

5 Ways to Prepare for the SUPERMARKET OF THE FUTURE



Shopping has changed.

It has become more efficient, meaning needs-based, traditional ways of engaging with us and tempting us to buy more stuff need to be re-thought.

We used to shop for groceries mainly using our System 1 mental processes, but now it is much, much more System 2 oriented; much more effortful. With that in mind, we need ask ourselves 3 key questions:

1) What does the new customer journey look like for big shop shoppers and those on top-up missions?

2) How well does the store help us buy our new purchasing repertoires as a result of Covid-19?

3) How does the typical supermarket layout, optimised for System 1 shopping, meet the needs of System 2 shopping?

During the lock-down, we have been working on 'Supermarket of the Future'. Based on how that lock-down has and will continue to change behaviour. Each day, we identify more psychology-related design insights as to how the store of the future should be designed.



1. Queuing

The Covid-19 Pandemic has provided us with new queues, both inside and outside of the store. Managing queues in retail is both necessary and potentially advantageous.

Understanding the psychology of a queue allows you to:

- a) Communicate with shoppers much more effectively.
- b) Significantly reduce their perceived queuing time by preoccupying them with communication.

We must take advantage of this queuing time to market to shoppers. Consider images that could evoke powerful emotions or offers that are simply irresistible. We must optimise this queuing time for the shoppers, the retailers and the brands they sell.



2. Physical Contact

Shoppers no longer want to come into contact with potentially germ-laden aspects in-store. With that in mind, what is the role of and how best do we merchandise unpackaged fresh produce, unpackaged bakery items and even pick 'n' mix sweets?

From a shopper-needs perspective, we hypothesize that shoppers need a packaged alternative right next to the unpackaged product in every case, so they can choose between them. Unpackaged sprouts right next to packaged sprouts,

loose bread rolls directly next to packaged rolls and bagged sweets in the same place as pick 'n' mix.

Providing both options side-by-side increases buying potential - a shopper will go with one or the other, walking away with a purchase. It's more difficult to walk away empty-handed when you have an option that suits your needs.



3. Checkouts

Back in the days of Piggly Wiggly, one of the supermarket pioneers of the 1930s, the aisles between checkouts were deliberately narrow, so that staff could more easily see if customers were stealing from them.

However, today, these same narrow walkways force shoppers to be uncomfortably close to checkout staff and other shoppers.

When you start to look at a new supermarket design with 2-metre social

distancing in mind, a few quick wins manifest themselves:

- 1) The person next in line for the checkout now waits at the end of the conveyor belt, meaning they could be persuaded to buy additional items like impulse lines and magazines, etc.
- 2) The Perspex screens offer a powerful communications opportunity. Shoppers stood for a period of time looking at the screens – an image may be powerful here.



4. Individual Categories

With more people working from home, there has been a clear shift in eating habits. Food to Go (FTG) sales have dropped as shoppers are buying more items to prepare at home for their working lunches; filled pastas, fresh soups, etc.

The crisis in Food to Go was epitomised by the sad announcement of 2,000 redundancies at sandwich giant Adelle Foods.

The fact is that the pandemic has altered people's everyday lives much more than many realise, which leads to 2 specific outcomes:

- a) Simply reopening stores as they were just a few months is not what shoppers need now.
- b) For those who test and learn the new needs of shoppers, there really are a lot of opportunities, both in-store and online.



5. Add-ons & Treats

Do you remember when you could wander around the supermarket, hunt and gather for the family and then reward yourself with a treat just before heading to the checkout? That was back in the day when you could freely take any particular route up and down any aisle. Now, we have to follow much more controlled routes, stay 2-meters apart and shop in a much more rational way.

As a result, if your treat is a cream cake, then most of the supermarkets have you covered with that category being near to

the end of the journey. But what if you want a bottle of Pinot Grigio instead, that works fine in Tesco, but the wine aisle is only $\frac{1}{2}$ way along your trip around Asda, Sainsbury's or Morrisons.

With a much stricter flow around the stores, more needs to be done to understand what categories need to be adjacent to others. I hypothesize that this will vary both by chain and by individual store at times.

Summary

Covid-19 has fundamentally changed the way people shop (and 89% still shop in bricks and mortar, so forget online just for a moment).

It's time to alter the shops to meet the way behaviour has changed, rather than simply hoping that shopping will just revert to pre-Covid behaviour.

For many years, leading brands and retailers looked towards 'The Store of the Future'. But how many factored in what they would do as a result of a pandemic? Now really is the time we need a store, not so much of the future, but of the new NOW...

ARE YOU PREPARING FOR SUPERMARKET OF THE FUTURE?

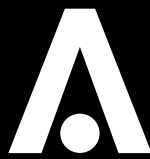
We are looking to have conversations with store designers and developers, category managers and anyone with an active interest in shopper psychology. Our aim is to simply compare notes and share insights.

If you'd like to discuss supermarkets and C-store design, that incorporates how shoppers have changed, behaviourally and psychologically, then get in touch!



Let's talk
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**If you think these 5 tips
can improve performance,
there's a whole load more!**

Let's talk.

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