



Wholesale Marketing Alliance, Inc.

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I'm a "Traditional" Retailer

I spent a majority of my career in retail. As a "Traditional" retailer, I don't ever remember selling a display to a customer! At least, I can't recall a time when I ever did.

In a "Traditional" retail store (like all college stores, for example)... the display Sku number wouldn't be on any of the products in the display and would further not be in my cash register system (hopefully a quality POS system). I would, however, need to be able to sell items (Sku's) that are in the display to my customers. If I had a bar-code cash register scan system (most stores have one, but not all... ma/pop stores and little college stores may not), I would physically enter the code or scan the bar-code that is on the product (Sku) in order to sell the product to my customer, thus tracking my sales by product Sku. If the product didn't come from the Mfg. (hopefully with a bar-coded label attached), I would have to internally produce and manually attach a label to the product or have a "look-up" cheat sheet, etc. at the register.

As a "Traditional" retailer, I would have in my back-office, a system able to produce a purchase order allowing me to buy the product I want to sell. If I bought a display from a Mfg. that contained "*can't buy the Sku's individually*", for example, I would use the display number only in order to purchase the said display from the Mfg. or a wholesaler. I would never use the same number found on the product in the display.

When the display arrived, I would have to check-in the display using my back-room system, and then I would have to turn around and enter into my cash register sales system the Sku# assigned to each product in any given display. If the Mfg. didn't provide a Sku number for each product in the display, I'd have to make one up for each (and be anything but pleased about it). If you had a number, even if the bar-coded number wasn't on the product, I'd likely produce a tag (bar-coded or not) using your assigned number, in order to enter a selling transaction code into my cash register system. I'd then put the display on the selling floor and sell the product in the display (not the display itself) to my walk-in customers. That's basically how it works!

So, to assist a "Traditional" retailer in this process, wholesalers attempt to provide them with the tools they need to buy the display in the first place, and then to help them sell the Sku's in the display to their retail customers by providing the data they need. Bottom line, what number(s) do retail customers and cashiers see when they walk up to the counter to buy your product? There should always be a "set" number on the actual product for sale and if at all possible that number should be a bar-coded label that is on the product in the display. That's how it works with the vast majority of the products sold to retailers by Mfgs./Wholesalers.

In short, WMA has only been asking Mfgs. for the code that is on, or assigned to, the Sku's in the display. If a Mfg doesn't have such a number and if the number isn't on the retail sales floor packaging (or product itself), there is a problem that the "Traditional" retailer has to deal with one way or another. Obtaining a unique Sku number and UPC for a display and a unique Sku number and UPC for "Traditional retail sales" products in said display is what we seek and what we ask Mfgs. to please provide.

Unfortunately, we seem to be singing to the wind!

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