



CROSSING THE GREAT DIVIDE

Closing the Chasm Between Sales & Retailers

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Growth can be an illusive thing for consumer goods companies these days. There is certainly no shortage of challenges. Hyper-competitive categories. Price-sensitive consumers. A lack of true innovation. High go-to-market costs. Many others. One of these is the widening chasm between retail customers and their suppliers that leads to missed opportunities on both sides. And all too often, we get in our own way. But there are ways to build a bridge across this chasm.

Consider these six components, all of which are within the grasp of any manufacturer.

1. Get a deep, deep understanding of how and why a retailer operates the way they do. Identify the specific areas of impact this has on your business.
2. Make a step change in the way you communicate with retailers, based largely on what you learn from 1. Above.
3. Gain control of all retail-related costs/expenses. Understand what they are, how they get spent and what performance is received for these funds. Look beyond the trade line into retailer-related Marketing and Supply Chain costs.
4. Get your arms around your data, both internal and external. What do you have and what's missing? How is it visualized? Look for ways to turn it into selling and other improvement opportunities.
5. Re-examine the architecture of your pricing and promotion strategies in ways that can benefit both your company and the retailer. You may be surprised at what you find.
6. Optimize every aspect of your business that touches the retail customer, from Sales to Logistics and Customer Service. Identify areas of friction. Take the initiative and work to eliminate problems on your end first, then get your retailer involved.

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