



## Elevate & Activate

Many export managers are dedicated to market expansion in far flung lands. We celebrate new listings at international retailers, sometimes forgetting that the real development work has just begun. True success is measured by the “second” order at any customer.

Recently, I spent the day checking stores with a leading European brand owner.

Fortunately, my client enjoyed presence at a handful of high-profile chains visited. Most of our initial discussions focused on securing placement at the “next” group of supermarkets. Yet, brand placement at current customers was frequently towards the bottom of the shelf, with limited facings and no promotion. Ultimately, we concluded that there was probably a bigger business opportunity improving our shelf presence and in-store visibility at current customers versus chasing new ones.

Export Solutions’ “Elevate and Activate” strategy challenges brands to focus on the fundamentals of store level execution to enjoy incremental volume gains.



**Export Solutions**  
Distributor Identification Experts

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### 1. How do you determine a “good” store vs. a “bad” store?

Each company should publish in-store presence guidelines for each of their brands. These objectives should be shared at a distributor merchandising training session so your team is clear on in-store goals. Adjust expectations to reflect local conditions.

### 2. Eye Level is the gold standard.

Most brands battle for placement on the desirable eye-level shelf. International brands tend to be premium, delivering higher “penny profit” per unit sold. Normally, retailers prefer to allocate eye-level space to their most profitable brands. Where is the most common shelf location for your brand?

### 3. Activate excitement at the point of purchase.

Each store offers an opportunity to improve and offer the consumer a reason to buy. High impact price promotions are a reliable but costly tactic. Other options include point-of-sale placement or taking shelf stock to create a co-promotion with an adjacent brand already on display.

### 4. Spend a day at retail with your distributor.

Improving shelf conditions is not an office activity. Schedule a day in the field with your distributor retail manager and brand manager to discuss practical solutions “store by store.” Request that the store visits reflect reality, not just the best outlets that have been spruced up for your VIP “red carpet” visit.

### 5. What's measured is treasured!

Implement a universal methodology for store evaluation. Export Solutions created an “Is this store a 10” program, which can be adapted for any company in any country. Consider a retail sales contest to motivate store level representatives.

Each year presents tough challenges for incremental volume growth. Focusing on creating more retail “elevation and activation” at existing customers represents a proven strategy for brand-building success.

Good Luck!

**Greg Seminara**  
[greg@exportsolutions.com](mailto:greg@exportsolutions.com)