The Advertising Sales Flyer as a promotion tool in grocery retail stores, and its effects on in-store consumer behaviour

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Abstract

Title:	The ASF as a promotion tool in grocery retail stores, and its effects on consumer in-store behavior.
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Key words:	Advertising Sales Flyer, Retail promotion, In-store consumer behavior, Consumer routes, Retail Strategy
Thesis purpose:	The purpose of this study was to analyse if there are in-store consumer behaviour differences between the consumers that use ASF and the consumers that not use ASF in store. More precisely this study had two objectives. The first objective was to create a conceptual model depicting the various behavioural effects that the use of ASF may result in. These variables were tested empirically in order to analyze if the use of ASF influence in-store consumer behaviour. The second objective was to analyze if there are differences in the routes taken by the consumers in store, in relation to whether the consumers use the ASF or not.
Methodology:	This thesis is based on a deductive approach where theory is used as foundation to formulate hypotheses.
Theoretical Perspective:	Theories concerning retail promotion, in-store consumer behavior, search activity and shopping routes have primarily been used.
Empirical data:	We have applied a quantitative case study (ICA, Supermarket, Linero). This is employed through use of structured observations in order to answer our research purpose.
Conclusions:	Our conclusions are that the consumers that use ASF in-store do not have different in-store consumer behavior compared to the customers that do not use ASF. Our conclusions provide insight for both retailers and manufacturers, and our findings do not validate the ASF as an effective in-store retail promotion tool.

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"In the struggle for survival, the fittest win out at the expense of their rivals because they succeed in adapting themselves best to their environment"

Charles Darwin

We are also grateful for the warm welcome and cooperation from Per Ola Wittzell and his wife at ICA Supermarket, Linero.

Last but not least, we would like to express our appreciations to our families for their indispensable support.

To Marte.

To Stine.

Lund May 2006

Britt Richardsen and Arnt Ove Dalebø

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Chapter 1 Introduction

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This chapter presents a concise introduction of this study, followed by a discussion of the problem area. Finally, the purpose of this thesis is presented.

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1.0 Introduction

Although the food retail market has continued to grow steadily from the 1990's, the number of retail outlets forced out of business has also increased (Peattie, 1998). Swedish retailing, given the food sector has a very concentrated structure (Elg and Johansson, 1997). This market is dominated by three large players, between them, ICA, Coop and Axfood share 87.8% of the market (Dagligvaruleventörers Forbund, 2006). ICA for example is made of a federation of food retailers with more than 1417 stores and enjoys a market share of 49,4% at the wholesaler level (ICA, 2006). There have also been several new threats on the Swedish retail market since Sweden became member of the European Union. In 2003, the heavy discounter, Lidl, entered the Swedish market and thus increased competition in food sales (Invest in Sweden Agency, 2006). In order to remain competitive, the food retailer needs to make full use of all the tools within the marketing management toolkit (Peattie, 1998). Within this toolkit, sales promotions have one of the strongest impacts on short-term consumption behaviour, and constitute an important element of retailer promotion activities (Ibid).

1.1 Sales promotion and the ASF

Within the category of sales promotion, advertisement sales flyer (ASF) is one of the most important media for featuring retail and manufacturer promotions (Arnold et al, 2001). Some retailers position themselves on the basis of "Low Prices, Everyday" across a wide assortment of product categories, while others offer temporarily deep discounts in a smaller group of categories. The former strategy is known as the "EDLP" and the latter as HiLo retail strategy (Bell and Lattin, 1998). The latter strategy tends to make extensive use of store flyers to communicate promotional offers to the consumers (Gjibrechts, Campo and Goosens, 2003). For these retailers, ASF represent about half of the retailer promotional budget (Ibid). Consequently these retailers are dependent on several effects linked to the ASF in order to increase the profitability.

