

In-Flight Promotion
Optimization

The Key to Growing National Accounts



Why is so much trade spend going to waste?

55% of trade promotions don't have a measurable impact on sales.

In 2019, the average consumer packaged goods brand spent between 11-27% of its budget on trade promotions¹. A huge portion of that spend went toward driving sales in national accounts, where brands not only have the biggest opportunity, but also carry the most risk. With such a massive investment in trade promotions, it should be no surprise brands are looking for new ways to guarantee ROI. That being said, nearly 55% of promotions still failed to have an impact on sales². Why? because 68% of brands lacked the tech they need³ to optimize their promotions.

In national accounts, a 55% success rate is far from ideal, but for years national account teams had no choice but to accept it as reality — they simply didn't have the timely data regarding in-store execution required to ensure success. By relying on out-dated processes like email communication or word-of-mouth, just getting visibility into execution at the store level could take an average of 12

weeks⁴ as teams struggled to compile incomplete data from multiple sources into useful reports. This meant retail campaigns would be over long before brands could understand where and how they could improve.

However, leading brands are now adopting a new model for improving execution in the field, called in-flight promotion optimization. By focusing on collaboration and data sharing between national accounts teams, field sales teams, and retail marketing teams, these brands are shaving months off of their reporting time. Able to spot execution gaps across hundreds of stores within just a few hours or days, national account managers can maximize compliance during the first few days of a promotion so promotions can have an immediate impact on sales in their accounts.

In this eBook, we discuss the three steps to achieving in-flight promotion optimization in your national accounts so you can replace quarterly reports with daily visibility, and achieve the perfect store in record time.

1, 3 | The POI 2019 State of the Industry Report - poinstitute.com

2 | Sell More with Smarter Trade Promotions - hbr.org

4 | Feed In-flight Optimization with Sales Metrics for an Increased Lift - iriworldwide.com

1. Stop waiting so long for updates from the field

On average, it takes brands 12 weeks to evaluate promotion success. Why not measure execution every day?

Sales leaders know that a lot rides on the success of in-store product promotions; that's why executing them well is often a top priority. Still, 67% of brands feel that the process of executing and reviewing promotions is burdensome⁵.

That's because when you launch a promotion, it's impossible to see into hundreds of stores at once to check on your primary KPIs — pricing accuracy, competitor activity, and whether promotional material or displays have been properly set up. You can't be the one to gather this information yourself; that's one of the reasons you have a field team.

But waiting for reports from the field can take days, or even weeks when relying on old-school reporting methods such as email

and phone calls. So how can managers monitor promotions in real-time without leaving their desks? Empowering field teams to gather and report data from the field faster is vital to achieving in-flight promotion optimization. If reps are able to instantly report on whether or not a display has been built or a pricing promotion has been carried out, account managers gain the visibility they need to evaluate promotion rollouts across all of their accounts as they occur.

When more information is required, they can send out data requests and get responses within minutes. Real-time data reporting closes the gap between when information is needed and when it is reported, empowering teams to get a dynamic view of promotions at all times.

67% of brands find the promotion review process burdensome.

5 | The POI 2019 State of the Industry Report - poinstitute.com

Brand Spotlight

Kraft-Heinz

With doubts about compliance in a national retail chain, Kraft Heinz needed to get visibility fast. Waiting weeks for data would mean losing weeks of sales.

One brand that's leading the way and pioneering in-flight promotion optimization is Kraft Heinz. By prioritizing real-time data collection and reporting from the field, they've empowered their national accounts, field sales, and retail promotions teams to work together to ensure retail promotions are executed properly across the country.

In one instance, a Kraft Heinz national account manager wanted to know how a planned promotion was being executed across the chain. While they had assumed execution would be between 80% and 90% at the promotion launch date, a few reports of poor execution had the team concerned that execution was actually much lower. The national accounts team issued a survey request to all of the account reps across the country, who were instructed to check this specific execution at the target accounts in their territory. In just a few hours, they had new execution reports



from over 300 doors, including geo-tagged photos of the execution at every store. The result? Compliance was only around 50%, far from their execution goal of 90%.

Before Kraft Heinz connected its national account team to their field team's data collection process, getting real-time visibility into store conditions would have been impossible. In order to track whether a new promotion was actually live across all of the stores in their chain, the field team would have to send hundreds of emails, which would then be manually assembled into a report before being shared with the national account team.

The amount of time it would have taken to go through this process would render it useless, since by the time they received a final report, in-store conditions would have changed and the opportunity to have an impact on sales over that period would have closed.

