



EBOOK

How to maximize ROI of your in-store merchandising program

Learn how to measure and maximize ROI on your Brand Reps.

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Introduction

Your brand is more than just a logo — it's a promise, an experience, a story that needs to be told. And who better to narrate this story than your Brand Representatives?

Brand Reps are more than just employees or salespeople. They are the human face of your brand, creating authentic connections with customers that can boost loyalty and sales. But how can you measure the success of your in-store merchandising program? And what elements should an effective program include?

In this guide, we'll delve into these questions, shedding light on how Brand Reps can boost sales through genuine recommendations, build lasting relationships with customers, and bring your brand's story to life in a unique way.

Brand Reps: The human face of your brand

In a world bombarded with advertisements, consumers yearn for genuine experiences and connections. Brand Reps — unlike faceless marketing campaigns or untrained store associates — are real people who genuinely love your products. They're everyday individuals who resonate with your brand and its story, and their authenticity is worth its weight in gold in today's market. Here's why:

- **Sales skyrocket with Brand Reps.** Brand Reps don't just talk, they sell. According to a survey, [46% of consumers in the U.S. say](#) that they would pay more to purchase from brands they can trust, so reliable word-of-mouth recommendations carry substantial weight. Think about it: who would you trust more — a glossy magazine ad or a trusted expert who swears by, and uses, the product?
- **Deep connections = loyal customers.** Brand Reps go beyond surface-level connections with customers; they interact, engage, and form one-to-one relationships. They're not just promoting a product, but sharing a lifestyle, a passion, a story. And considering that [77% of consumers buy from](#) brands that share the same values as they do, building these deeper connections means customers are more likely to stay loyal and continue purchasing your products.
- **Your brand's story, amplified.** Brand Reps are key to telling your brand's story, embodying its values, and communicating your vision to a wider audience. They enhance visibility, shape consumer perception, and ensure your brand message is conveyed through impactful visual displays and interactions.

Why store associate knowledge is power

In the retail industry, where a well-informed store associate can be the pivotal difference between a lukewarm customer experience and an exceptional one that drives repeat business, knowledge really is power.

Here's why devoting time for employee training pays off:

The ROI of well-informed associates

Knowledgeable staff are the lifeblood of a thriving retail business. They are the ones who interact directly with customers, answer questions, recommend products, and ultimately influence purchase decisions. When your associates are well-informed, they confidently engage customers, leading to increased sales, improved customer satisfaction, and ultimately, higher ROI. Plus, investing in employee training fosters a positive brand image and reduces staff turnover, leaving employees feeling more confident and competent in their roles.

The role of Brand Reps in training

Brand Reps serve as direct liaisons for retailers, providing valuable feedback to improve service and increase customer satisfaction. They use their product knowledge to identify and address gaps in associates' understanding, and share problem-solving techniques to equip the team with the skills needed to handle customer issues effectively. In addition, they embody and impart the brand's values during training, ensuring that associates project a positive brand image.

A win-win for customers and brands

Well-trained associates are a win-win for customers and brands alike. For customers, interacting with knowledgeable associates makes shopping easier, more enjoyable, and less time-consuming. For brands, investing in associate training improves sales performance, enhances Brand Reputation, and increases customer retention. It shows your commitment to providing the best possible shopping experience, which is a powerful differentiator in today's competitive retail landscape.

How to measure the ROI of your in-store merchandising program

Think of your Brand Reps as secret agents, stealthily gathering intel, influencing customer decisions, and bolstering your brand's reputation. But how can you quantify their contributions? How can you ensure that they're not just an expense but a strategic investment delivering tangible returns?

Driving Revenue – Sales Performance Metrics. It's not just about total sales, it's about the story behind the numbers. Break down the figures into metrics like sales per representative, sales per store, conversion rate, average deal size and upsell and cross-sell rates. These statistics shine a spotlight on the top performers, the underachievers, and the potential gold mines waiting to be tapped.

Tuning Into the Customer Pulse – Satisfaction Metrics. Sales, however, are only one piece of the puzzle. The voice of your customer is another. Are your customers walking away happy? Are they singing praises about your products? Things like surveys, customer reviews, net promoter scores (NPS), etc. give you a glimpse into your customers' hearts, so you can understand what works and what doesn't.

Amplifying Your Presence – Brand Awareness Metrics. Then there's brand awareness, the invisible thread connecting your brand to the consumer's mind. Monitor things like social media engagement, search volume data, online advertising results, and website traffic — these signals reveal how visible your brand is, how loud your voice is in the marketplace, and how effectively your Brand Reps are amplifying it.

Six elements of an effective in-store merchandising program

Now that we've covered how to measure your Brand Rep program's ROI, let's talk about six ways to maximize it:

1. Be meticulous in choosing the right reps

Observation and communication skills should top the qualifications list. Brand Reps need to have an eagle eye for detail, picking up on customer behaviors, preferences, and unspoken needs. They should be able to effortlessly engage customers, articulate your brand's offerings, and handle any objections with tact and positivity. To find these Brand Reps, look beyond surface-level qualifications and delve into their personalities, their passions, their drive — or outsource it to a vendor like ThirdChannel, which has a vast [network of vetted Brand Reps](#) segmented by industries, lifestyles, and more.

