



Retailer Pitch Essentials for New, Incumbent, and Mature Brands

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Retailer pitches tend to focus on one of two different objectives: **bringing a brand's new items onto the shelf** or **adding more of a brand's items to the current assortment**.



The Audience

You'll be talking to a buyer/category manager or someone with a more specialized role, such as forager. This person will have many responsibilities and a variable knowledge of data. They are usually concerned with their section of the store and making sure it is performing well.

Try to ascertain what their goals are for the year or category before you talk to them. What are they trying to achieve? How could your brand align with that? Can you find a win-win?

A retail buyer is a professional who plans, manages, and selects goods to be sold in retail stores to ensure their own company's competitiveness with other retailers.



Retailer Pitches for **New Brands**



NEW BRANDS

Create the win-win for your brand and the retailer

The content of retailer pitches is also dependent on how long the brand has been on the retailer's shelf.

New brands are approaching a retailer for the first or second time. Their focus is increasing their distribution. The products presented for the retailer's consideration may be new to the market and have very little or no competitive retail sales data.

However, there are other things that brands can show to help prove their case to the retailer.

Focus on Differentiation

ANALYSIS TEMPLATES

Qualitative Brand Story

Size of the Prize
or White Space






Prove Incrementality



If you're a new brand, this checklist can help you make sure that you have the fundamentals of a good retail pitch.

- **PROBLEM/SOLUTION:** The mandate of an entrepreneur is finding a problem worth solving. What is your brand trying to solve? What imperfect solutions exist now? What are you doing different to solve the problem?
- **ORIGIN STORY:** What inspired you to take on this journey?
- **UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION:** What makes your product different from the others – and how are you communicating that to the consumer?
- **THE TEAM:** What people have you brought on to manifest your vision – and what are their qualifications?
- **MARKETING & STORE SUPPORT PLAN:** What will you do (demos, free fills, marketing, promos, swag, etc.) to help support the launch and rollout of your products?

QUALITATIVE ELEMENTS













-  Problem/Solution
-  Origin Story
-  Unique Selling Proposition/
Key Differentiators
-  The Team
-  Marketing & Store Support Plan

Remember, getting onto the shelf may seem hard, but that's actually the easy part. Getting off the shelf and into the customer's shopping cart is a lot harder.

You will need to continue to build interest, sales and velocity for your items post-launch, and the only way to make consistent progress against a goal depends on the ability to measure progress toward that goal – an ability that data provides to brands.

The quantitative element checklist on the right is fueled by retailer or market level syndicated data. Incumbent and Mature brands use these analyses in their retailer pitches.

QUANTITATIVE ELEMENTS

- | | |
|---|---|
|  Size of Market/
TAM |  Promotional Plan |
|  Growth of Market/
Category |  Quantified
Opportunity Gap |
|  Brand vs Category |  Demographic
Data |
|  Brand vs Brand or
Item vs Item |  Contribution to
Growth/Decline |
|  Velocity Metrics |  Pricing Analysis |
|  White Space |  Velocity Quintiles |

Retailer Pitches for **Incumbent Brands**



INCUMBENT BRANDS

Encourage retailers to **shift space** **from the competition**

Incumbent brands are familiar with the struggle of getting into the customer's basket. Brands at this level are monitoring their competitors' pricing, promotion and marketing strategies. They are adjusting trade spend (usually a brand's biggest expense) to optimize their lift % and drive trial to their brand and away from other brands.

