

Job Description

Job Title: Category Manager

Department: Purchasing

Responsible to: Head of Purchasing

Responsible for: Responsible for the strategic development and execution of plans to maximize sales and profitability within a specific product category by analysing market trends, managing supplier relationships, optimising Stock holding, supporting sales efforts and managing the range of products.



Summary of main purpose of the Job:

The purpose of a Category Manager is to act as a strategic leader for a designated product category. This involves comprehensive market analysis to identify growth opportunities, understand consumer behaviour, and assess competitor activities. The category manager is responsible for curating the product assortment within their category, selecting items based on profitability, demand, and supplier capabilities, while also establishing competitive pricing strategies that attract customers and maintain healthy margins. Crucially, they cultivate and manage relationships with suppliers, negotiating favourable terms and ensuring consistent product quality and availability. Effective inventory management, including demand forecasting and stock control, is essential to minimising waste and optimising operational efficiency. Furthermore, the category manager supports the sales team by providing product knowledge and resources, collaborates with marketing on promotional activities, and monitors category performance through key performance indicators. Ultimately, their success is measured by the growth in sales, profitability, and market share within their assigned category, achieved through strategic planning, effective execution, and strong collaborative efforts across the organisation.

Knowledge and Skills Required:

- **Strategic Category Management:** Develop and execute category strategies based on deep market understanding, competitive analysis, and customer insights to drive sales, profitability, and market share growth.
- **Supplier Relationship Management:** Negotiate contracts, manage supplier performance, and build strong relationships to secure optimal product selection, pricing, and consistent quality.
- **Financial Acumen:** Manage category budgets, analyse financial data, optimize rebate programs, and ensure cost-effective procurement strategies.
- **Product Portfolio Management:** Curate and maintain product ranges, identify product substitutions, and ensure alignment with market trends and customer demand.
- **Market Intelligence & Analysis:** Conduct market research, analyse competitor activities, and identify emerging trends to inform category strategy and product selection decisions.
- **Inventory & Supply Chain Management:** Develop and implement inventory management strategies, forecast demand, and collaborate with suppliers to optimize stock levels and ensure product availability.
- **Cross-Functional Collaboration:** Collaborate effectively with sales, marketing, finance, and operations teams to align procurement strategies with overall business objectives.

- **Team Leadership & Development:** Provide guidance and mentorship to purchasing assistants, contribute to process improvements, and foster best practices within the category management function.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

- **Supplier Relationship Management:** Negotiate contractual terms and pricing with suppliers, rigorously monitor and evaluate supplier performance, and implement cost-effective procurement strategies. This includes negotiating end-user support agreements with suppliers for major contracts.
- **Category Portfolio Management:** Strategically manage and maintain all product ranges within the foodservice category, ensuring alignment with competitor offerings and market trends.
- **Rebate Optimisation:** Monitor and analyse rebate income to identify and capitalise on opportunities for revenue maximisation.
- **Supplier Sourcing and Development:** Proactively identify and onboard new suppliers, cultivating strong relationships to secure optimal product selection and pricing.
- **Product Substitution and Contingency Planning:** Identify and source suitable substitute products as needed, minimising customer disruption and ensuring continuity of supply. Provide guidance and training to purchasing assistants to support this function.
- **Rebate System Implementation Support:** Contribute to the implementation and ongoing management of a new rebate tracking system to enhance rebate administration and analysis.
- **Cross-Functional Collaboration:** Collaborate effectively with sales, marketing, finance, and operations teams to ensure alignment of procurement strategies with overall business objectives. Attended daily and weekly cross functional meetings as required.
- **Process Improvement and Team Contribution:** Actively participate in regular team meetings and contribute to the continuous improvement of procurement processes and best practices.
- **Operational Efficiency and Core Range Management:** Adhere to principles of operational efficiency and core range optimisation in all procurement activities.
- **Category Management Development:** Contribute to the evolution and enhancement of the category management function within the buying team, fostering best practices and knowledge sharing.
- **Data Analysis and Reporting:** Analyse category performance data, including sales, margin, and market share, to identify trends, opportunities, and areas for improvement. Prepare regular reports on category performance and present findings to management.
- **Market Intelligence:** Maintain a thorough understanding of market dynamics, including competitor activities, emerging trends, and customer preferences. Use market intelligence to inform category strategy and product selection decisions.
- **Inventory Management:** Develop and implement inventory management strategies to optimise stock levels, minimise waste, and ensure product availability. This includes forecasting demand, managing lead times, and working with suppliers to improve supply chain efficiency.
- **Promotional Planning and Execution:** Collaborate with marketing to develop and execute promotional plans for the category, including pricing promotions and marketing campaigns. Track the effectiveness of promotions and adjust as needed.
- **Budget Management:** Manage the category budget, including promotional spend, supplier allowances, and other expenses. Ensure that all expenditures are aligned with the category strategy and business objectives.
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Ensure compliance with all relevant regulations and food safety standards within the category.
- **Purchasing Assistant Management:** Provide guidance and support to the purchasing assistant, overseeing their order placement activities and providing feedback on their performance.

General Conduct

- Keep all computer and manual records updated daily/weekly as required.
- Ensure all meetings you are required to attend are done so and the appropriate level of preparation in undertaken.
- Ensure as far as is reasonably practicable your own health, safety, and welfare and that of others who may be affected by your acts.
- Any other duty which may be reasonably requested by your manager

Employee Signature.....

Date __/__/__

Manager's Signature.....

Date __/__/__