2. Set clear objectives

Objectives give your Brand Reps a clear idea of what they need to achieve. Whether it's increasing sales by 10%, improving customer satisfaction scores by 15%, or reducing return rates by 5%, each objective should be SMART — Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound. These objectives aren't just milestones for your reps; they're essential metrics for you. They help you gauge the effectiveness of your Brand Rep program, pinpoint areas that need improvement, and make informed, data-driven decisions to elevate your ROI.

3. Invest in training

Without a deep understanding of your products, your sales techniques, and the unique selling points of your brand, Brand Reps cannot perform to their full potential. Continuous training gives your reps the confidence to engage with customers, to answer their questions accurately and persuasively, and to recommend the right product for their needs. It transforms them from mere salespeople into trusted advisors — after all, [91% of consumers are more likely](#) to shop with brands that recognize, remember, and provide them with relevant offers and recommendations.

4. Use technology to your advantage

Advanced [retail intelligence platforms](#) provide a feedback mechanism for Brand Reps, giving them a place to share feedback on in-store display adjustments, customer interactions, competitive intel, employee training, and more. This feedback is critical as it provides real-time insights into what's happening on the ground, enabling brands to understand how these adjustments impact sales and customer behavior.

5. Define key performance indicators (KPIs)

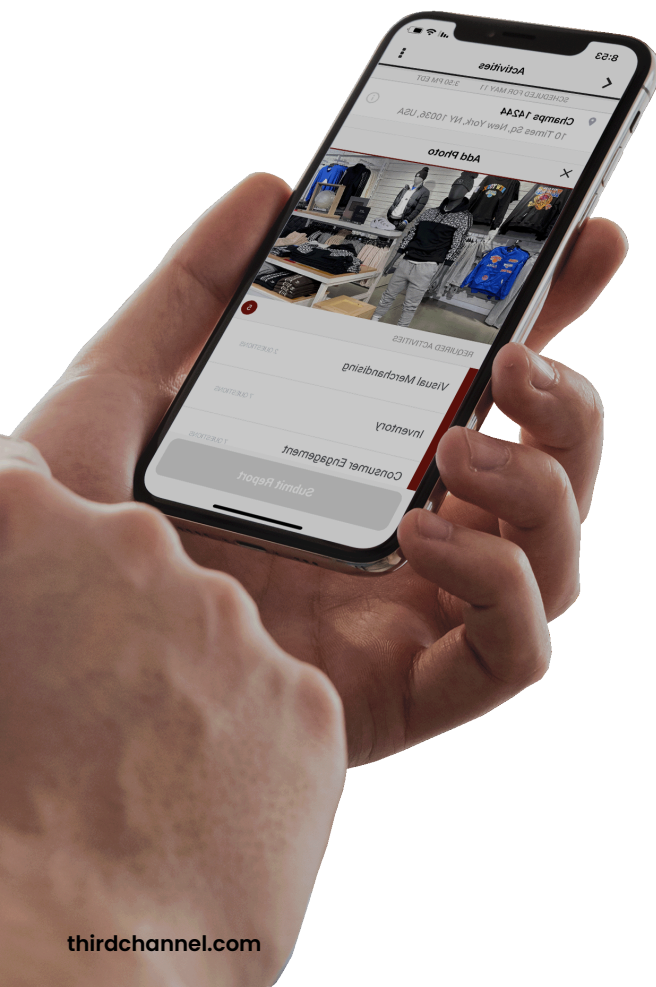
To keep Brand Reps on track to meet their objectives, consider [focusing on KPIs](#) like:

- Sales Volume
- Conversion Rate
- Employee Turnover Rate
- Customer Retention Rate
- Upselling Rate
- Cross-selling Rate
- Return Rate
- Referral Rate
- First Contact Resolution Rate
- Average Handling Time

6. Embrace routine support over quarterly visits

Clinging to old strategies — like quarterly Brand Rep visits, for example — can be a recipe for stagnation. Today, the key to unlocking greater ROI lies in fewer stores with more routine support — a paradigm shift that trades episodic oversight for continual engagement.

This new model is marked by proactive problem-solving, fostering an in-depth understanding of each store's unique challenges and opportunities, building enduring relationships, and ensuring resource efficiency. Shifting to routine support involves deliberate steps such as store segmentation, establishing regular communication channels, leveraging data-driven insights, developing tailored strategies for each store, and encouraging consistent feedback.



Empower your Brand Reps with ThirdChannel

ThirdChannel isn't just a tool, it's your partner in navigating the complex world of retail. It equips your Brand Reps with the knowledge and resources to make your products shine, manage inventory with precision, and build meaningful connections with customers.

And we don't stop at turning data into insights — we empower you to act on these insights in real-time. You'll spot trends before they're trending, address issues before they become problems, and find growth opportunities hiding in plain sight. Plus, you'll build stronger relationships with retailers and gain unparalleled visibility over your in-store presence.

Don't just keep pace with the future of retail — [schedule a demo](#) with ThirdChannel and learn how you can lead it.

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