

MAR 4933 RETAIL TEAM PROJECT SPRING 2009

This course is designed to provide students with an opportunity to practice making strategic decisions based on market research through hands-on experience in approaching real retail problems and coming up with solutions that will be used by sponsoring retail client. By working closely with the retail client, students gain practical insight into actual retail business operations while performing problem identification, exploring opportunities, collecting data and developing strategy.

This year's retail client is Sweetbay Supermarket. **Sweetbay Supermarket** is a chain of supermarkets located entirely in Florida. As of July 2008, there were 107 Sweetbay stores in operation. The company is headquartered in Tampa, Fla., and is a part of the Delhaize Group (Belgium-based). In January '04, Sweetbay Supermarket concept is created its core markets on the West Coast of Florida by converting from Kash n' Karry, which was suffered from slumping sales growth.

The client company provided overview of corporate/marketing strategies by hosting students and providing tours of selected stores in different customer clusters. Each team works on different retail issues of Sweetbay Supermarket as listed below. Student teams are responsible for designing and executing all phases of the project. Contacts from the retail client are provided to students.

To support research, three consulting firms (Retail Forward-TNS, NPT Group, and Kurt Salmon Associates) shared their market research reports related to grocery industry with students.

Project Team A: Sweetbay Supermarket– Strategy Development

The goal of project team A is to improve the prosperity of Sweetbay Supermarkets throughout Florida by identifying future possibilities for Sweetbay Supermarkets that will drive sustainable growth. The team focuses on analyzing the company's brand image, as the current image is weak, and is either associated with its predecessor, Kash N' Karry, or is thought of as being a specialty foods store, and therefore does not appeal to neither the lower class nor upper class members of society. The team will assess the current positioning of Sweetbay Supermarkets by conducting SWOT Analysis, conduct surveys utilizing shopper segments and their price perceptions, and provide final recommendations for Sweetbay to pursue based on data analysis.

Project Team B: Sweetbay – Deli Visual Merchandising

The project team B focuses on the deli section of Sweetbay. The goals of team B are to improve Deli performance by increasing sales and profits in the Gainesville Store and to

provide visual merchandising recommendations for the deli section as a whole. Based on observations and focus group interviews, the team B decided to increase the performance of sub-shop through visual communications and cross-merchandising because the sub shop, with its high profit margins, is a pivotal area that has the ability to garnish new sales quickly. The team B also explores the ways to improve visual merchandising aspects of Sweetbay deli selection as a whole as working with design consulting firm, the Exhibium Group-Global Retail Solutions.

Project Team C: Improving the Performance of Gainesville Sweetbay Supermarket

The goal of team C is to increase the amount of foot traffic that comes into the Gainesville Sweetbay store and the basket size. Based on observations, the team C focuses on implementing cross-merchandising techniques and improving the store's layout and displays to increase the amount of products that each customer purchases per visit to the store. Utilizing surveys comparing Publix and Sweetbay supermarkets, the team C will make final recommendations to improve the performance of Gainesville Sweetbay supermarket.