

The new normal

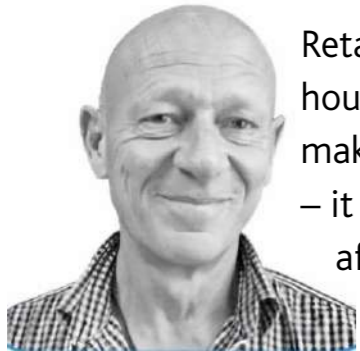
Unplanned purchases



By Julia Baker
S&R Content
Manager

According to Kevin van Zyl, Sales Manager from Storeworks ...

“As defined, in the field of consumer behaviour, an impulse purchase or impulse buying is an unplanned decision by a consumer to buy a product or service, made just before a purchase.”



Kevin van Zyl

Retailers have done countless hours of research into what makes a consumer impulse buy – it is a huge money maker, after all. A survey, conducted by OnePoll.com, reveals that in America, “three in

four (73%) respondents said most of their purchases tend to be spontaneous – a significant jump from 59% who held the same sentiment in last year’s study.

The average person spends \$314 every single month, consistently, on impulse buying.



<https://vocal.media/writers/>

This monthly spend has been increasing steadily since at least 2020.”

Globally, consumers are feeling the impact of the rising expenses, and with budgets tightening, they decide what is worth the spend and what can wait.

Or we just call it impulse buys ... buying items on a whim, without planning to do so. These can range from a candle that catches your eye, to a travel-sized toothpaste.

“41% of consumers (according to GWI, a consumer research group) say they are going to spend less on treats and luxuries, yet impulse purchases creep into even the tightest of budgets.”

There are commonly four categories of impulsive buying behaviours ...

- **Pure impulse buying** involves making unplanned purchases for the sake of novelty or escape.
- **Planned impulsive buying**, when a customer prepares for a specific purchase and keeps an eye open for promotions or discounts.

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Customers looking for value-driven cleaning products choose Triple Orange for its combination of affordability, performance, and eco-consciousness.

One of the most compelling advantages Triple Orange offers FMCG merchandisers is its clear value proposition. Consumers are increasingly looking for transparency in the products.

Whether they're buying in bulk, seeking promotions, or using loyalty programs, Triple Orange delivers.

Those in the FMCG space have a unique opportunity to stock products that resonate with today's value-conscious consumers.



A growing number of retailers are driving sales with Triple Orange's natural cleaning solutions, trusted by South African households nationwide.

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- **Reminder impulse buying** happens when a customer sees an advertised item and remembers that they are running low or out, leading them to make an impulsive purchase.
- **Suggestion impulse buying** happens when a customer sees a product and imagines a need for it, despite not having previous knowledge of the product (great in store advertising).

Frontiers in Psychology, found that between 40% and 80% of purchases fall into the impulse category. <https://www.frontiersin.org/>

Their report goes on to say "Retailers and store owners can benefit from knowing which merchandising strategies encourage shoppers to make unplanned purchases. In certain product categories, impulse buying accounts for nearly 80% of purchases.

So with this in mind, what are consumers impulsively spending their money on?

After clothing, food and drink is the next most impulsively bought items, though this impulsive buy may be declining as we feel the cost of living rise. Impulse purchases of non basic food and drink seem to be the first cost cut. Clothes, food and drink are essential purchases, so it is understandable to see them number one and two for top impulse purchase categories.

Clothes are the top impulse purchase category

% who say they made impulse purchases in the following categories



Image courtesy of www.vogue.com/

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We love to shop

There are many people who just love to shop. Buying something new can be liberating and for some and can even become addictive. Buying new goods without too much forethought, whether needed or not, can become routine.

“When we make a purchase, our brain releases endorphins and dopamine. For some, this momentary pleasure can lead to compulsive shopping, as the instant reward and motivation to re-experience the ‘rush’ starts to outweigh self-control and practical financial considerations.” Explained by Priory Group, a provider of addiction and mental health care facilities in the United Kingdom. This tendency is used by retail to continue inflating sales.

Time constraints

With most people having busy schedules, when going to the store and seeing a conveniently placed product that is needed or wanted, there is no time to compare prices between brands or stores. The item is simply bought and then the client moves on as quickly as possible.

It's on special!

