MEN ON A MISSION
Understanding the New Male Grocery Shopper

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The world of grocery and HBC retailing is changing rapidly, and dramatically. Longstanding ideas about shopping patterns are being upended, affecting marketing, display options, stocking choices, loyalty programs, and even hours of operation. The grocery scene has become more complex and competitive, with alternate formats—such as mass merchandising stores and convenient superstores—vying for shopper loyalty. And while online purchasing of grocery items is in its infancy, this segment will continue to grow quickly.

As revealed powerfully by a new Daymon Worldwide study detailing evolving grocery shopping patterns, it’s no longer enough to assume who key grocery shoppers are, their shopping patterns, or what influences them. Long-held notions of grocery merchandising are being transformed by changing demographics and evolving domestic household roles. Relying on the old understanding of grocery retailing is the surest way to lose the loyalty of shoppers, market share, and your competitive edge.

Daymon’s study focused specifically on the evolving role of the male grocery shopper. Among the major findings: Men have assumed a leadership role in grocery shopping for their households, and they display several unique shopping patterns that are different from those of women. Further, not all men are alike in their shopping habits, with distinct segments approaching the task in very different ways.

Taking advantage of this new understanding with consumer-centric category management and innovative merchandising strategies can help protect your market share, and gain untapped advantages against the competition.
HOW GROCERY EXECUTIVES CAN BENEFIT FROM THIS STUDY

This report is more than a simple study of shopping habits. It offers powerful action items for grocery chain executives to consider, in order to take advantage of little-understood or emerging markets and social habits. Here are a few that can offer competitive opportunities in the future:

1. CONNECT WITH THE MALE GROCERY SHOPPER.

   Today, men are often the primary grocery shoppers for their households. They buy baskets full of groceries, and spend significant amounts of money during their shopping trips. It’s essential that retailers develop strategies specifically to reach male shoppers, make their shopping experiences more convenient and pleasing, and encourage their loyalty.

2. DEVELOP STRATEGIES THAT TARGET UNIQUE MALE SHOPPING PATTERNS.

   Men plan their shopping trips in different ways than women and they shop on different days. This has profound implications for store hours, staffing, and stocking of national versus private brands.

3. CONSIDER TACTICS THAT ADDRESS DIFFERENT MALE SHOPPING CHARACTERISTICS.

   Grocery retailers can gain competitive advantages by understanding differences among male shoppers, and devising tactics that appeal to each segment.
SEIZING AN UNTAPPED SHOPPING OPPORTUNITY

*Grocery aisles have long been considered the domain of women shoppers, with men traditionally seen as occasional shoppers. This is no longer true.*

The common wisdom has long held that men select just a few items for an upcoming party, barbecue, or sports-viewing event, but are not really the most important grocery shopping demographic. To some extent, males still do that. But according to Daymon’s study of 1,000 males and 750 females in the U.S.—a double segmentation study that examined men’s food and beverage shopping habits, personal opinions, and behaviors—men now make up 51% of the primary grocery shoppers for all U.S. households. They’re major decision makers about food and beverage options, have key input into their household’s need for healthy eating, and make brand choices that often run counter to past assumptions.

But that 51% isn’t the end of the story. Of these primary grocery shoppers, 78% are personally responsible for all groceries purchased for their households in a typical month. In most cases, they are the *sole grocery decision makers in their homes.* Much of this can be attributed to changing roles that both men and women are assuming today. In an increasingly busy world, couples are taking greater joint responsibility for household chores. Greater health consciousness overall also has had an impact, with males being more aware than ever of healthy eating choices. Cooking at home has become a key hobby for men. And the well-documented trend toward delaying marriage means that males are shopping for themselves in greater numbers.

VOLUME BUYERS ... AND LOYAL

The primacy of male grocery shoppers does not end with their mere presence in the aisles, or their decision-making status. According to the Daymon study, significant proportions of male grocery shoppers have full baskets, and spend large amounts per shopping trip. Male grocery shoppers typically are not in the “12 Items or Less” express checkout lanes. They are serious grocery buyers, buy lots of items, and spend freely for them.

There is one other important characteristic of the male shopper that grocery executives should be aware of: Men are much less likely to shop at mass merchandisers than women. *They like their grocery stores.* Thus, in addition to their primacy as household shoppers, men can be considered more likely—and potentially more loyal—grocery store customers.

*A Deeper Dive: Male Shopper Significance*

The male shopper represents a major opportunity for grocery retailers today. *Changing gender and lifestyle roles in American society means that old assumptions about grocery shopping are just that—old and outdated. The growing primacy of the male shopper has significant consequences for stocking choices, loyalty programs, and displays—both in-store and at-shelf.*
UNIQUE MALE SHOPPING PATTERNS

What other unique habits do men display when they go grocery shopping? Daymon Worldwide’s study reveals some intriguing patterns.

