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MARKET BASKET ANALYSIS TO THE RESCUE OF RETAIL INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

Retail industry is moving with a great pace in the Indian market, it has to set parameters to identify and measure the performance of participants in the market. A retailer may group its customers based on purchases and can do various analyses to determine which different products should be merchandized together to improve sales and revenue. This analysis helps in deciding the store layout, product assortment, and promotional plans and cross selling opportunities. Market-basket analysis is an effective way to ascertain the relationship between products. It is an analysis made on customers purchasing behavior during same visit and single order. Data mining techniques are used to ascertain the combination of categories within a customer's "basket". Now-a-days, market basket analysis has been intensively used in many companies as a means to discover product associations and helps retailers in promotion strategy.

KEYWORDS

Market Basket Analysis (MBA), Financial pressures, Cross-product Promotions, Popular products, and Purchasing pattern

INTRODUCTION

Market basket analysis is a popular technique used by retailers to understand what products or services are commonly purchased together. Market basket analysis identifies customers purchasing habits. It provides insight into the combination of products within a customer's 'basket'. Ultimately, the purchasing insights provide the potential to create cross sell propositions, which product combinations are bought, when they are purchased; and in what sequence. The end result of the analysis should help companies to determine how to grow each customer's basket. This information will enable the retailer to understand the buyer's needs and rewrite the store's layout accordingly, develop cross-promotional programs, or even capture new buyers.

CONSUMER PREFERENCE

One of the main uses of market baskets is in analysis of consumer preference, which is important for theoretical microeconomics as well as general-purpose business marketing strategy. Standard microeconomics suggests that consumers select what to buy by theorizing about market baskets, and that because people seek certain market baskets over others based on their preferences, we can figure out consumer preferences based on which market baskets they purchase.

MARKET AFFINITY ANALYSIS

One type of affinity analysis, whereby data analysts and others use computers to find correlations in data, is market basket analysis. Market basket analysis is used in retail to try to understand the behavior of consumers, thereby using this information to benefit sales. For consumer analysts' purposes, market baskets are not representative cross-sections of available market goods (as they are for measuring inflation), but are highly specific market items that tend to be bought together. Retail websites like Amazon.com, for example, use market basket analysis to try to predict which other products (books, CDs, etc.) are similar to ones purchased and therefore likely to be bought by a consumer. Grocery companies use market basket analysis to try to determine which shoppers buy which products together, and seek to maximize profits using improved store layouts and cross-product promotions. Ultimately, the purchasing insights provide the potential to create cross sell propositions:

- Which product combinations are bought
- When they are purchased; and in
- What sequence

EMPOWERING THE RETAIL PLANNERS

Retailers need better tools to help the planners and the merchants. "Planning is one of the faster growing parts of the retail business. The intuition of the crusty old-school buyer is a myth because there is a lack of information. That's why planning came to be; there didn't used to be planners". A good planner asks, "How much should we buy, how are we going to display, and what is the lifecycle of this product. It takes a partnership between the retail planners and the merchants to determine. We can sell fast enough to cover carrying costs and will the initial markup provide sufficient margins to promote to sell. These high-value, high-risk decisions can be significantly improved with the customer insights provided by Market Basket Analysis (MBA).

ATTRACT MORE TRAFFIC INTO STORE

Retailers can better understand which products and offers will get more customers into the store by correlating MBA with foot traffic counts, then attachment rates, to understand what they purchased once you got them into the store. "The things you are giving away get them in, but

what do they buy when they come in? What is the 'attachment' to the loss-leader?" once the retailer knows what brought a customer into the store, they can use MBA to understand how to keep that customer coming back.

MORE PROFITABLE ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION

Retailers are using MBA to make advertising and promotions more predictable by understanding how buyers respond to different offers and communications vehicles. For example, MBA can help retailers avoid unnecessary discounts by understanding when and where discounts will make a difference to top line sales, knowing that a reduction in unnecessary markdowns will improve gross margins. Retailers also want to separate sales trends from the advertising effect to understand, "Is our promotion just shifting revenue around or really uplifting gross sales? How did sales change and is this meaningful or not.