Naturally, people try to make decisions that will keep them from having buyer's remorse or regret losing out on a good buy. The thought of losing out on a deal or discount can create an impulse buy, when it's realised that there is a time limit, it is why it is called 'FOMO' (fear of missing out).

With hiking prices even on basic needs, it's almost impossible for clients to resist the urge to save



money by buying in bulk or buying multiple sale items; even if there isn't an immediate need.

It goes without saying that a product is more likely to be impulse bought, if it is seen up front, immediately visible and with the lure of a great price. Nic Hajianni, Owner at SPAR Sandringham explains ...

“ We have bins near the checkout for items on special to make them more visible, just in case they may have missed them in the store. ”

So, how as retailers do we ensure that consumers continue to impulse buy?

What makes us buy impulsively?

As Frontiers in Psychology says, that some shoppers are more likely to buy products impulsively, without taking into account their finances.

As mentioned, people looking for an endorphin or dopamine rush, are more likely to buy impulsively often. They feel the need to experience something new and interesting and a small purchase can fill that need.

<https://eboxman.com/>



Also, impulse buying for some, can be linked to our self-identity. Not all people shop for a bag of chips impulsively, some people tend to make large purchases like designer watches or motorcycles. Customers buy impulsively because they believe that others will treat or perceive them differently.

Most people look for pleasure and want to avoid pain. In our minds, an impulse buy could help us increase the level of pleasure or simply avoid negative feelings. For instance, sweets and chocolates are some of the most common impulse purchases because our brain loves sugar.



Some cash is genuinely lost by accident, mis-counting or carelessness as it moves from point of sale to the bank.



Some is lost through theft by employees, customers, and others with access to the retail cash chain.



Some cash is also lost when the money turns out to be counterfeit

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How do age and finances influence impulse buying?

As you might expect, the thickness of the wallet is a trigger for impulse buying. If finances are good, or if there is a boost in cash flow, people are more likely to buy impulsively. When it comes to demographics, people who live in urban areas are more prone to impulse buying because there are conveniently located stores. The older generation has more self-control and that's why they are less likely to buy impulsively. Impulse purchases are the highest amongst Gen Z and the lowest by Baby Boomers. Gen Z are very much influenced by what is cool and trendy. Using social media drives to this mix and you have a sure winner.

The importance of shelf positioning

The positioning of shelving within store design is a personal choice for most retailers but is also guided by professionals. "The most preferred position for impulse shelving & impulse display fixtures are at high volume areas i.e. the store entrance, gondola ends, small side displays at the service areas and the most popular area of the front line check out tills, explains van Zyl from Storeworks.

Because of the 'captive audience' one has whilst customers are waiting to make their purchases, the impulse shelving becomes a hugely important section of your store design. The trend is now largely one of the 'snake queuing system' where customers have shelving in close proximity to their left and right, thus boosting last minute sales. Sloping shelves allow the product to be displayed

with maximum exposure to the client. Retailers are also now preferring to maximise the height of the shelving systems, so as to utilise as much shelf facings as possible."

POSM (point of sale materials) for in-store marketing

However, in bigger retail chain stores shoppers are more likely to buy impulsively due to the product display. The way products are displayed in the store can impact shopping decisions.



Shelf talkers: Small ads or displays that you can attach to the shelf where your products are being sold.



Shelf wobblers: Also known as danglers, are promotional tools that attach to store shelves and move to catch customer attention.

Ceiling danglers: Suspended marketing designed to captivate attention and direct customers to specific products or offers within a store.



Floor graphics: Are also great POSM that can stop shoppers in their tracks to promote products in stores. Floor graphics are less common than in-store

posters and signs, so this added element of surprise could help your brand stand out and pique more interest.

Dump bins: Open top containers used in retail to display promotional products in key areas. They are typically used to hold clearance, overstock or seasonal items that need to move quickly.

Self-standing displays: A modular system that is adaptable, while it helps increase merchandise capacity by simply modifying shelves or adding on side or adjacent stands, made from cardboard or metal, which is usually provided by the advertising brands.

Gondola end cap/rack displays: End cap sale displays give a larger space to showcase product features, offers, or anything else, that can be used to engage customers.

Digital displays: Digital displays are an excellent choice. While digital POS materials require a more detailed marketing workflow and a larger budget than traditional POS materials, the long-term return for business can make it all worthwhile.

