

GUIDE BOOK

A comprehensive customer decision support system
during the purchase of floor underlays at OBI

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OBI is one of the leaders in the construction products market in Europe. Its success is based not only on a comprehensive assortment, but above all on a good analysis of the customer's needs, anticipating them and ultimately facilitating the customer's difficult purchasing decisions.

The challenge from OBI was to direct the customer's attention so that when buying a floor, firstly, they knew that they should buy a floor underlay, and secondly - that they would not have problems with the selection of a specific product. In other words, how to make the customer aware of the need and facilitate their purchasing decision.



1. Defining and analysing the client's needs

Customer need

OBI is an international concern with 40 years of tradition. It manages over 600 stores in Europe. The company has been operating in Poland since 1998, and 59 stores located in 41 cities operate under the OBI brand.

The challenge of each store is to provide comprehensive service to its customers. At OBI, they focus not only on a wide range of products, but also on educating customers and showing them comprehensive solutions. Such initiatives translate not only into an increase in sales in individual product groups, but also a smaller number of complaints - the complete service is simply less problematic. Advantages only.

However...

...almost every sales group has a product the customer is partly or not aware of using. This is also the case in the flooring section where customers do not have sufficient awareness of a total solution. They just don't know what's in that solution, in other words - what to buy. And of course it's not the same as a floor covering.

The aim of our activities, as a manufacturer of floor underlays, was to create a distinctive own brand for the OBI network and to develop a logical and friendly communication system for the recipient, which would result in the purchase of a proper underlay.



2. Selecting solutions for the maximum fulfillment of needs

> The brand and customised set of products

The role of the brand and customer trust becomes more and more important. Customers are more likely to buy products whose values they identify and trust. The consumer wants to be sure that the product they choose will surely meet their expectations. The private label trend in DIY chains is developing for a reason - it turns out that consumers perceive these goods as good quality, but also attractive in terms of price due to the high purchasing power of the chain. They can expect that there is always a recognised producer behind such goods. The strength of the OBI brand automatically positions the product in a group of trusted, proven and recommended by a brand with an established market position.

At the stage of the preliminary analysis, we identified the needs of the potential client. We chose the parameters and features to be met by the product. Should it protect the floor against intensive use, work with underfloor heating or soundproof it? Is it supposed to be a universal or specialist product? How is it to be packed - both on the scale of individual rolls - their size, color, applied prints or branding, as well as the method of packaging the roll of the underlay. We have also developed logistic solutions.

Finally, we prepared a set of 4 customised products that met the diagnosed needs in terms of the assortment offered by us. The concept also included products from other suppliers that offered properties that complemented our offer.

> Communication system

Floors are bought emotionally. The customer selects its type, color, texture, material, imagines how the final effect will look like, whether it will be practical - the criteria are as different as the customers are different. Here, the advantage is usually the multitude of varieties and decors of floors, because the expectations of customers are very diverse.

Nevertheless, few customers are aware that a floor underlay should also be laid under the purchased cover. In this case, the multitude of choices without a clear key of elimination becomes the consumer's nuisance.

And if the customer does not know what to buy - either they do not buy at all or the only criterion is the price. And we all know that this is not always the best solution.

Therefore, the first element of the planned communication system was to make the client aware of the need. Where? In the supermarket, of course.

Racks with floor underlays are planned in the immediate vicinity of the floor coverings. Clear marking of this product as an integral part of the system is to make customers aware of the necessity of its use.

And here comes the most important thing: **how?**

The research shows that the customer above all appreciates the ease and speed with which he makes purchasing decisions. So we focused on "picture writing", i.e. pictograms, which firstly attract attention, and secondly - they convey faster and more information than traditional written messages.

We have analysed the decision-making process of customers, we have compared them with the characteristics of the products, and in this way a coherent, logical and, most importantly, simple system was created to help the customer choose the right product for their floor (floor underlay).

Now it was enough to transfer these steps into the concept of shelf management and a kind of a self-guiding communication system for the purchase of a floor underlay.

The applied colors and symbols smoothly and quickly lead the customer to a product that will not be visible after installation, but which will significantly improve the comfort of its use. The underlay acquires "identity" and proves to be an important element of the system.



Consistently and maintaining consistency, the entire communication concept was translated directly into the products - it was used on product labels, collective packaging, display systems and in all other communication elements.



3. Consultations and analysis of the activities

Simple? It seems to be simple, when having a solution in front of your eyes.

Yes, simple from the end recipient's point of view. Logical, quick, easy and understandable. Nevertheless, reaching such a solution is the basis of our know-how, but also a sequence of meetings, talks, specifying assumptions, detailing the possibilities. It is a process of communication with the client - openness of both parties, the ability to listen, draw conclusions and translate them into individual solutions.



4. The final results

If we want to work out something together, we will certainly succeed.
The system is so intuitive and simple that it is easy to modify and apply also in online shopping systems.
Success? For us, it is one of many cases. Good development of assumptions. Good communication.
Good product. We are good at this.

Schedule a call with us

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