

# Study Shows How Shoppers Navigate C-Stores

By Erika Flynn

STATE COLLEGE, PA. — VideoMining Corp. examined the in-store behavior of convenience store shoppers and released the results in its “Convenience Shopper Insights” study. Key findings included: More than one-third of shoppers seek some kind of beverage immediately after entering the store, and 24% shop the food service category during a trip. Less than 10% of shoppers are influenced by promotions; instead, proximity is key. Additionally, 73% of gas buyers do not purchase anything in-store.

“The main benefit [of the study] will



VideoMining identified where shoppers stopped first upon entering convenience stores.

come from the ability to plan better adjacencies and store traffic flow,” says Larry Brueggemier, director of marketing at **Circle K**, one of the major retailers to support the study. “This research is actionable and targets specific locations within the store that are areas of opportunity. We now have a better understanding of traffic patterns and purchase behavior.”

## Video Captures Metrics

The study analyzed more than 2 million shopping trips at 48 stores in 11 geographically dispersed markets in the United States. VideoMining’s Shopper Metrics program derives shopper behavior and segmentation information from in-store video. Servers mine the video streams in real time, using software that converts video into data on shopper behavior and demographics. The program garnered support from more than a dozen key retailers and manufacturers including **7-Eleven**, **BP’s am/pm**, **PepsiCo**, **Hershey Co.**, **MillerCoors**, **Kraft Foods**, **General Mills** and **Mars Inc.’s Wrigley**. VideoMining launched the research in late 2010.

Those retailers and manufacturers gained insights on overall traffic patterns in-store, high-exposure categories or zones, and whether those categories are high engagement or not, according to Priya Baboo, executive vice president, shopper insights and strategy, at VideoMining. The study also identified destination categories as well as shopping pattern variations by trip types, and the impact of those on store performance. Finally, data showed shopping behavior variations by product locations, such as primary aisles, endcaps, freestanding displays and displays on or near the sales counter.

## Higher Traffic, Higher Sales?

Kent Bassett, senior director of shopper insights for PepsiCo, says that seeing how shoppers navigate the store and where they spend their time significantly helps the company from a merchandising and equipment standpoint, and also helps determine “what our opportunities are for interrupting the shopper.”

Since approximately 25% of c-store shoppers spend more than the average time in the store, with 8% of them spending six or more minutes, according to VideoMining, there’s a definite opportunity for influencing their purchase decisions.

The study gave PepsiCo “a couple of different lenses on how to get from traffic to actual takeaway and how that changes by location,” Bassett says. “It helps us drive our money in the right location and get the biggest bang for the buck.” He says that learning by category, by time of day and by cohort what products are most often paired or co-purchased “was a pretty big one for us.”

Michael Burkenbine, am/pm marketing programs specialist, says that by comparing the resulting store traffic map with the shopper activity map, the retailer was able to gain a better understanding of whether high traffic translates to high sales. “Some areas of the floor plan garnered more traffic than we had thought.”

Burkenbine and Bassett both identified the importance of recognizing the differences in the shopping habits of Hispanics, who are key c-store shoppers. “Most notably how much longer they spent selecting products prior to making a purchase,” Burkenbine says. Am/pm will use the information to design its next generation store layout, placement of P-O-P and merchandising, Burkenbine says. **SM**



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