



BRAND INSIGHT

## Kirsty Dollisson On The Shopper Engagement Debate

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Drawing on TorchMedia's most recent research study into eye tracking



Having read a recently penned article by Nielsen.com, I felt compelled to draw attention to a number of points, and offer a different perspective on the shopper engagement debate.

As the report points out, some shoppers are minimally engaged while grocery shopping, and don't tend to make considered purchases. Their choices are highly driven by what they have purchased in the past. In fact, TorchMedia's recent eye tracking study (Hoop Group in 2014) which was conducted to determine the visibility of

their in-store formats revealed a segment of shoppers that can be described in exactly this way. We call them Mission Shoppers.

The study also revealed two additional segments that are not mentioned -- The Specials Seeker and The Explorer.

The Specials Seeker spends more time reviewing their options on shelf, but decisions are ultimately driven by price promotions. The Explorer spends the most time in-store, and is always on the lookout for inspiration and ideas for cooking and eating. This group of shoppers is most likely to allow external factors such as point of sale advertising and sampling to influence their purchasing decision.

Another variable to consider is the difference in shopper behaviour between grocery categories. In TorchMedia's Eye Tracking study, it was evident that different areas of the store enjoy longer dwell times, meaning that some brands benefit from longer opportunities to communicate to shoppers than others. Examples include Ice Cream, Dips, and Health and Beauty categories.

TorchMedia has commissioned over 300 Test and Control studies with Aztec to assess the impact grocery in-store media has on product sales. Results reveal that it is harder to influence shoppers in commodity categories such as flour, toilet paper etc, however there is a growing opportunity to influence shoppers on their 'Dinner Tonight' shopping trip, when they are likely on the lookout for meal solutions and inspiration.

There is no doubt that brands only have a small window to communicate to shoppers in store, many of which are on autopilot to some degree. This highlights the importance of standing out in the aisle, especially in those categories where the dwell time is shorter. Eye catching advertising and product packaging becomes ever more imperative in these categories.

TorchMedia's Eye Tracking study also revealed an 'Auto-Match Instinct' among shoppers, whereby well executed creative drove the participants' eyes straight to the advertised product on the shelf before perusing the remainder of their options. This unconscious reflex is exaggerated where the advertising format features clear product shots, or colour blocking matched with the product on shelf. Ultimately the reflex promotes brand awareness and enters the advertised product into the purchase consideration set of the shopper.

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