of US smart phone users already use their device to help them shop. Also, 12% of all Google food & beverage category searches (think products, recipes, etc.) are made on a mobile device, not a desktop computer. If you don't consider these mobile users to be your customer, realize that by the end of 2011, over 50% of the US adult population will be carrying a smart phone device. They are your shoppers.

It's clear that in the world of marketing, the “traditional” approach is already obsolete. Even greater change is coming. And it's coming quickly.

The need for integration — across the full marketing to sales spectrum — is imperative for success in this future.

To win effectively  
companies must activate  
shopper marketing not as a single distinct element of a  
marketing plan but as an integrated  
discipline that **aligns the work of marketing & sales from brand equity clear through to in-store execution.**

“The key is not the will to win...everybody has that.  
It is the will to prepare to win that is important.”

– Bobby Knight

There's a reason Coach Bobby Knight holds the record for most wins in NCAA basketball history. He understands that victory is determined long before the first game and requires maximum performance from both the individual AND the team. He designed — then instilled — his philosophy to create sustained success. He also understands that **every element which may impact performance must be understood, scrutinized... and then aligned.**

An individual player must maximize their potential for success. He can engage conditioning coaches, strength coaches, sports psychologists, nutritionists and others to ensure every element of personal athletic success is aligned for peak performance.

At the team level, each player's unique skill set must be aligned into a cohesive team design that maximizes the impact of each player's individual contributions. Every athlete must function as part of a crafted playbook. Failure in only one area — from individual preparation to team execution — can cost a game. Ongoing, sustained alignment of all the complex moving parts is critical to building a dynasty.

So it is for companies.

To capture sustainable success, every driver of marketing & sales performance, from people to process to support elements and beyond, must align and support a company differentiated way to win.

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To win in the new world of the future, companies must:

- **Develop Your Philosophy.** Create a differentiated way to win.
- **Design Your PlayBook.** Define your way to execute.
- **Engage Your Team / Instill the Discipline.** Set and instill the system.
- **Get in the Game!**

## Create a Differentiated Way to Win

# Define Your Philosophy

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Winning companies recognize the growing ‘end-heavy’ influence of marketing — with estimates as high as 70% of all purchase decisions are now made in-store — and are rethinking their go-to-market philosophy.

“Retail is detail.  
Show me a big  
picture guy, and  
I’ll show you a  
guy who’s out of  
the picture.”

Jim Sinegal  
CEO/Co-Founder Costco

The process begins with defining a Path to Purchase.

Unique to every category and brand, a Path to Purchase identifies what brings a shopper to the shelf, what compels them to buy and how the brand traverses across that path. To fully understand the shopper process and embrace brand/shopper marketing, companies must identify and measure customer motivations, purchase occasions, retail expectations, purchase/ repurchase behaviors and more — along with the company’s ability, or lack of ability, to influence each step.

In defining the Path to Purchase a company should:

- **Create a ‘day-in-the-life’ of a brand’s most important shopper** in the brand’s most important channel. This clarifies the shopper’s motivations, behaviors and attitudes, thus objectives and leverage points become simpler to identify.
- **Consider all marketing efforts** including brand management, social media, and category management.
- **Understand the retailer impact** on the consumer to shopper transition.
- **Create unified understanding of the shopper** to support strategic business decisions throughout the organization.
- **Eliminate exposed gaps in insights** with appropriate research.
- **Inspire shopper marketing efforts** clear to shelf.

Like a basketball program strategizing if ‘their game’ will be about winning down low with big men and size, or on the perimeter with speed and shooting, the Path to Purchase sets the philosophy of how a company intends to win in the new world of marketing.

## Define Your Way to Execute

# Design Your Playbook

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The mere existence of a defined Path to Purchase does not create competitive advantage. It cannot drive consistent, winning execution. Winning teams drive the success of their philosophy by defining their execution — designing their playbook — so that it defines a unique, rigorous way to consistently execute.

And the Path to Purchase plays a key role here. While most commonly used to identify communication tactics or triggers that influence consumers / shoppers, the Path to Purchase becomes more powerful when used to align every aspect of marketing efforts. The P2P provides a philosophy to align around.

Then a Playbook must be designed in order to leverage strengths, compensate for weakness, and define the ways to execute. The playbook defines all elements of the Capability: processes, tools, knowledge and people needed for success.

Disciplined design and evaluation of company structures along the entire defined Path to Purchase — work flows, competencies, insights, roles, etc. — can help identify barriers to success in the ‘go to market’ model that will prevent a company from executing flawlessly against their philosophy for success. The challenge lies in identifying problems rather than only symptoms of problems.