TEST AND LEARN BY USING THE MARKET PLACE AS A LABORATORY

Some retailers described how they use MBA to determine the value of an incremental marketing event at a select "control group" of stores, and then run the analysis another "test group" of stores. For example, retailers described using MBA to determine how they can increase the average ticket value without having to spend more or sacrifice margin. They do this by separating the base sales trend from the "advertising effect" for the same time frame.

BETTER LOYALTY CARD PROMOTION

Market basket analysis allows retailers to characterize the buying behavior of customers over time, leveraging that knowledge for better understanding of their customer bases. Retailers use loyalty cards to capture customer lifecycle data so that they can analyze a customer's lifetime purchasing behavior, such as shopping frequency or shifts in categories.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Yen-Liang Chen, Kwei Tang Ren-Jie Shen and Ya-Han Hu- Market basket analysis (also known as association-rule mining) is a useful method of discovering customer purchasing patterns by extracting associations or co-occurrences from stores' transactional databases. Because the information obtained from the analysis can be used in forming marketing, sales, service, and operation strategies, it has drawn increased research interest. The existing methods, however, may fail to discover important purchasing patterns in a multi-store environment, because of an implicit assumption that products under consideration are on shelf all the time across all stores. In this paper, we propose a new method to overcome this weakness. Our empirical evaluation shows that the proposed method is computationally efficient, and that it has advantage over the traditional method when stores are diverse in size, product mix changes rapidly over time, and larger numbers of stores and periods are considered.

MÄuller-Hagedorn 1978 :- A market or shopping basket is representing the result of a specific consumer's decision making process on the choice or non-choice of product categories among the assortment ordered by a retail outlet during one and the same shopping trip. Retail managers are interested in better understanding the interdependency structure among categories purchased jointly by their customers for several reasons. Traditionally, insights into cross-category dependencies and corresponding marketing mix effects are of particular interest for optimizing the overall profitability of retail category management,

Market baskets arise from consumers' shopping trips and include items from multiple categories that are frequently chosen interdependently from each other. Explanatory models of multi category choice behaviour explicitly allow for such category purchase dependencies. They typically estimate own and across-category effects of marketing-mix variables on purchase incidences for a predefined set of product categories. Because of analytical restrictions, however, multicategory choice models can only handle a small number of categories. Hence, for large retail assortments, the issue emerges of how to determine the composition of shopping baskets with a meaningful selection of categories.

Manchanda et al. 1999; Song and Chintagunta 2003; Chen et al. 2005). However, most of the attempts towards this direction are restricted to fairly small selections of (sub-) categories. Naturally, today's large retail assortments not only make the consideration of complete category ranges prohibitive but also managerially inexpediently. Nevertheless, in most empirical applications both types and numbers of included categories seem to be rather guided by analytical viability than by sound managerial considerations. Hence, the question arises which categories to be included in models for predicting cross-category effects that adequately represent consumers multi-category decisions. More recently, numerous retailers have equipped members of their loyalty programs with bar-coded plastic cards and provided various incentives (such as discounts or check cashing privileges) to encourage their regular customers to present their membership cards at each purchase occasion (cf., e.g., Passingham 1998). Combined with modern point-of-sale (POS) scanning technologies, those retailers are nowadays collecting tremendous amounts of personally identifiable POS transaction data. Among other things, the latter are dissembling valuable behavioral information on cross-category purchase patterns of their prime customers.

JUSTIN on DECEMBER 13, 2006, Market Basket Analysis is a modeling technique based upon the theory that if you buy a certain group of items, you are more (or less) likely to buy another group of items. For example, if you are in an English pub and you buy a pint of beer and don't buy a bar meal, you are more likely to buy crisps (US. chips) at the same time than somebody who didn't buy beer. The set of items a customer buys is referred to as an item-set, and market basket analysis seeks to find relationships between purchases. Typically the relationship will be in the form of a rule: IF {beer, no bar meal} THEN {crisps}. The probability that a customer will buy beer without a bar meal (i.e. that the antecedent is true) is referred to as the support for the rule. The conditional probability that a customer will purchase crisps is referred to as the confidence. The algorithms for performing market basket analysis are fairly straightforward. The complexities mainly arise in exploiting taxonomies, avoiding combinatorial explosions (a supermarket may stock 10,000 or more line items), and dealing with the large amounts of transaction data that may be available.