Conveyor belt adverts: Logos and images directly on the conveyor belt surface at check-out areas in retail stores. Grocery store conveyor belt adverts provide numerous impressions to each shopper while they wait in checkout.

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Store ambiance

Setting the ambiance and tempo is a major key in attracting customers. Providing a calm environment helps shoppers to shop calmer and slower.

Music is often used to create a calming atmosphere, with a moderate tempo (around 100 BPM, which matches your heartbeat), which encourages shoppers to make impulse purchases while they are relaxed.

If the store is a pleasant location, people are more likely to purchase more products, even more than what they came in for. Seeing grocers making a great effort, with pleasant and helpful staff, and a clean environment, goes a long way to create loyalty. Customers will be back there often.

Place impulse buy items at the checkout counter

Small, cheap products are usually impulse buys. Sweets, cold drinks, and chewing gum are some of the most common impulse buys in grocery stores. Hajjianni points out ...

“Customers don't want to shop while ice cream is melting, so placing it, (including the 2 litre) near the tills gives customers ease of mind when it's the last thing to go into the trolley.

Charcoal and HTH is also best placed near the tills so there is no worry that bread and fruit in the trolley could be contaminated or dirtied. Also, more staff are nearby to help if assistance is needed in lifting heavier items. ”



Music is used to create a relaxed atmosphere, to encourage shoppers to make impulse purchases.

<https://stockcake.com>

Creating impulse buys by using cross-merchandising

“Cross merchandising enhances profitability and the customer experience. It's easy to implement for in-store or online businesses of any size and has been shown to increase sales by 20% on average,” according to <https://fitsmallbusiness.com>.

By showcasing products from complementary categories side by side, you can entice shoppers with interconnected products, which would normally not be put together, to encourage them to make that add to their basket.

Showcasing various items from multiple areas of the store together, makes the shopping experience quicker and also affords impulse buying, pointing out diverse choices without having to roam the store. Showing combinations that target different shopper missions.

www.phenomenon.co.nz/



Field marketing

Field marketing used with cross-merchandising, can include a stand grilling products or serving samples. Customers often stock up on new products once they have tried them.

Serves: 6
Preparation time: 20 minutes
Cooking time: 40 minutes

INGREDIENTS

8 Pieces Goldi Mixed Portions
BBQ Sauce
¾ cup (180ml) tomato sauce
2 Tbsp (30ml) sugar
1 Tbsp (15ml) vinegar
2 tsp (10ml) cayenne pepper or paprika
2 Tbsp (30ml) water
2 Tbsp (30ml) oil



INGREDIENTS

Phuthu Salad
2 cups (500ml) water
1 tsp (5ml) salt
1 cup (150g) maize meal, soaked overnight
½ cucumber, sliced
1 chilli, finely sliced
1 Tbsp (15ml) oil
2 tsp (10ml) vinegar
½ cup (125ml) amasi



Tasty & Delicious

Ideal for a family meal



BBQ CHICKEN WITH A SPICY CUCUMBER PUTHU SALAD

You probably have all the ingredients for this easy homemade barbeque sauce, a perfect pairing to a refreshing puthu salad.

Method:

Pat the chicken dry.

To make BBQ sauce, combine tomato sauce, sugar, vinegar, cayenne pepper and water.

In a frying pan, heat oil on medium heat and add chicken and brown sides for 4 minutes a side.

Coat the chicken pieces with barbeque sauce, cover the chicken and continue to cook for 20 minutes.

Cooking the chicken covered will prevent the sauce from catching and burning.

Remove lid to let chicken crisp, and baste with any remaining BBQ sauce.

To make salad combine oil, vinegar, chilli and cucumber.

While the cucumber is marinating, bring water and salt to a boil in a medium saucepan.

Reduce heat to a simmer and add maize meal, cover and cook for 25 minutes.

Fluff with a fork and set aside to cool.

To serve, add cucumber with marinade juices to the pap and drizzle with your desired amount of amasi.

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Place impulse buys near your best-selling products

Another tactic that can help you encourage impulse buying is to place impulse buys near best-selling products. Of course, it's best to use products that work well with one another. At the liquor section, you can place a bottle opener or gift bag near your best-selling wine, or biltong and chips next to the beer. Frequently, shoppers overlook small items. While they may remember to purchase salad greens, they may forget that they are out of salad dressing.