Sample Promotion Compliance Report

	Organic Ketchup	B2 Steak Sauce	Rice Pasta Dinner	
	PROMOTION PRODUCT AVAILABILITY			SUM
Walmart Framingham 302	✓	✓	✓	3
Freshco Salem 120	✓	✓	✓	3
Safeway 225		✓	✓	2
Zehrs Norfolk 108			✓	1
Walmart Hanover 298	✓		✓	2
Target Cambridge 116	✓	✓	✓	3

By gathering real-time data from the field, account managers can easily identify gaps in execution and address them quickly.

2. Say goodbye to wasted meetings with retail partners

In stores with up to 60,000 SKUs, arm yourself with the data you need to advocate for your brand.

Account managers know that noncompliance is inevitable, especially in chains with hundreds of store locations. And as they gain more visibility into the field via real-time reporting, gaps in execution — such as incorrect pricing or missing promotional materials — will become apparent even more frequently.

The fact of the matter is your brand is only one of hundreds or maybe thousands that your retail partner is responsible for, so you can't expect them to be on top of what is going on with your brand 100% of the time — for example, a typical grocery store can have anywhere from between 14,000 to 60,000 SKUs⁶. But when retailers are out of compliance, what is the best way for account managers to address this?

In order to invest their resources into optimizing your promotions, retailers will need more than just a few anecdotes from the

field. Simply showing a couple of photos of messy shelves or an email from a rep about one store that is lacking the proper promotion signage won't be enough. Account managers need to arm themselves with comprehensive reports with execution data from dozens, if not hundreds of stores that compel retailers to see execution gaps at a broader scale and invest in correcting the errors.

Instead of providing anecdotal evidence on what is occurring at the store level, managers can use the in-store data they receive from their field team to gather a sample and use this to guide conversations with field teams and retail partners. Rather than putting retailers on the defensive, account managers can tell them a compelling data story that demonstrates exactly what the problem is and provides a clear jumping off point for how to address it.

6 | What Does SKU Mean in the Grocery Business? - smallbusiness.chron.com

Brand Spotlight

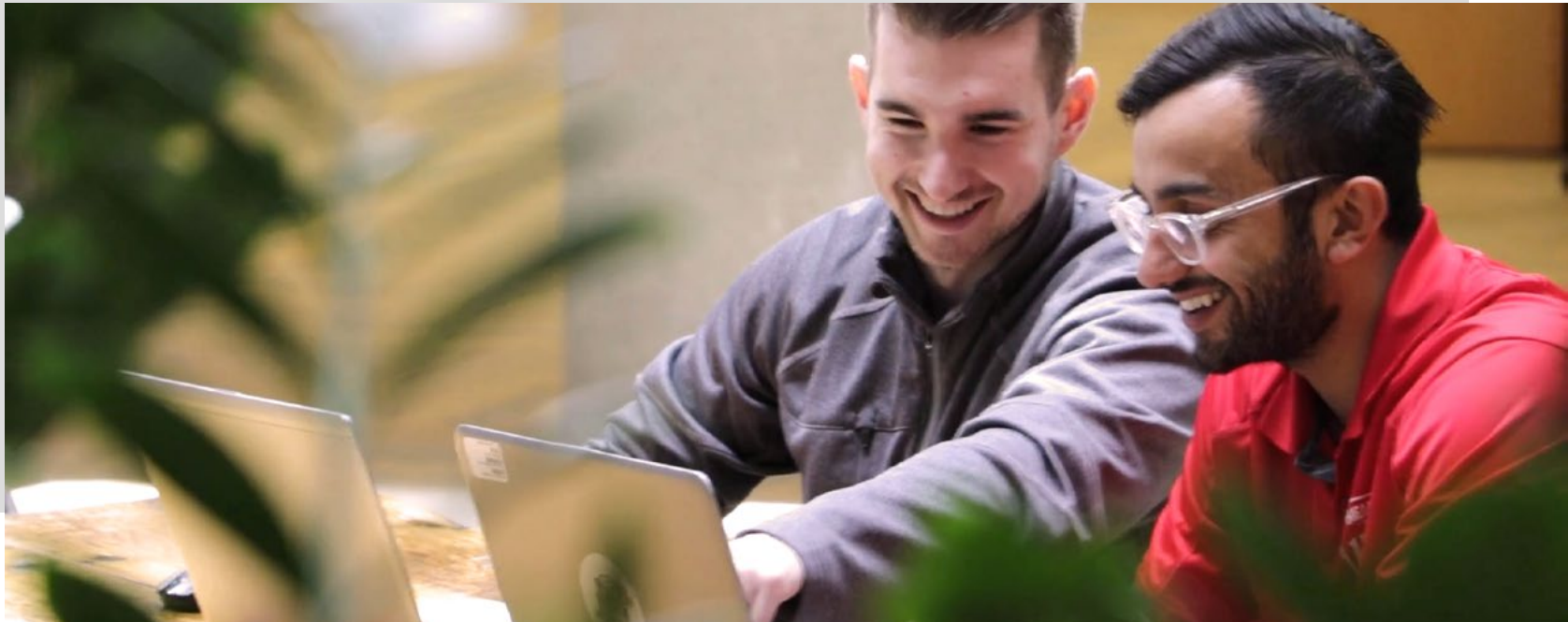
Kraft-Heinz

With only 50% of stores in compliance with their latest promotion, the Kraft Heinz national accounts team had to take action.

