

The Residual Effects of Special Merchandising Sections on Consumers' Shopping Behavior

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Abstract : This paper examines the secondary effects and consequences of special displays on subsequent shopping behavior. Special displays are studied as a prominent form of in-store or shopper marketing activity. Two experiments are performed using special value and special quality-oriented displays in an online simulated store environment. The impact of exposure to special displays on mindsets and resulting product choices are tested in a shopping task. Impact on store image is also tested. The experiments find that special displays do trigger shopping mindsets that affect product choices and shopping basket composition and value. There are intended and unintended positive and negative effects found. Special value displays improve store price image but trigger a price sensitive shopping mindset that causes more lower-priced items to be purchased, lowering total basket dollar value. Special natural food displays improve store quality image and trigger a quality-oriented mindset that causes fewer lower-priced items to be purchased, increasing total basket dollar value. These findings extend the theories of product categorization, mind-sets, and price sensitivity found in communication research into the retail store environment. Findings also warn retailers to consider the total effects and consequences of special displays when designing and executing in-store or shopper marketing activity.

Keywords : special displays, mindset, shopping behavior, price consciousness, product categorization, store image

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