

# 80% of in-store communication is ineffective

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It's estimated that 80% of in-store communication doesn't work on its target market, although this is probably a conservative figure when it comes to evaluating the efficacy of messaging and design in this environment. Whether it's point-of-purchase displays, category banners, point-of-sale material, window display, digital display or even [packaging](#), the majority are getting it wrong.



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This shouldn't be the case. With all the science, research and behavioural insights one has access to, versus a decade ago, I believe we should be doing a much better job. So what has been the major obstacle? In two words, domain and education.

## Domain

As *custodians* of the brand, consumer marketers and their agencies inevitably have the final say when it comes to in-store creative execution. However, shopper and consumer campaigns shouldn't be one and the same. Often the messaging and design needs to be different to serve its specific purpose to drive the overall combined objective for the bottom line. Yes, there should be a link but the biggest travesty remains the incessant cut 'n paste approach.

Perhaps the most important aspect is that messaging and design fundamentals for consumers largely don't apply for shoppers. There's a different blueprint for in-store just as there is for digital, social and native marketing. Marketers and their agencies that are not creating and evaluating work for in-store through the *shopper lens* are literally throwing money away.

## Education

When I started in the shopper and retail marketing space, my mentors had a good idea of what worked in-store based on their deep experience. The challenge was that this was rarely documented and there was little internal and external research to validate their directions. Thus presenting in-store to the consumer marketing team was always an arduous and contentious exercise.

When I was leading brands on the consumer marketing side, we were armed to the teeth: identity standards, brand guidelines, messaging segmentation, evaluation tools and more. Granted, we weren't given *design training* in terms of what works best, but we had solid direction.

When shopper marketing was showing the highest dividends but resources were scarce, the only thing we could do was train our consumer and trade marketers to wear shopper hats. Arguably the most important part of this training was in [shopper design science](#), *the understanding of shopper psychology and behavioural fundamentals that must be considered when it comes to designing, communicating and promoting in-store*. A science that empowered managers with an evaluation methodology that covered visual literacy, semiotics, mnemonics, shopper messaging, form, colour psychology, way-finding and more. All of which were critical in grabbing exposures, delivering more impressions and driving higher sales.

Once managers understood the fundamentals of communicating to shoppers through design and messaging, the rest of the education toolkit/guidelines could naturally flow.

## Conclusion

Shopper marketing needs to become an organisational discipline understood and practised by all tiers and hierarchies. One of the metrics for shopper marketers should be how they arm and train their teams, and the best place to kick off is to start training them to speak shopper.

These views and opinions are my own and not those of my employer or customers.

## ABOUT JASON (FRICH) FRICHOL

My passions are shopper marketing, consumer packaging, visual merchandising, ideation, bankable innovation, integrated marketing, tangible ROI, and execution efficacy. My motto is, "Passion and persistence will get you everywhere." I strive for simplicity, practicality and information frugality.

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