With the ability to get on-demand insights from their field team about store conditions nationwide, the Kraft Heinz team was able to come to their retail buyer with hundreds of concrete data points, instead of just anecdotes. As a result, the buyer was able to take ownership of the problem right away, and create a correction plan for every store.

If the Kraft Heinz team had come to the table with only anecdotes, instead of starting a conversation based on nationwide data, the buyer would have pushed back and improvements in execution would have been delayed.

Faced with proof of non-compliance in just a handful of stores, retail partners can easily chalk mistakes up to one individual or team. They might work with you to request follow-ups in a few particular stores, but this will do little to move the needle on promotion execution nationwide.

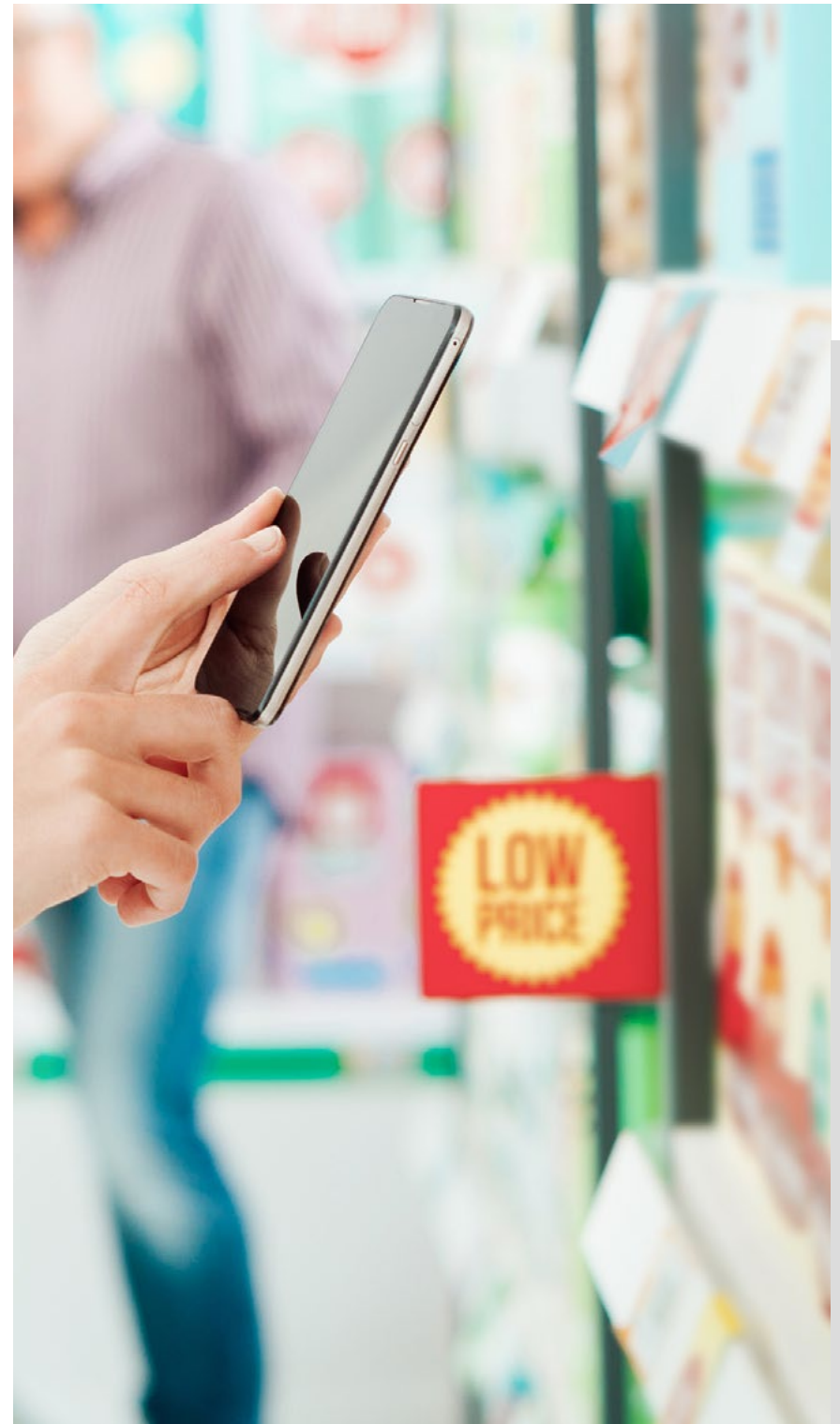


3. Close the loop and measure sales lift

When compliance is down 40%, every day has a huge impact on sales. Here's how Kraft Heinz closed the gap.

