



Ten years ago who would have ever believed that Nescafé coffee would have become such a significant product within the office products market? Who'd have thought that on every tender Nescafé Original 750g would appear, AND be a deal breaker?

That tin of coffee enables us to open the door that little touch wider to the consumer than ever before. Now warming to the idea that we don't just sell office products; the consumer can service all their day-to-day needs from one source. No multiple invoices from various suppliers, one delivery van arriving instead of several, no requirement to send staff out of the office in valuable working hours for a trip to the cash and carry or supermarket – all elements that will save his business time and money.

At present the consumer is aware that we sell tea, vacuums, toilet rolls and cash boxes but what about the all important other lines that he needs to keep his business running smoothly and safely? Packaging supplies, health and safety signage and kitchen equipment.

With less than 15% of FM market being serviced by the Office Products industry at present our opportunity is huge. How can we increase our average FM order and gain profitably?

For the consumer to take notice it's key that we recognise he has his eye on price of the key lines – Nescafé Coffee, Tetley Tea, Andrex Toilet Tissue to name a few. Deliver on price here and he'll be more confident you're the partner to work with. Outside of this small handful of products there is immense scope for extending the depth of range they buy at a far greater profitability level than the key lines.

# FM — THE REAL OPPORTUNITY

Jeanette Maillardet, merchandising manager for Spicers, gives us the big picture on the Facilities Management opportunity.

## HOW DO WE IDENTIFY AND TACKLE SOME OF THESE AREAS?

The general office products buyer within the company may not be solely responsible for purchasing. Ask your contact to share with you names and addresses of their health & safety officer, warehouse manager, MD's personal assistant; all people who are likely to make some element of decision about this type of product for use within their own area of the business. Send across relevant offers and information to these new contacts introducing you initially as the company's preferred Office Products company.

Next time you visit a customer make a trip to the washroom. Do all their tissue and hand towel dispensers match? Poor washroom facilities reflect on the staff and/or customer view of that company. By identifying a development area within their company and offering them a keenly priced washroom solution with co-ordinating dispensers you can easily capture their repeat business for the tissue consumables – the fastest growing margin rich area of FM.

There are frequent changes and additions to health and safety legislation that require businesses to adhere by implementing certain systems, displaying new signage and updating aging safety equipment. Business owners are keen to comply, as often the threat of hefty fines for non-compliance is enough to frighten people into actioning new legislation within their company.

Cross-sell opportunities are widespread throughout the category. For every tin of coffee/pack of tea purchased the consumer will inevitably need sugar, plastic spoons, milk jiggers, washing-up liquid. The order value will quickly

jump from £10–£15 to a much healthier £20–£25. When ordering a new office furniture suite the consumer is indicating they are conscious about improving their working environment. Suggest he completes the look with some artificial plants, a stylish fan and some motivational prints.

Creating awareness of your full range is so important. Why not try a sampling exercise on new, innovative beverage lines. Give the customer a one-off special offer price for purchasing off the

back of the campaign. Perhaps next time you send a mailer or catalogue use a page flag to draw the customer's attention to different ranges within the facilities management section or highlight where there is a special offer on their most frequently purchased products.

There's nothing too difficult, taxing or 'techy' about selling FM. With a little confidence and by making use of these few tips you'll be reaping the rewards of growing profitable FM sales in no time. ■



**“Having spent over 25 years selling FM/Hygiene related products, I am convinced that the continuing trend will be for large end-users to rationalise the number of specialist vendors. This swing towards a single source solution will create huge opportunities for office product suppliers to supply FM products and achieve higher margins without incurring significant additional delivery costs.”**

SHAUN CHATTERTON, MANAGING DIRECTOR,  
CPD:CLEANING AND PAPER DISPOSABLES

## Household bag market trends

- Convenience sells, meaning sales of easy bag closures, e.g. Tie Handle and Snap Seal are growing.
- Sales of cling film, food wraps and bags continue to grow as hygiene remains the key driver.
- Sales of garden refuse sacks and rubble sacks are on the increase, particularly during the autumn months.
- Dispenser boxes – bin liners in particular are a growth area and should be allocated extra space.

*Information supplied by Robinson Young.*