The Fight for Space

ANALYSIS TEMPLATES

Price

Promotion

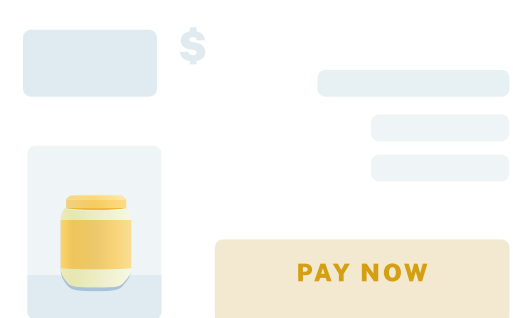
Trade

Marketing

Trade Promotion Tools



CHECKOUT



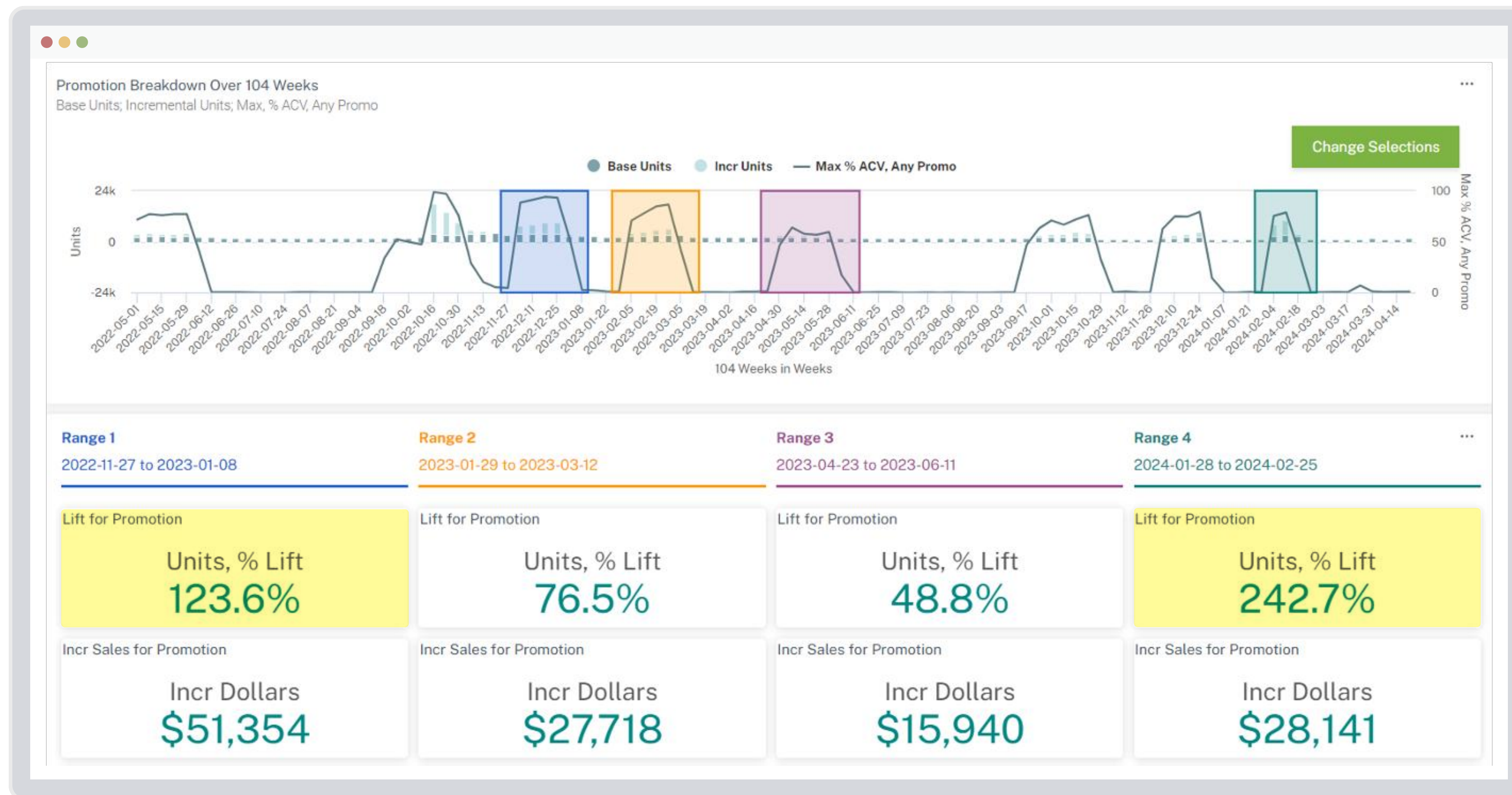
If you're creating a promotional plan for a retailer and you have access to their data, use it to make smart decisions with your trade spend.