In order to get a better understanding of the ASF as a promotion tool, the AIDA model is applied in the following discussion. This is one of the most important models of consumer decision-making, used by both advertisers and marketers. The AIDA model is fairly simple, which partly explains its longevity and widespread use, but are at the same time useful in order to analyse and highlight that a promotion tool as the ASF have different fields of operations. According to AIDA, ASF as a promotion tool are creating awareness, interest, desire and action among consumers towards a specific price deal or a product which can be found in the promotion. The ASF and its effects can be researched from two different perspectives:

- ASF distributed home to the consumers
- ASF as a in-store promotion tool

The ASF distributed home to the consumers are aiming to influence their purchase decisions, by firstly creating awareness both about the retailer, the retailer brand, products promoted,

where and when it is available. Secondly, the consumers must be stimulated to take some interest in the products, the price specials and the benefits these can provide. How can this satisfy the needs and wants of the consumers? At this stage the consumers develop a reaction towards the retailer, the products displayed and the prices, which usually either are favourable or unfavourable. If the response is favourable and the advertisement is successful in awakening interest, it creates a desire to purchase. The challenge, however, is that the consumer are displayed to a numerous different ASF every week. In Sweden, 3.607.847 out of 4.406.690 households receive unaddressed printed advertisement, which means that 18% of the households have neglected and signed up in order to stop this form for advertisement (Statistiska centralbyrån, 2006). In 2002, 54 kilos of unaddressed advertisements was received by the every villa, where the amount was 67 kilos for apartments. A natural question to ask is if such advertisement has reached a saturation point? This can also be strengthen by the fact that the number of households neglecting unaddressed advertisement is an increasing tendency (ibid).

Given that consumers read ASF at home and a desire to purchase is created, the consumers are still far from the actual purchase, or the "action" element according to AIDA. It seems clear that ASF distributed home to the customers are of large importance in retail promotion strategy, and the figures indicate that ASF have high circulation between actors in the retail sector. However, understanding the effects of ASF used by consumers in store, and when the consumers consequently are closer to the purchasing act, is a field we have found to be under researched and unknown.

1.2 ASF and its position as a retail promotion tool

ICA Supermarket, Linero is one example which can illustrate the position ASF have among retailers. This particular store spend 0.7 % of the total sales on the weekly distributed ASF, which in turn represent 100% of the total promotion budget and in total 1.560.00 SEK (Wittzell, 2006). Every week, approximately 1500 copies of the ASF are distributed home to the consumers while 300 copies of the ASF are placed in-store (Wittzell, 2006). Our knowledge bring to front that there are differences related to which ICA format the store represent, when it comes to the costs of this particular promotion tool. The larger formats as ICA Maxi and ICA Kvantum has, in comparison, an income of about 1% of its total sales on producing and distributing the ASF. This indicates that there are large internally differences within ICA. The fact that ASF represent a marketing cost for some retailers and an income for others can indicate that there also may be differences in objectives and motivation for focusing on the ASF. This makes it even more compelling for further research. If producing and distributing the ASF represents an income in itself for the retailer, the potentially effects generated by ASF may not be the core focus. On the other hand, retailers that invest and spend a high percentage, and even the entire promotion budget on this promotion technique are dependent on getting return on the investment. The fact that ICA have no centrally guidelines of how the ASF should be displayed in the ICA stores, can firstly be questioned based on research findings that indicate that ASF have a positive effect on sales. Secondly, this gives an indication that ASF as an in-store promotion tool is present, but the retailers are not certain on how to make use of this promotion tool. Due to this, we make an implicit assumption that there is a need of understanding the effects, both positive and potential negative effects of this promotion tool have on in-store consumer behavior. How is it possible to rely 100% on a promotional tool as the ASF without knowing if it creates desirable effects to the retailer? The fact that we have found the ASF placed out of sight for the consumers, strengthen our assumption that the ASF have a relatively minor focus in-store. The latter, can further be questioned based on previous research findings that indicate that ASF are more

effective if the customers are exposed for the advertisement in close proximity to the actual shopping (Corjstens and Corjstens, 1995).

1.3 In-store consumer behavior

The following definition of in-store consumer behaviour will be prevailing when we refer to this concept throughout the study:

" the individual consumers purchasing patterns as purchase of promoted and non promoted products, time spent in different store areas, search activities and the route that will be followed throughout the store."