Women have long been viewed as “ruling the shopping roost” for their families, but that’s no longer true. Daymon’s study revealed that males and females today share the shopping chores for their households but—importantly—with a number of distinct gender-specific differences. Thus, viewed as a grocery-shopping “type,” males can present unique opportunities to grocery chains. Further, merchandising/marketing techniques that have long been assumed to work for women may not, in fact, have a similar impact on men.

Some of Daymon’s findings on how men are unique in their grocery shopping habits include the following:

• Men are less likely to write down their shopping lists. Their lists typically are in their heads, they know what they want, and they go for it.

• Men are less likely to take advantage of store circulars or coupons than are women, but are likely to talk to friends, family, or coworkers about grocery needs.

• Men tend to shop alone: 66% were solo on their most recent grocery store visits. Women, by contrast, generally have children or other family members with them during shopping trips, which can influence their choices.

• Some 70% of males report that they visit the grocery store Monday through Friday, generally in the afternoon, but significantly are twice as likely to shop on Fridays and Saturdays than are women.

• Men are curious about different food options, and they are open to private brands. Yes, national brands are still top of mind, but males are as open to private and specialty brands as are women.

• While both men and women prefer to shop at grocery stores for their grocery needs, men are less likely to shop at a mass merchandiser outlet.

• Men are 10% more likely than women to go grocery shopping for a specific mission than, to say, stock up or fill in their pantries.
A Deeper Dive: Male Shopping Differences

The fact that male shoppers are less likely to take advantage of store circulars or coupons has important ramifications for grocery chains, that may seek different means of appealing to males beyond cost savings. Product placements that facilitate this shopping pattern—perhaps with complementary items grouped together—will appeal to men in particular. Male shopping patterns may cause grocery chains to rethink the timing of particular displays, and influence their commitment to private brands, which men are open to trying.

Each type of shopping trip supports, in its own way, the growing importance of the male shopper. However, each also sheds additional light on the details of that importance, and reveals opportunities for best-of-breed grocery executives to address those details.

“Men are 10% more likely than women to go grocery shopping for a specific mission than to say, stock up or fill in their pantries.”
NOT ALL MALE GROCERY SHOPPING MISSIONS ARE ALIKE

Opportunities presented by male grocery shopping go beyond the key recognition of its importance. Opportunities are in the details.

Yes, competitive advantages can be gained by recognizing the rising trend of male grocery shoppers, and by making stocking, feature, and loyalty decisions that address them. But competitive opportunities can go further by recognizing that men themselves present dramatic differences in how they approach the grocery store door. Here are the most prominent grocery shopping missions that men undertake:

#1 THE CROWD MANAGEMENT MISSION

This is the most common type of male shopping mission, representing 26% of all male shopping trips, according to the Daymon study. This man on a mission fills his basket for the entire household. He shops earlier in the day, he takes his time in the aisles browsing and reviewing labels, and he appreciates a wide variety of shopping options. The primary shopping need for this mission is being able to get something for everybody.

This male shopper really appreciates it when his grocery store has all the items he wants. Convenience-type stores are not for him on this mission. A vast assortment of products is paramount, as is filling his basket adequately and creatively.

#2 THE ON-DEMAND MISSION

This shopping goal, undertaken on 23% of male missions, is perhaps the most stereotypical. He shops in the evening after work, picking up something quick for dinner. The primary shopping need for this mission is convenience.

This shopper is focused on easy food prep, and values prepared or ready-cooked meals, often to avoid the kitchen. A quick shopping trip—the faster the better—is essential to him.

#3 THE MAN-RIETY MISSION

This trip is an adventure. It’s undertaken by the guy who likes to try different foods, recipes, spices, and other products. His trips to the store are exciting opportunities. The shopping need for this mission is an exploratory one, to satisfy a craving.

This mission-going man wants to break out of his normal routine, and uses grocery shopping (among other activities) to accomplish that. His life is busy, and grocery shopping is like taking a break—it energizes him, gives him a sense of adventure, and helps satisfy cravings along the way.
Other patterns, other missions
Among other apparent patterns the Daymon study revealed, the following male shopping missions were also significant:

#4 THE WELL MAN-NERED MISSION.
Here, men put exceptional thought into their shopping trips. They devise lists that reflect the way they care about impressing others while entertaining, and about the way they see themselves reflected in the eyes of the world. On these trips, they buy groceries to cook for someone special. The shopping trip is about caring, and bringing the family or household closer together. But they also buy groceries to entertain well, to impress colleagues and friends, and to demonstrate good taste.

