

The 4 Hats of a Shopper insights Manager

One of the most common questions I get is, “What is the Role of a Shopper Insights Manager?” This is a great question in a field that seems to still be evolving and morphing.

At a high level, the Shopper Insights role is really a hybrid between marketing research, and category management, with a little bit of salesmanship thrown in! Finding the person with the right balance is critical, too much on either end of the spectrum will leave an organization ill-equipped to effectively manage this ever-evolving environment.

Here are 4 Hats that a good Shopper Insights manager wears:

Integrator

The integration of information, people and processes is a vital aspect of Shopper Insights. From an information standpoint, the SI manager must be adept at analyzing very disparate sources of information and boil them down to the essential insights that will lead to business-building strategies and tactics. For people and processes, the SI manager is often the lynchpin between functions and people that have not traditionally worked collaboratively. The effective SI manager has the ability to find common ground from which to build upon.

Investigator

It takes naturally curious people to be extraordinary SI professionals. Always asking “why”, then being resourceful in finding answers will not only lead to successful outcomes, but it makes the job worth waking up for every morning.

Informer

The SI position on a team should be the vault of knowledge for all things related to the shopper. The person in that role should proactively inform all stakeholders on key insights regarding the

shopper. Keeping a consistent flow of information will go a long way in elevating shopper needs in the mindset of the team.

Inspirer

The outcome of shopper insights is great shopper marketing. The shopper insights team should inspire and act as catalyst for shopper marketing. I've often viewed the best insights people as talented marketers who have a specialty in insights.

The most effective organizations involved in shopper insights, the ones who are driving positive ROI on the investment, leverage the shopper insights role for strategic purposes. They plan resources well and focus on opportunities that will produce long term, sustainable business results. The less effective method is to hire a shopper insights person and constrain them to analyzing and running reports, or as a "firefighter". Your shopper insights manager should be integrated into your team and set free to leverage these multi-faceted skills to make a broad impact on your business. If you have any questions or have comments about this article, please email me at jason@livebranch.com