Prof. Dr Reinhold Decker: This paper demonstrates the application of a new growing neural network for market basket analysis. The algorithm to be introduced is an extension of the recently published 'grow when required network' and it is tailored in particular to the processing of large amounts of point of sale scanner data. Two of its most remarkable features are its parsimony regarding the number of parameters to be preset by the user and its considerable autonomy with respect to the network creation process. The simplicity of its implementation and its great flexibility make this algorithm an easy-to-use tool for exploratory data analysis in retailing, marketing and consumer research. The application of the algorithm is demonstrated by means of point of sale scanner data provided by two retail chains.

Asemin Boztuğ and Thomas Reutterer Market baskets arise from consumers' shopping trips and include items from multiple categories that are frequently chosen interdependently from each other. Explanatory models of multicategory choice behaviour explicitly allow for such category purchase dependencies. They typically estimate own and across-category effects of marketing-mix variables on purchase incidences for a predefined set of product categories. Because of analytical restrictions, however, multicategory choice models can only handle a small

number of categories. Hence, for large retail assortments, the issue emerges of how to determine the composition of shopping baskets with a meaningful selection of categories.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The age old problem is stocking too much of the wrong merchandise and not enough of the right. The right merchandise moves and the wrong stuff sit until it is marked down. The buyer's life is further complicated when he or she cannot obtain sufficient quantities of popular products, or when pressured by suppliers to buy uncomfortably large quantities of less popular products. These competitive and financial pressures motivate retailers to seek better tools that will improve their ability to manage through these situations.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To study the theoretical aspects and the concepts of market basket analysis.
2. To know the customer purchasing pattern and their behavior.
3. To identify the satisfaction level of retail organizations towards the benefits of market basket analysis.
4. To offer suggestions based on the results of the study.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The datum was collected from the primary and secondary sources i.e. from Books, Magazines, and Journals and from Internet. For the study a sample of 110 respondents had been selected to collect data in Coimbatore district with the help of questionnaire. The statistical tool used for the data analysis in the study is Simple Percentage, Chi-square Analysis, and Rank Analysis. The period of the study is August to October 2010.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Table: 1 Chi-square analysis for income level of customers and the schemes provided by the retailer

Schemes	Discount	Seasonal sales	Point card	Scratch card	Others	Total
5000 - 10000	8	4	6	5	3	26
10001 - 20000	3	16	8	4	3	34
20001 - 30000	2	14	6	2	2	26
30000 and above	1	6	8	7	2	24
total	14	40	28	18	10	110

Table: 2 Chi-square analysis for gender and impulse purchase decision

Impulse purchase	Yes	No	Total
Male	67	27	94
Female	6	10	16
Total	73	37	110

Table: 3 Rank correlations

Rank correlation	Rank
Selection	2
Display	3
Advertisement	4
Quality	5
Price	1

RESULT

Chi-square	12.59
Chi-square	3.841
Rank correlation	0.031

FINDINGS

1. Table 1 shows that chi-square has been taken for the income level of the customers and schemes provided by the retailer. Hence the calculated value is greater than the table value null hypothesis is rejected. So, there is a significant relationship between the income level and schemes provided by the retailer.
2. Table 2 shows that chi-square has been taken for the gender and impulse purchase decision. Hence the calculated value is greater than the table value null hypothesis is rejected. So, there is a significant relationship between the gender and impulse purchase decision.
3. Table 3 shows that rank analysis has been taken for the factors which made them to purchase under market basket analysis.

SUGGESTIONS

1. The concept of Market Basket Analysis was not familiar in most of the retail organizations. So, it should be properly intimated to the retail organizations to increase sales and profits.
2. The concept of Market Basket Analysis should be applied in order to identify the product associations and customer-purchasing patterns.
3. The concept of Market Basket Analysis should be applied in retail organizations, so that it would help the retailers in implementing effective sales promotional strategy.
4. Retailers should know the type of customers, when and at what time the products are bought, etc in order to attain more sales through MBA.

CONCLUSION

Progressive retailers see Market Basket Analysis (MBA) as a strategic tool that will help them increase their success and provide them with the edge that they need. By using market basket analysis, leading retailers are increasing their competitiveness by focusing directly on the consumer's buying habits, and then using that knowledge to quickly tailor their operations to the changing needs of their customers and trade areas. Additionally, leading retailers are beginning to equip buyers, merchandisers, planners, and store managers with powerful and convenient market basket analysis tools, improving success across the board

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