Analyze which brands are currently positive in sales and velocity growth.

Review their promotions over the past year – how many did they do, how deep was the discount, how widely was it executed, and most importantly – what was the lift?

Learn from their past strategy – did a short and deep discount drive better lift, or did a moderate and multiple week promotion move more units?

Cut 'em off at the pass! A great time to go on sale is right before your competitor. Assuming they run the same playbook this year, when should you execute your promotions?



30% OFF, 8 WEEKS
100% OF STORES

20% OFF, 8 WEEKS
80% OF STORES

10% OFF, 8 WEEKS
50% OF STORES

50% OFF, 4 WEEKS
100% OF STORES



Look at the "Lift for Promotion" for each range. If this was your competition, the first and fourth promotions are worth replicating for your brand—perhaps at an earlier time than your competition.

Retailer Pitches for **Mature Brands**



MATURE BRANDS

Maintain Top Brand Position or **prove you deserve to be Top Brand**

Mature brands are defending their space by using pricing, velocity, or new item introductions to maintain or gain market share. Due to their longevity on the shelf, these brands often have longstanding relationships with the buyers/category managers, and they use data to build the case for additional SKUs.

When retailers trim or optimize their sets, they often look at item velocity to make informed decisions. One method of analyzing performance is called Velocity Quintiles.