Seasonality is important

Seasonality is key, take advantage of the hype that is made by holidays. If Valentines Day or Christmas

is coming, then making your products up front is relatable and becomes an impulse buy.

Customers will buy seasonal products impulsively because they want to follow the trend or, even better, create an environment for their family that is thoughtful and full of love.

Impulse buying is a common thing all shoppers do from time to time. Our brain is wired in a way that encourages us to buy more than we need or different products than the ones we planned to buy. Encourage impulse buying, think about what your customers want and need, use loyalty cards to gather information. Provide variety and constantly change products. **SR**

Sources:

www.gwi.com/blog/fashion-impulse-purchase-trends
The fine art of matching beer with bar snacks

Show customers how to use a product

Sriracha sauce, known and loved by some shoppers, may be passed over by those who are not familiar with it. Presenting an opportunity for cross-merchandising by showcasing it alongside complementary items and offering easy recipe suggestions to entice customers to purchase and experiment with the sauce at home, while also buying the associated products.

Communicate urgency

When you have a special offer, promotion, or discount, communicate the urgency to your customers. Help customers shoppers feel that they can enjoy that price now and not in the future.



There are several studies that have found a positive correlation between in-store advertising and impulse buying. One such study was conducted by Point of Purchase Advertising International (POPAI), which found that in-store advertising can increase sales by up to 20%. The study analysed 77 in-store advertising campaigns and found that these campaigns resulted in an average sales increase of 5.6%. <https://smartmedia.co.za/>

Co-located with



Game-changing packaging innovations take centre stage at Propak Africa

As sustainability grows in importance for the packaging industry, innovation is accelerating at an unprecedented pace. Propak Africa, set to take place at the Johannesburg Expo Centre in Nasrec, will showcase the latest trends shaping the future of sustainable packaging, printing, plastics, and processing.

Plastic packaging remains an essential component in South Africa's supply chains, particularly within the food, beverage, and pharmaceutical sectors. While its durability and cost-effectiveness are undeniable, the industry is responding to mounting pressure for eco-friendly solutions.

Leading innovators at Propak Africa and co-located shows Pro-Plas Expo, The GAPP Print Expo, FoodPro Expo, and Pro-Label Expo, will unveil cutting-edge developments that make packaging more recyclable, reusable, and environmentally responsible – without compromising performance.

The event will also highlight the transformative role of digital print solutions in packaging. Advances in AI-driven printing equipment are streamlining everything from job changeovers to quality control. With a growing demand for short print runs and on-demand packaging, digital print technology is enabling businesses to enhance production efficiency while reducing waste. Sustainable printing practices, including eco-friendly materials, certified paper, and energy-optimised processes, will also be in focus.

Another key driver in the packaging landscape is the considerable growth of South Africa's food and beverage sector, which has seen notable growth in dairy, snacks, beverages, and bakery products. As the food and beverage industry grows, so does the demand for safe, traceable food packaging solutions. Visitors to Propak Africa can explore advanced industrial weighing and product inspection solutions designed to enhance product safety, maintain quality, and protect brand integrity, amongst the many other food processing and packaging innovations and solutions.



Invaluable opportunities

Beyond the exhibition floor, Propak Africa offers invaluable learning opportunities. Two seminar theatres within the exhibition halls will host 50+ expert speakers, covering key topics in packaging and printing. In addition, the Institute of Packaging SA (IPSA) will present three half-day conferences focused on pressing industry challenges, including packaging technology advancements, ERP regulations, and food safety packaging solutions.

Importance to the industry

Recognised as one of the most important trade events on the industry calendar, Propak Africa is a hub where buyers and sellers come together to do business. Held every three years, the exhibition is a prime opportunity to discover the latest innovations, witness live demonstrations of cutting-edge machinery, and connect with key industry players. This year's event will feature over 500 exhibitors, displaying thousands of products, technologies, and services across packaging, plastics, printing, food processing, and labelling.

These sessions require advance registration and are ticketed events.

“ Propak Africa is a must-attend for packaging professionals looking to stay ahead in a rapidly evolving industry. It's an opportunity to explore new materials and technologies, gain expert insights, and make valuable connections that will drive business success. ”

Mark Anderson, Portfolio Director, Specialised Exhibitions, a division of Montgomery Group & organisers of the show.

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