A basketball rimming out on a free — throw is only a symptom. Identification of the root problem requires a complete inventory of possibilities — incorrect hand position, lack of mental focus, poor ball release. Once discovered, an appropriate solution can then be applied.



Applying the Path to Purchase to define the organization's capability design **aligns the needed elements** (consumer marketing, shopper marketing, category management, insights, sales, etc.) and **ensures a defined executional path to win.**

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## Set and Instill the System

# Engage Your Team/Instill the Discipline

It's unlikely that if we took yesterday's athletic superstars and put them on the courts today they could compete at the highest levels.

While the game is the same, the way it is played has evolved (strategies & tactics), the skill and training of the athletes has evolved — overall, the keys to winning have evolved.

The same is true of CPG marketing. Creating a Path to Purchase, and using that to design executional capabilities will not create wins on game day. **The playbook must be commercialized, the required infrastructures put in place, the new plays trained and practiced, and the individuals equipped with the required skills.**

Activating the Path to Purchase as an alignment tool creates a holistic, aligned and “Shopper-Centric” organization, with a strong, strategic marketing game plan.

- **Seamless marketing flow clear to shelf from classic brand equity efforts**, with crucial awareness that in-store efforts must include a brand equity component.
- **Holistic insights** create common, seamless understanding that informs the business and all activations.
- The **selling / customer** facing parts of the organization — sales, customer marketing, category management — are **integrated into the flow** and support the overall winning philosophy. This ensures retailer enlistment earlier in the game.

Instilling and maintaining executional discipline against the game plan is hard — yet required. Successful companies realize that investments made in commercializing the playbook, reinventing and reinforcing new management routines, and building individual required individual competencies are critical keys to establishing and maintaining organizational alignment to win.

## TIPS FOR IMPROVING INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE

Everyone can start driving individual change to enhance 'personal alignment' for future success:

**Marketers:** Commit to understanding shoppers and retailers

- Abandon that ivory tower. What happens at retail is important; evaluate all efforts against their impact in-store.

**Sales:** Move beyond “rates & dates”

- Know retailer's business strategy to become 'advisor'.
- Align recommendations strategically with insights.

**Insights:** Transform data into integrated insights

- Share information from brand through sales.
- Enable understandings all along the Path to Purchase.

**Shopper Marketing:** Commit to program alignment

- Know what motivates the shopper and offer your brand as the solution.
- Be certain every team member knows what causes a consumer to transition to shopper

# GET IN THE GAME!

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It is vital that companies begin rethinking how they go to market today to remain effective and competitive in the future. If you haven't begun driving this change already, get in the game!

Companies that will win going forward will apply their Path to Purchase to remove barriers between functions and departments in ways that:

- Support flexibility and responsiveness.
- Clarify all efforts.
- Build strategic, integrated capabilities across key organizational areas.
- Elevate retailer relationships.
- Provide a foundation for sustainable marketing success.

Set the playing field for change now:

**DEFINE PHILOSOPHY: CREATE, EVANGELIZE, & ADOPT A POINT OF VIEW ON THE PATH TO PURCHASE FOR YOUR CATEGORY & YOUR BRANDS.** Engage everyone both internally and externally, including agencies and other partners. Encourage the executive level down to adopt the Path to Purchase as A UNIFIED LANGUAGE and insist that all efforts align to it.

**DESIGN PLAYBOOK: LEVERAGE YOUR PATH TO PURCHASE TO ALIGN ACROSS THE BUSINESS.** Map tactics to each stage. Align roles & responsibilities. Create clear 'hand offs' between groups and functions

**ENGAGE THE TEAM: FULLY DEVELOP & COMMERCIALIZE YOUR INSIGHTS VIEW ACROSS THE PATH.** Become a category expert to understand how a consumer is converted to shopper, and how all insights — strategic foundational understandings, trends, shopper insights, category management, specific tactical stimuli — work together to align and drive successful solution development. This allows the company to capitalize on existing and emerging trends.

The rapid evolution that is sweeping CPG marketing defines a new reality, and **the steps companies take today will determine whether they survive or thrive going forward.**

To see how you can  
optimize your shopper  
marketing success,  
give us a call at 678.443.2280

See where capabilities & rēresults intersect

The Capre Group is a strategic consulting firm focused on shopper marketing. We use our deep industry experience and proven success driving brands at major CPG companies to help our clients develop the core capabilities that drive success in today's retail world.

**the caprē group**

1117 Perimeter Center West  
Suite E-203  
Atlanta, GA 30338

[capregroup.com](http://capregroup.com)

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