

MERCHANT MECHANICS LLC

"Pioneers of Retail Forensics®"

In-Store Observational Research for Consumer Product Companies

Merchant Mechanics is a boutique observational consumer research and testing firm serving retail, consumer product and fixture/point-of-purchase companies. We help our clients develop more effective selling spaces and merchandising strategies. The company is a leader in retail environment research and an activist for creating selling spaces that best match the natural tendencies of shoppers. Merchant Mechanics helps create a better experience for shoppers, and thus, a more profitable business for its clients. We have never failed in successfully completing our mission for any client.

Services for Consumer Product Companies

Product Managers, Merchandisers, Marketing Managers, Market Researchers and others, get valuable guidance from our groundbreaking quantitative, in-store consumer studies.

- ❑ **Category Management** - gain deep knowledge of how consumers are shopping product categories. Our approach yields innovative and highly actionable tactics for optimizing shelf-sets, store plans and cross-marketing activities. The detailed segmentations we provide (by gender, age, shopping group size, time of day, etc.) are critical to maximizing sales
- ❑ **Packaging Assessment** – package design elements (i.e., copy, color, form) influence consumer decisions. Given the time pressures facing today's shoppers, optimized packaging can reduce the time necessary to view relevant brand information
- ❑ **Point-of-Purchase Evaluation** – 80% of purchase decisions are made in the store. Optimizing display presentation is crucial and can be the difference between a successful product and one that fails to capture customer attention

Our Approach to Consumer Research

Our state-of-the-art research methodologies deliver a comprehensive understanding of the in-store environment, allowing managers to make decisions based on empirical data – leading to increased sales, brand awareness and customer satisfaction.

- ❑ **Benchmarking** - we evaluate the interactions between shoppers and any element within the retail environment, then recommend actionable tactics for improvement, all based on statistically significant empirical data
- ❑ **Testing** - we perform in-store, controlled scientific tests to determine relative prototype effectiveness for any physical element(s) of the store environment
- ❑ **Multivariate analyses** – we simultaneously and comprehensively evaluate the interrelationships between customer behaviors and co-existing marketing and merchandising elements. These analyses are focused on uncovering the critical "spheres of influence" that govern consumer actions and opportunities to innovate beyond common practices

Data Collection Techniques

We use an integrated array of proprietary, unobtrusive techniques, including:

- ❑ **Videography** – small, digital CCT cameras capture overt and unbiased consumer behaviors. Our state-of-the-art recording techniques allow seamless and unobtrusive observation of customers from multiple vantage points
- ❑ **Field observation** – highly trained observers track shoppers in all areas of the store, including regions which fall outside of those captured through video, to get a fuller picture of the customer experience
- ❑ **Interviews** - customer attitude data is captured through CriticalPoint interviews. This qualitative data provides the shopper's impression of specific category, brand and/or in-store experience

RealThought® Cognitive Insight

Traditional observational research, which details overt customer behaviors, does not adequately reveal why these behaviors occur. Merchant Mechanics' groundbreaking techniques apply expert knowledge of cognitive principles that ultimately *explain* customer actions. This involves providing insights into customer perception, attention, memory and decision-making. Our cognitive insight increases the value of every dollar spent on observational research.

What people are saying

"You are a wonderful resource for research in the business-to-business marketplace."

-- Mac Byrd, Senior Marketing Manager, Kodak Digital Imaging

"This study has provided valuable facts for implementing the future retrofitting of end-caps and other promotional areas in GNC stores in the United States and Canada. "

-- Art McSorley, VP of Construction, General Nutrition Centers

"Our retail clients love the availability of detailed information about how our lighting affects consumer behavior. Having the empirical third-party information of the sort that Merchant Mechanics provides really pays off."

-- Kathy Pattison, VP of Marketing, Color Kinetics Inc.