Continued Innovation

ANALYSIS TEMPLATES

Space to Sales

Velocity Quintiles

Assortment Suggestions

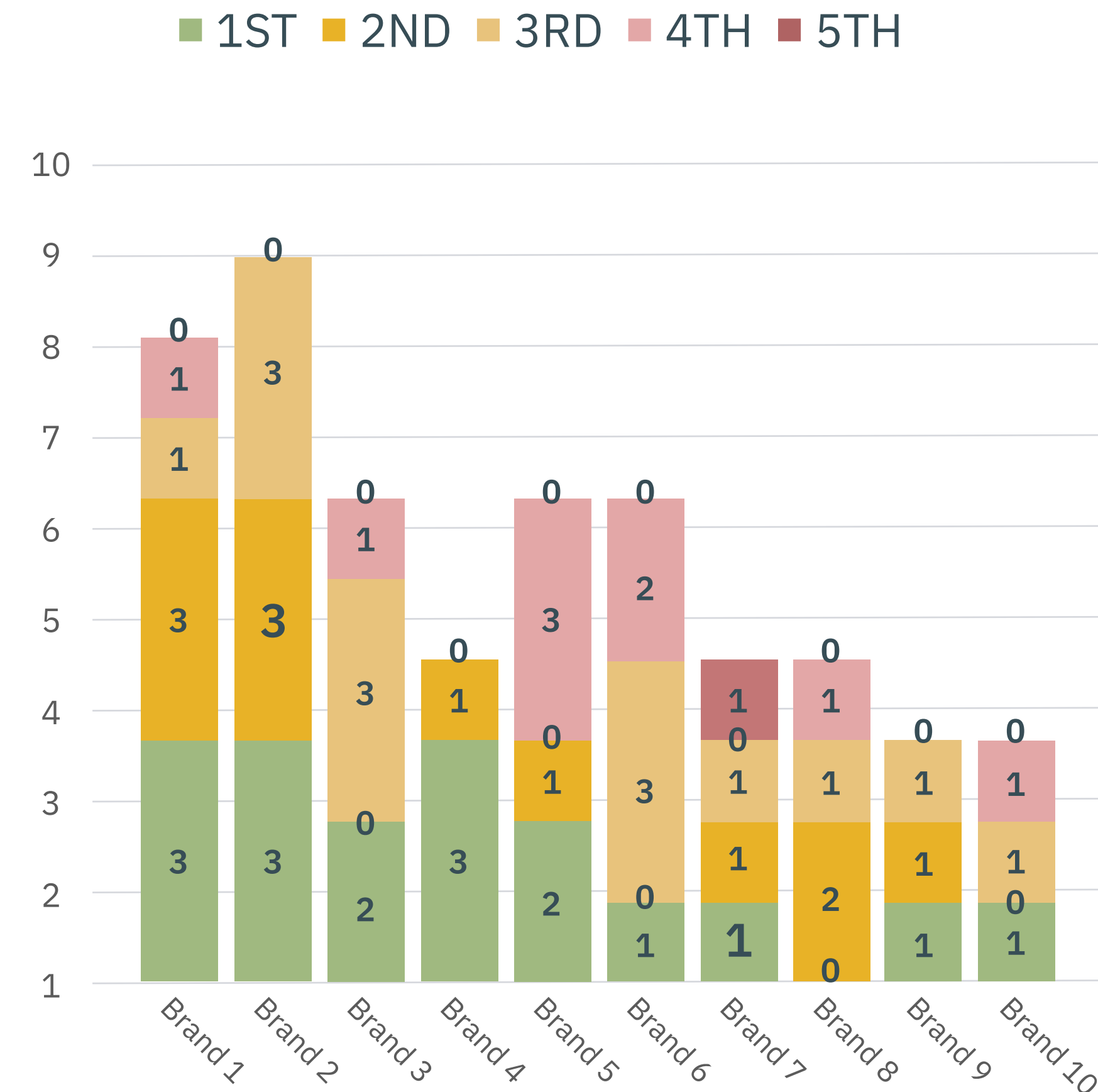


Velocity Quintiles may sound complex but it is simply a ranked and graded list. A retailer takes all of the items sold in a set and ranks them on their velocity. The list is then broken into “quintiles” or five equal gradations:

1ST QUINTILE	Top Performers
2ND–3RD QUINTILES	Middle Performers
4TH–5TH QUINTILES	Bottom Performers

Items in the bottom/red tier are ripe for replacement. Mature brands understand this can suggest that their newly developed items be swapped in for the low performers, often suggesting a list of deletes and justification in their retailer pitch.

**# OF UPCS BY VELOCITY QUINTILE
TOP 10 BRANDS**



Things to **Remember**

Show product-market fit. How will your products appeal to this retailer's customers?

Make sure your value proposition is clear – it should be the hero of your story.

Retailers say “no” more often than “yes”.

Retailers want the right product at the right time. Your product might be innovative, but it could be perceived as “too early” or even “too late”.

Things to **Remember** (*cont.*)

Try to discover which way the category is performing at the retailer. If it's increasing, that's great - does your product align with the other types of brands or items that are pulling in this growth? How is your product slightly different or better? Make it the hero of the story. If the category is flat or in decline, weave the narrative that your product will help turn things around. Point out how it's different from what is dragging down the category and how customers will be attracted to it.

Working with retailers is about building intimate relationships. You'll get to know the store manager names and build long-standing relationships, especially in the beginning. Remember to take care of these relationships even as you grow and expand into different markets.

Partner with SPINS to **Accelerate Your Brand Growth**

The SPINS Liftoff Bundle is designed to equip brands with insights and resources to succeed in a highly competitive market. We bring 25 years of experience as a proven growth partner to develop data-driven retail strategies and put them into action.

Brands that work with SPINS **grow 22% faster** on average than those that don't.

- Optimize performance & accelerate velocity at key retailers.

- Grow market share & innovate across categories.

- Benchmark against competitors & create better sell stories for new distribution.

To learn how SPINS can drive success for your business, email growth@spins.com or visit www.spins.com/liftoff.

Small Business **Liftoff Bundle**

