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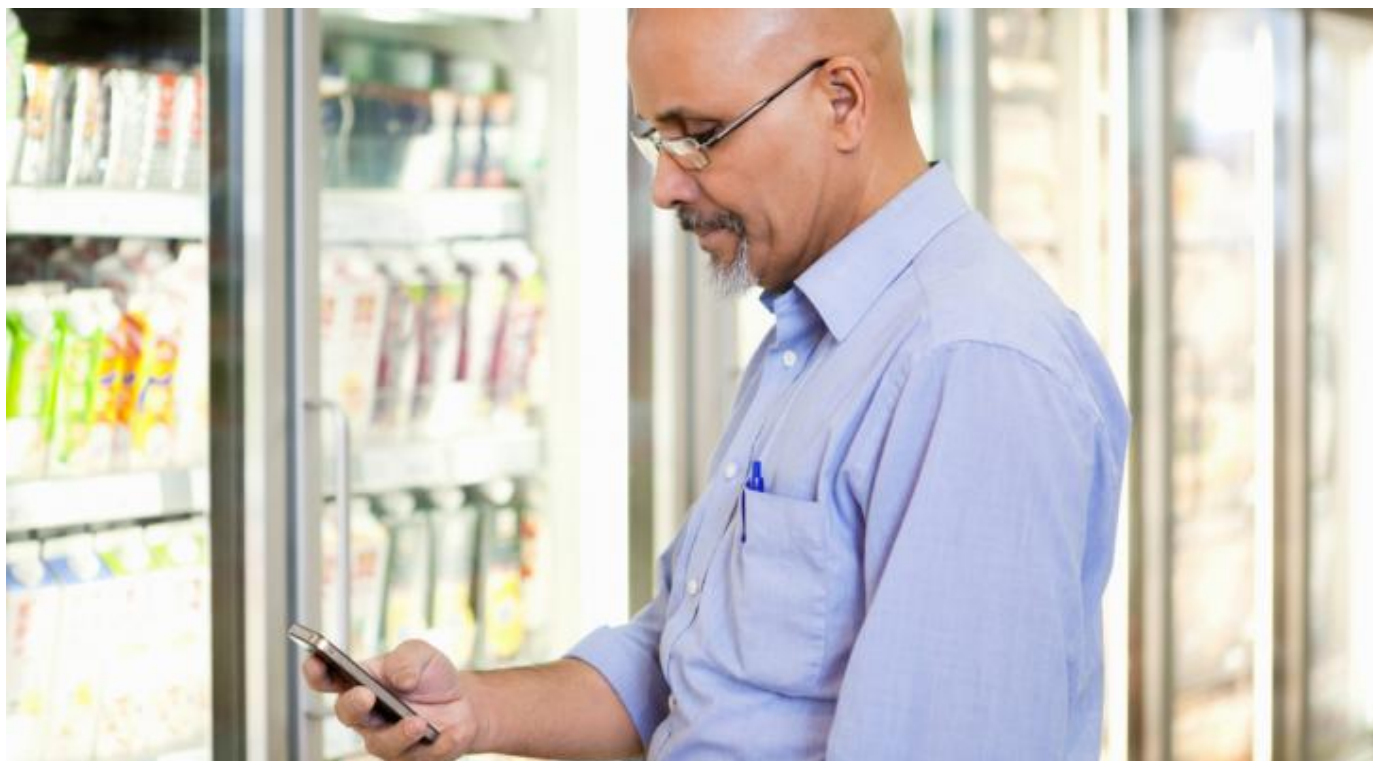
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Dissecting the Stereotypical Household Shopping Patterns

Insights to court male shoppers

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By Phil Dance

A few years ago the title of The Clash's 1979 hit song, "Lost in the Supermarket," may have directly applied to the growing number of males doing the primary grocery shopping for themselves and their families, but these men aren't lost. Not anymore.

Dual income households are now the norm, and the traditional roles of mothers and fathers have significantly changed. According to Pew Research Center, in 1965 only 25 percent of households with children under 18 were dual income households. In contrast, today 60 percent of households with children under 18 are dual income and with this shift comes shared responsibility for household management. This trend is combined with the fact that men are putting off marriage until much later: in 1965 the median age for men to get married was age 23, today it is age 29. These shifts have drastically increased the number of men doing the grocery shopping.

Looking more closely at these male grocery shoppers, we begin to see some drastic differences between how men and women shop. Our **Shopper STAT** [2] syndicated research, which tracks primary grocery shoppers who have shopped in the past 24 hours, confirms some of these key differences:

- Men are significantly more likely than women to head to the grocery store with little preparation. In

fact, 40 percent of men only start thinking about the shopping the day of the grocery trip, compared to 32 percent of women.

- Men are significantly less likely to prepare a list compared to females (69% vs. 78%) and they are significantly less likely to clip coupons (41% vs. 48%).
- They also shop more frequently than females - 48 percent report going shopping more than once a week compared to only 42 percent of females.
- Male grocery shoppers are considerably more likely to report they do not have children. 61 percent vs. 43 percent of females.
- The majority of males spend under 40 minutes per trip (68% vs. 60% of females).

The diversification of primary shoppers and the proliferation of shopping channels are real challenges to the traditional brick and mortar stores. It is a must for these retailers to grasp and interpret the changing shopper and their needs and habits for continued growth.

While both males and females generally frequent the same types of stores, male shoppers do gravitate toward different shopping channels than their female counterparts. According to our research, in the past 24 hours, males are more likely to have grocery shopped online (9% vs. 5%), shopped at a Warehouse Club store (6% vs. 3%), but are less likely to have shopped at a mass merchant (31% vs. 35%).

As this pattern continues to grow, grocery-shopping channels will continually need to change to meet the needs of their male shopper base. Keeping in mind that men shop more frequently, spend less time in the store, and are less prepared, retailers need to think about how these trends can be leveraged to enhance the shopping experience.

According to Laurie Demeritt, president and COO of The Hartman Group, "Don't mistake their lack of planning for lack of caring or think they are willing to accept items of lesser quality with higher price tags," says Demeritt, "To engage with male shoppers, brands and retailers should offer tools and services to help them quickly and effortlessly locate and buy items."

Phil Dance is a partner with [Alter Agents](#) [3].

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