#5 THE MAN CAVE STOCKPILING MISSION.
The goal here is to provide for fun, relaxing entertainment. Here’s a trip that means shopping for items that make watching TV sports, or playing cards, more fun for a crowd of friends, for example. Entertaining options can be either indoors with a cocktail party, or outside with a barbecue or picnic. The TV may be going, or active sports may be underway. The goal is to have fun, and help others enjoy themselves too.

#6 THE MAN-SHAPE MISSION.
This grocery trip is all about health and fitness. Our guy is willing to take his time in the store, examining closely his healthy eating options, and perhaps even novelty seeking. The shopping trip can be for himself only, but more likely is about encouraging a healthy lifestyle for an entire household. The goal can include seeking out new grocery items if those items fit his lifestyle.

A Deeper Dive: Varying Shopping Patterns
Not all grocery trips by men are the same. The Daymon Worldwide study dramatically revealed that the male shopping mission breaks down into various types. Most prominent are store visits entailing provisioning an entire household, but other segments are equally important. Understanding not just the importance of the male shopper, but also the varying types and patterns of male shopping experiences, can help the grocery retailer bundle and display products for convenience, for mission trips, for adventure, and for health. Displays can—and should—provide men an easy way to fulfill their shopping goals.
KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR THE GROCERY CHAIN EXECUTIVE

Facts and figures are interesting, but actionable insights based on those facts are at the heart of the matter. Retailers should consider the following to leverage insights about the male grocery shopper gleaned from the Daymon Worldwide study:

**Shoppers, circulars, and loyalty programs need to be rethought.**
While these marketing elements have their value, men are less likely to consult circulars or use coupons. Further, statistics gathered from loyalty cards may not reveal the true nature of male shopping patterns, since women are often the originators of those shared cards.

**Men are grocery store shoppers.**
When it comes to loyalty and marketing efforts, grocery executives should be aware that men are much more likely to visit their local grocery stores than to shop at mass merchandisers. Men are loyal grocery store customers, whose greater loyalty can and should be encouraged through innovative marketing approaches.

**Planning for occasion shopping needs to take a higher priority.**
Traditionally, aisle stocking is done by food groups and departments. However, men are more likely than women to make “mission-oriented” grocery store trips, rather than focusing on pantry filling or stocking up. Taking advantage of this might begin with more obviously bundling products for specific occasions, or making “heat and eat” options more prominent. In short, develop “solution-based retailing.”

**Promotions and activities should be tailored to males.**
Men tend to shop at different times than women, and particularly on Fridays and Saturdays. Day-of-week specific targeting for in-store or at-shelf couponing would be an interesting tactic to explore here. Keep products, themes, and communications on the masculine end of the spectrum.

**Private brands have great potential among male shoppers.**
Men’s preferences extend beyond national brands. Despite being heavy spenders overall, men’s primary responsibility for household shopping may also make them budget-conscious. As a result, they are open to private brands, in particular when merchandised for occasion-shopping missions.

**Best of breed grocery chains use analytics to uncover new opportunities.**
There is not one, general grocery shopper, and the male shopper has been overlooked for too long. Moreover, distinctive male shopping patterns are diverse, and these separate patterns can be viewed as distinct retailing opportunities. Retailers must reconsider how they collect loyalty data about their customers, analyzing males and females separately, and then providing promotional and merchandising efforts that can be adapted to these segments.
Methodology
Daymon Worldwide’s study is based on a 2013 nationally representative survey of 1,000 males and a 2014 study of 750 females in the U.S., detailing their food and beverage shopping habits, as well as personal opinions and behaviors.

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Resources
Global TrendBlenders. Daymon Worldwide offers grocery retailers a unique approach to innovate and develop new product and merchandising programs. Daymon’s Global TrendBlenders approach helps retailers think more broadly about the opportunities and risks associated with consumer trends, and to innovate based on that knowledge. For the purposes of this study about the male grocery shopper, Daymon Worldwide developed particular ways to ideate “cultural ecology” and “always on” shopping patterns, to better understand rapidly evolving opportunities.

Call Us Today
Why not give us a call to further discuss the opportunities revealed by Daymon Worldwide’s study on male grocery shopping patterns? We’ll sit down with you, discuss your current situation, and develop a customized analysis of how your company can take advantage of these, and other, findings.
Thank you.

Daymon Worldwide is the global leader in consumables retailing. Through our renowned industry expertise in Private Brand building, experiential consumer marketing, and innovative retail-driven services, we currently collaborate with more than 100 major retailers and nearly 6,000 manufacturers in 50 countries. Daymon teams work directly with the world's leading suppliers and retailers to create and market ownable, differentiated brands in the marketplace that deliver exceptional value, drive consumer loyalty and profitable sales growth, and improve people's lives. We currently handle more than 1,700 brands and approximately 165,000 individual SKUs globally. Founded in 1970, today Daymon has more than 35,000 highly trained and passionate associates worldwide, with offices located across six continents.