**Co-op Ambient Supplier Q&A**

**Category Growth & Strategy**

**Co-op is often described as being "all about food". How does non-food fit within the strategy?**

Non-food categories continue to play an important role in supporting customer missions, convenience shopping occasions and overall customer satisfaction. Our focus is on ensuring customers can access relevant products when they need them, while delivering a compelling convenience proposition.

**How does premiumisation and health contribute to growth within Ambient categories?**

Both health and premiumisation remain important growth drivers. Customer demand continues to evolve, with increasing interest in wellbeing, product quality, functionality and occasion-based purchasing. Category strategies will continue to balance these trends alongside value, convenience and customer needs.

**What are Co-op's broader health priorities, and how do areas such as gut health and fibre fit within them?**

Health remains an important consideration across our category strategies. As customer interest in health and wellbeing evolves, we will continue to consider emerging trends and opportunities where they are relevant to customer needs and category growth.

**What role can functional food and beverage products play in future growth?**

Functional products can play an important role in meeting changing customer needs and attracting shoppers into categories. We continue to review opportunities within this area and welcome supplier insight that supports customer demand and category development.

**What role do brands play in driving growth?**

Strong brands remain important in attracting customers, driving innovation and supporting category growth. We believe the most successful categories combine leading brands, relevant innovation and a strong own-brand proposition to meet customer needs.

**Supplier Engagement & Ways of Working**

**Can you explain the responsibilities within the pod structure?**

The pod structure brings together commercial buying and category teams with shared accountability for category success.

Generally:

- Buying teams focus on supplier relationships, sourcing and commercial delivery.
- Category teams focus on customer propositions, category strategy, ranging and promotional planning.

Suppliers are encouraged to engage with the wider category team rather than relying on a single contact.

**Who should prospective suppliers contact first?**

Suppliers should engage through the appropriate commercial or category contact for their area. The wider Pod structure is designed to ensure expertise and accountability are available across multiple functions.

**How can relationships become less transactional and more collaborative?**

We want relationships to be built around shared customer opportunities, category growth and clear ways of working. The best partnerships are those where both parties bring customer insight, long-term thinking and a focus on mutual growth.

**We sometimes struggle to get access to buying teams. How can engagement be improved?**

The pod model is intended to broaden engagement opportunities across commercial and category functions. Suppliers should utilise the full range of available contacts within the category team to ensure discussions reach the most appropriate stakeholders.

**Mission-Based Retailing & Cross-Category Growth**

**How will Co-op improve cross-category collaboration?**

Our operating model is designed to encourage greater collaboration between buying and category teams. This helps identify opportunities across customer missions rather than focusing solely on individual categories.

**How can suppliers contribute to cross-category opportunities?**

We encourage suppliers to focus on customer solutions and shopping missions. Opportunities supported by strong customer insight and clear category growth potential are most likely to generate productive discussions.

**How can suppliers become involved in meal solutions and cross-category promotional activity?**

We welcome new ideas that help solve customer missions and deliver mutual growth. Suppliers should engage with their commercial and category contacts to discuss opportunities supported by compelling customer insights and category benefits.

**How can we access information about future customer missions?**

We encourage suppliers to discuss future opportunities with their commercial and category contacts. Early engagement allows suppliers to develop broader customer-focused solutions that support category and mission growth.

**Promotions, Merchandising & Execution**

**How will Co-op drive basket growth if secondary space is reduced?**

Secondary displays continue to play an important role; however, growth is increasingly supported through stronger category execution, clearer customer navigation, mission-based merchandising and improved in-aisle communication.

**What is the role of clip strips and secondary displays?**

These fixtures are intended to support customer missions through effective product adjacencies and convenience, helping customers complete shopping tasks more easily while supporting basket growth.

**What steps are being taken to improve promotional execution?**

We continually review execution processes to improve consistency and effectiveness. Simplifying promotional planning and reducing complexity remains an important area of focus.

**Will there continue to be opportunities for range refresh and innovation?**

Yes. Ongoing category and range reviews remain an important mechanism for ensuring ranges reflect customer needs, innovation opportunities and category growth potential.

**Terms, Investment & Joint Business Planning**

**What does an ideal supplier partnership look like?**

We are seeking collaborative relationships built on simplicity, transparency and shared growth objectives. The focus should remain on customer outcomes, category growth and mutually beneficial opportunities.

**How should suppliers approach Joint Business Planning discussions?**

Successful Joint Business Plans are built around customer needs, category growth opportunities, innovation, execution excellence and long-term value creation for both parties.

**How are smaller and challenger brands supported?**

We encourage suppliers of all sizes to bring strong customer insight, clear category opportunities and relevant innovation. The strength of the proposition and customer relevance remain important considerations in evaluating opportunities.

**How are ranging decisions made?**

Ranging decisions consider multiple factors including customer demand, category strategy, commercial viability, operational considerations and overall category performance. Our objective is to ensure the best outcomes for customers and category growth.

## Availability, Forecasting & Supply

### What is Co-op's approach to availability improvement?

Availability remains a key priority. We continue to invest in forecasting, planning and supply chain improvements to ensure products are available for customers when they need them.

### How would Co-op respond to changes in customer demand for Ambient products?

Our forecasting and replenishment processes are designed to respond to customer demand patterns, ensuring stock levels can adapt appropriately as requirements change.

### Are there plans to improve communication and coordination between functions?

We recognise the importance of strong cross-functional alignment. The pod structure has been designed to improve collaboration and accountability across teams, supporting clearer communication and more effective execution.

## Quick Commerce & Emerging Opportunities

### How can suppliers engage with Quick Commerce opportunities?

Suppliers interested in Quick Commerce opportunities should discuss these through their commercial and category contacts. We continue to evaluate opportunities that support convenience missions and changing customer behaviours.

### How is Co-op preparing for Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) implementation?

We are working on plans to support implementation and will engage with suppliers through established communication channels as plans develop closer to implementation timelines.

## Sustainability

### How does sustainability fit within commercial decision making?

Sustainability remains an important consideration across the supply chain. We encourage suppliers to incorporate sustainability initiatives into collaborative business planning and growth discussions wherever appropriate.

## Household, Healthcare & Convenience Missions

### What role do Household and Healthcare categories play in convenience retailing?

These categories help customers complete important shopping missions and meet immediate needs. Our focus is on ensuring the range is relevant, easy to shop and aligned with customer expectations.

**Are Household and Healthcare categories important for attracting customers as well as driving basket growth?**

Both categories can contribute to customer acquisition, satisfaction and basket growth. Category strategies are developed with customer missions, convenience needs and overall category performance in mind.

**Important Notice & Disclaimer**

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