

Getting Listed: 2023

Every supermarket buyer appears obsessed with sales and profit targets just like you are. Their objective is to squeeze as much productivity out of every square meter of shelf space allocated to their categories. As salesmen tout their products miracle benefit's, the real question on every decisionmaker's mind is "How will this new product perform and help me versus what is currently occupying that shelf space now?"

Good Fit

Each retailer claims a place in the market spectrum. This ranges from formats appealing to high-income, gourmet consumers, to stores targeting budget-conscious families. Another key factor is segmenting supermarkets willing to pioneer a premium innovation versus those stocking brands with a proven sales record at other local chains. Align your brand attributes with a retailer's marketplace ambition and you will improve your chances.

Trend is Your Friend

Buyers remain on a mission to identify new trends and category innovation. What does your brand offer that is currently not available on the shelf? Can you share professional research to support your ideas? Is the opportunity high growth or niche? "Me too" bores everyone!

Data, Data, Data

Retailers manage categories, not brands. Companies that discuss their business opportunity, supported by deep dive analysis on category impact, are viewed strategically. Many vendors speak only of their own story and dream without factually creating a convincing case on the size of the prize for the customer.

Consumer Marketing Plan

You may have a great product, but is it supported by impactful marketing? This appears obvious, but many exporters ignore the fundamental requirement of brand support. In many countries like the USA, you can buy your way on to the shelf as a first step. However, you need a credible plan to generate meaningful sales turnover. Creative sampling events are a preferred vehicle. Digital marketing is targeted and comparatively inexpensive.

Trade Promotion

Trade promotion budget remains a critical listing factor for all buyers. Each chain sponsors proven programs to drive incremental sales at their stores. Companies willing to participate signal that they are serious about partnering. No one gets excited about periodic 10-20 % off price promotions.

Track Record

Multinational companies find it easier to gain listings due to a strong track record of success. What is your company reputation?



Have you been successful in adjacent countries or similar retailers? Are you worth "betting" on?

Unlimited Space-E-Commerce

Cyberspace offers unlimited opportunity to stock new brands, unburdened by the restrictions of physical store size. Amazon is now the world's second largest retailer. E-commerce appears as a channel to test and learn. E-commerce has experienced high growth everywhere, validating its place in the strategic mix. An important reminder is that rules are different in this channel, especially marketing and promotion tactics.

Service Level

A key buyer assessment metric is service level. Reliable suppliers promising delivery within 48 hours with 98% service level are heroes today. In many countries, companies with large merchandising teams are appreciated helping maximize in store execution and compliance. Buyers hate out of stocks and empty shelves more than anything else.

Who is Your Team?

Is your team a preferred supplier? Most buyers have favorite distributors or brokers who have earned their trust through years of demonstrated support. Your team extends beyond your dedicated key account manager. This includes your marketing manager, supply chain, customer service, trade marketing, distributor owner, and you!

What is the Size of the Prize?

Ultimately, you will enjoy success getting listed with a convincing argument and impressive data around the size of the prize. Everyone may appear friendly, but the real winners are those who help the buyer achieve their personal objectives for profitable total category sales growth. View our Buyer New Item Scorecard for your performance.

Visit Export Solutions website for 15 free Export Guides on international development and best practices for working with distributors.
www.exportsolutions.com

Buyer New Item Scorecard Score _____

Criteria	Weighting	Rating	Evaluation Factors
Product Innovation	20%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High growth category or mature? • Taste or performance • Differentiation vs. current assortment • Consumer research insights
Saleability	20%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Packaging attractiveness • Retail price point vs. category norms • Sales turnover at other market retailers
Promotion Plan	20%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size of investment...\$\$\$ not percentage • Consumer marketing: sampling, digital • Trade: listing fees, trade allowance level • Participation in retailers' programs
Team	20%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distributor/Broker: category experts? • Logistics service level • Merchandising team to service stores
Size of the Prize	20%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incremental category sales • Incremental category profits/margin • Realistic projections (data)
X Factors			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do I love/"believe" the story? • Does the item sync with corporate goals? • Will this product appeal to our customers? • Will it sell better than the item it replaces?

Greg's Ten Tips

1. Good news travels fast and bad news travels slowly
2. If you want to know what's really going on, spend a day visiting stores
3. Pick up the phone and call a friend or business partner versus email
4. Be positive. Think, "why not?"
5. Results are directly proportionate to your investment: Marketing, People, Focus, Time
6. A distributor (or Broker) "respects" what the Brand owner "inspects"
7. Shipment numbers rarely lie
8. Put it in writing
9. If two people agree on the principle of a deal, you can usually work out the financial terms
10. There is more in common with industry practices across the globe than differences. Brand owners everywhere desire more shelf presence and retailers demand more discounts. Recognize the differences, but focus on the universal requirement for superior products, marketed at a fair price.

20 Tips on Gaining Buyer Attention

It's tough to secure buyer Face Time, even as an existing supplier. Read Export Solutions 20 Tips on gaining buyer attention.

Tactic	Comments
LinkedIn	Connect via LinkedIn. Post success stories. LinkedIn messages go to buyer's personal email.
Gift Box	Mail samples in attractive gift box. Include high-quality pen with your company logo.
Sampling Pop Up	Retailers' headquarters or nearby train station.
Embassy	Invite buyer to special event at your embassy.
Photo Book (Apple?)	Share category conditions from their chain or nearby country.
Paid Consultant	Conduct independent buyer category research. Organize / pay through external agency.
CEO Visit	Bring your CEO to meet your buyer.
Mail	Correspond via DHL / FedEx. Receives special attention.
Charity	Support retailer's charity. Sponsor / attend their gala event.
Multifunctional Contact	IT, supply chain or marketing department.
Category Research	Share professional category research.
Company Newsletter	Add buyer to distribution list for your company newsletter.
Retailer CEO Speech	Pay retailer CEO or merchandising head to speak at your annual sales meeting.
Celebrity Chef	Dinner with celebrity chef at Michelin star restaurant.
Factory Tour	Invite buyer to VIP factory tour.
Book	Mail quality photo book from your home country.
Government Trade Support	Government trade officers maintain excellent buyer contacts.
Billboard	Near retailer's headquarters.
Sporting Event	Obtain VIP tickets for the big game.
Adjacent Categories	Create synergies with other categories on buyer's desk.