



Category Manager

Company: Private, family-owned, profitable Midwest retailer with annual revenues of almost half a billion dollars

Location: Metro Detroit

Reporting to: Director of Procurement

Salary: \$100k - \$125k plus bonus and benefits

Job Summary:

The Category Manager leads the effort related to driving competitive advantage across the commodity spend and effectively sourcing automotive aftermarket parts and/or supplies (MRO, office supplies, etc.) to support retail systems operations. Through use of in-depth knowledge of the commodity, the manager is able to cultivate key supplier and customer relationships, effectively develop and successfully execute a commodity strategy through internal and external collaboration, and coordinate the product forecasting and acquisition process to meet the client's corporate objectives. Efforts focus on having the right product from the right supplier in the right quantities at the right location at the right price! Ultimately, the manager's goal is to provide the ultimate retail experience for our consumers by providing excellent support to our internal customer base, supporting future growth opportunities, taking innovative approaches to the marketplace, and by ensuring a healthy bottom line for the client.

Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Lead strategic sourcing decisions through consensus building and using strategic sourcing models.
 - a. Development of the commodity category profile which includes a detailed spend and supply market analysis, aggregation of internal demand/needs, understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the supply base, and understanding current and future product trends & life cycles.
 - b. Collaboratively work with internal customers to identify the sourcing strategy which best aligns with the client's overall needs, generating the supplier portfolio of qualified suppliers, and by selecting the best RFx (or similar) execution strategy.

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- c. Interactively work with internal customers to negotiate and select qualified suppliers who will provide the best value to the client (Service, Quality, Price, Product Availability, Reliability, etc.) and quantifying the value for the client's constituents.
 - d. Integrate the suppliers and products into the client's system by creating the proper process for transition, forecast/stocking/replenishment, monitoring and making recommendations for pricing, managing supply situations, providing support to internal departments such as finance, AP, logistics, etc. Educates suppliers, peers, and other business partners on inventory management practices.
 - e. Devise and monitor performance indicators which promote high levels of supplier performance while developing, long term, strategic relationships with key suppliers. Incorporate improvements and/ or adjust the strategy to enhance the process and create a robust, stable sourcing plan.
2. Manage and implement proper collaborative, planning, forecast and replenishment (CPFR) strategies and practices encompassing seasonal changes, sales incentives, manage risk and current market trends while maintaining proper inventory levels across to service the client's network. Work in conjunction with the replenishment analyst to support the business needs and corporate objectives.
 3. Manage the product life cycle for the commodity by proactively identifying new emergent SKUs/products as well as eliminating products at the end of the life cycle.
 4. Manage new product introduction and product conversion projects, establishes new accounts, and onboard new suppliers and products, and manages communications between stores and suppliers through effective supplier and customer relationship management.
 5. Ensure data accuracy through maintenance of price information files, data cleansing, etc. for all products.
 6. Interface with other channels to provide current pricing of distressed stock for sale and ensure pricing is properly established to ensure maximum financial returns to the client
 7. Prepare and provides appropriate internal reporting and impact analysis to provide for effective decision making, monitor progress toward goals, and effectively manage the commodity(ies) throughout the client's System.
 8. Optimize the use of JDA and other internal systems to manage forecasting, inventory and replenishment efforts.
 9. Identify, lead, and participate in continuous purchasing and company-wide, cross-functional improvement projects to yield results.
 10. Other related duties as assigned.

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Experience & Skills:

1. Retail, commercial and/or automotive store-level experience, with strong knowledge of store operations, preferred.
2. Knowledge of the automotive aftermarket in parts and supplies needed to support an underbody retail operation, required.
3. Intermediate to expert user level in computer applications, including Microsoft Excel, Word, Access and Powerpoint.
4. Ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously and prioritize in accordance with the challenges of a rapidly changing environment.
5. Able to build and maintain constructive and effective relationships with a broad and diverse group of business partners and influence necessary change.
6. Advanced organizational, time management and communication skills (verbal, written and listening).
7. The ability to gather and interpret information and to develop, recommend and implement solutions.
8. Strong customer service focus – both internal and external.
9. Ability to take initiative and possess strong sense of urgency and intensity.
10. Bachelor's degree in supply chain management, business/finance, or 5 years related retail automotive aftermarket purchasing experience, required.

Working Conditions:

Work hours are typically 8-5, Mon-Fri, some overtime required. Open-concept office environment, with long periods of intense concentration, sitting, telephone and computer usage. Requires occasional travel to retail stores.

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