

## Catering to the Male Shopper's Mind

by Lindsay Scarpello, POPAI



Image Credit: [Scatter Logic](#)

Men shop. I know, I know—*do they really?* Um, yes. For some reason in the shopper marketing world as of late, this has been written about like it's big news. But it isn't the news that *men go shopping* that is that big of deal; instead, it's something more along the lines of men are shopping *more*, and yes, they do shop differently than their lovely lady cohorts.

Whether these male shoppers in question are bachelors searching for the best beef for a burger with their bros, or seasoned dads complete with an entourage of kids, it's important for brands and retailers to understand the subtle differences in the way they shop compared to women, especially since they are increasingly shopping more. Otherwise, you risk alienating a potentially lucrative emerging shopper segment. In order to do just the opposite, check out these three must-knows about the evolving male shopper:

### **DON'T SELL MEN SHORT.**

Men buy more than beer, Ramen, and bacon. While it may be easy to write off all male shoppers as beer-chugging, jeans and t-shirt-wearing steak-&-tater enthusiasts, the thing is, men are a little more complex than that, and that is reflected in their shopping and spending habits. I'll admit it—the first time my boyfriend taught me something about baking cookies (which, admittedly, I am also no good at, along with all other forms of cooking), I was a little shell-shocked, but since then I've learned my lesson (and, when I can get him to, an added bonus is that the boyfriend makes me baked goods).

Bottom line: not all men are confused Neanderthals roaming grocery store aisles wondering what a whisk is for. Just like women, men range from seasoned chefs to complete novices, and while it's of course still a good idea to target men for all the ol' favorites (beer, beef, etc.), it's also important not to make them feel like they can't indulge in the fancier stuff. This same principle goes beyond the grocery channel, even, and can be applied to other categories such as apparel, electronics, and more as well.

## **MOST MEN ARE “TIME STRESSED” OR “TRIP PLANNER” SHOPPERS.**

According to a recent survey conducted by [Integer](#), a whopping 60 percent of men report having a “get-in-and-get-out” mentality when it comes to shopping for their weekly essentials. According to [POPAI's 2012 Shopper Engagement Study](#), this rings true—meaning that most male shoppers fall in the “Time Stressed” and “Trip Planner” categories. Only 26 percent of Integer's male respondents considered themselves more “Explorer” shopper types. These findings reveal the truth of the male shopper psyche, translating into male shoppers whose primary goals are to have efficient shopping trips where convenience is key.

“Overall male shoppers appear generally less engaged in [the] whole weekly shopping process,” said Marcus Evans, managing director, [Integer Canada](#). “Meaning they are less influenced by brands, less motivated by discounts and promotions and consequently less likely to make impulse purchases as they are more mission focused.”

## **WITH MEN, IT'S ALL ABOUT “ME FIRST”.**

Also according to the [Integer](#) study, men also seem to take a “me-first” attitude while shopping, meaning they're not focused on procuring items for their whole family or others until they have first gathered their own personal items. Specifically, only 39 percent of men reported that they feel their family's needs should come before their own. This is especially an interesting opportunity for brands and retailers, who can perhaps capitalize on this attitude and sell men more on the “want” factor.

“It's okay to give males the opportunity to be selfish,” Evans said. “It's cool to say ‘you’ rather than ‘family’ when selling to men.”

Finally, continuing on the same finding that men often put themselves first in the aisle, it's also important to note that men are much less sensitive to price, promotions and discounts in comparison with women. In fact, only 39 percent reported specifically searching for more affordable items, and only 29 percent reported consciously sticking to a more conservative budget. Hear that, brands and retailers? There's a segment out there not paying particular attention to price (clearly, no one surveyed my dad).

As male shoppers continue to take on more domestic responsibility in their family lives, or become bigger “foodies”, it’s up to brands and retailers to use appropriate insights to capture more of their dollars, and more of their loyalty. They can do it, too—as long as they don’t forget that men *do* shop.

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ABOUT POPAI

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