Once their retail partners had bought in and taken ownership of promotion execution in their stores, Kraft Heinz re-canvassed the accounts to measure compliance. After just a few weeks, they saw execution go up to nearly 90% (from around only 50%). Not only that, but getting the promotion executed properly boosted their sales of their target product by as much as 25% in those accounts.

There is a great deal that national account teams can learn from Kraft Heinz's success. By equipping your team with the tools they need to report data from the field in real-time, you set yourself up to have a more complete view of promotions as they unfold. This empowers you to use this data to understand why a promotion is or isn't going to plan. With this knowledge, your team can take immediate action when opportunity arises and optimize promotions in-flight instead of re-evaluating your execution strategy on a monthly or quarterly basis.

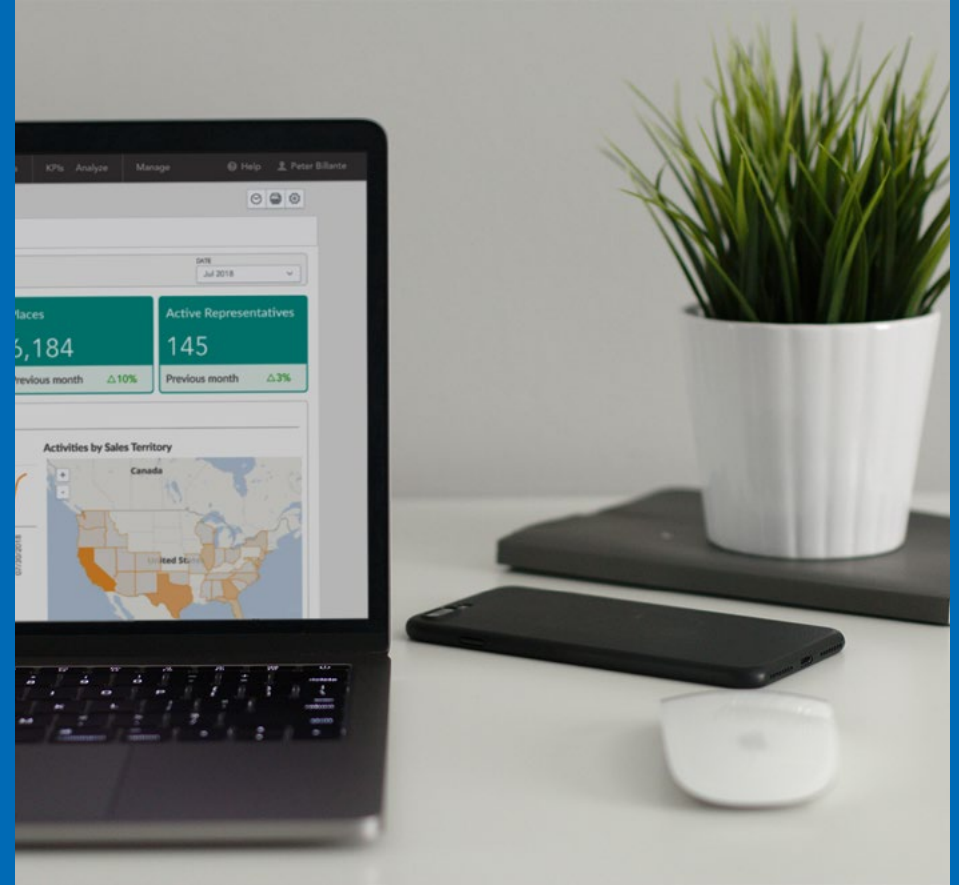


Achieve National Success With World-Class Retail Execution Software

Repsly's retail execution software was built to provide national account managers with data and tools they need to increase their field team's impact on program execution, retail compliance, and sales velocity.

Unlike other solutions, Repsly combines data about team activities, store observations, and product sales in a single solution for planning and execution.

Our powerful mobile app equips field reps with the store-level data they need to succeed in every account, plus customizable data collection tools to capture insights from the field. Managers can access powerful dashboards and KPIs with real-time updates from the field monitoring in-flight activity allowing them to prioritize their team's actions to impact sales..



Ready to take advantage of the most innovative retail execution tech on the market?

Get started with Repsly for free today and join thousands of high performing field teams.



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