There is a large body of research on consumer response to sales promotion and how this works in a retail environment and its influence on store traffic and sales (Blattberg and Fox, 1995, Mulhern and Padgett, 1995, Urbany et al., 2000, Burton, Lichtenstein and Netemeyer, 1999). Further, most marketers have well established schema for shopper travel behavior within a supermarket, where the typical customer is assumed to travel up and down the aisles of the store, stopping at various category locations and deliberating about the consideration set, choosing the best option and then continuing in a similar manner until the route is completed (Larson, Bradlow and Fader, 2005). However, even though there exists some research in supermarkets shopping routes, little research has been undertaken to understand the actual travel route within a supermarket when the consumer are influenced by a promotion tool as the ASF (Ibid). Will those who are influenced by ASF have different routes from those who are not influenced by ASF? Will use of ASF result in other behavioral patterns such as increased consumers search activity and as a consequence spend more time in high-marginal sections? Do the ASF trigger the consumers to purchase promoted products and further influence them to also purchase non-promoted products?

Previous research also evidence that there are a positive correlation between time spent in store and number of products purchased (Gilbert and Jackaria, 2002). Given the time aspect; the importance of understanding if ASF result in that consumers spend more time in-store compared to those who do not, is self explanatory. If we further can divide the total time spent by the consumers in store into the different store areas, we are getting closer to a more holistic picture of the effects ASF have on in-store consumer behavior. Another consumer pattern which is important to investigate is if the ASF result in that the consumers take more frequent tours off the racetrack. In addition, do the consumers spend more time searching the aisles as a consequence of using the ASF?

We find it questionable, that ASF have such as strong position among retailers due to the fact that knowledge about the in-store effects of ASF are an under researched area. Will ASF influence the customers to enter into what the retailers define as high margin areas? Do the consumers only purchase the promoted products, which in some cases represent a pure loss for the retailer? Given the latter, ASF can potentially have negative consequences on the retailer profitability.

In general, understanding consumer behaviour is an essential prerequisite of successful retail marketing strategy and one of the most fundamental principles of in exerting influence on consumer patronage decision process (Tankred, 1999).

1.4 Research purpose

In general our purpose is to analyse if there are differences in in-store consumer behaviour between the consumers that use ASF and the consumers that not use ASF in store. More precisely our study has two objectives:

The first objective is to create a conceptual model depicting the various in-store behavioural effects that the use of ASF may result in. These variables will be tested empirically in order to analyze if use of ASF influence in-store consumer behaviour.

Second objective is to analyze if there are differences in the routes taken by the consumers in store, in relation to whether the consumers use the ASF or not.

Our study is focusing on use of ASF in-store and consequently not including the potential effects the ASF distributed home to the consumers may cause.

Chapter 2 Methodology

This section describe the general approach and design of the present study and what is required to fulfil the aim of the research purpose, as well as the relationship of the research purpose to the study's theory, perspective, research objects and analytical framework.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 General approach

In order to describe the relationship between theory and practice in the formulation of the research problem, the overall approach could be termed deductive, because the defined research problem are derived from a general discussion. A quantitative research strategy will be employed and the findings will be tested statistically. The problem discussion suggest that we have a theoretical understanding of sales promotion tools such as the ASF in general, but that we lack empirical knowledge about how this specific promotion tool influence in-store consumer behaviour as defined earlier.

As we are interested in in-store consumer behaviour from a marketing perspective, this means that we will emphasise consumer behavioural effects of the ASF. The core issue is to measure whether the consumers that use ASF will have different in-store behaviour compared to consumers that not use ASF in-store. We also explicit steer clear of those issues on how sales promotion works in terms of increased sales, store traffic and repurchasing. This due to that there already exist a huge body of research in these issues (Blattberg and Fox, 1995, Mulhern and Padgett, 1995, Urbany et al., 2000, Burton, Lichtenstein and Netemeyer, 1999) Instead, we are interested in finding out to what extent ASF influence in-store consumer behaviour as discussed in the research problem. We are interested in this because, among other things, we want to know if the consumers who are influenced by ASF spend more time in store, if they spend more time in high marginal sections, if it results in an increased search activity and if they change their routes. We also want to establish if the ASF can result in that the consumers have opportunistic behaviour and consequently purchase only the promoted products.

2.2 Making the model

We have used the multiple-aspect in the relating of the theoretical background to the constructed model. That is to say, we have tried not to rely exclusively on one source in either theory section, since the theoretical conclusions could then be compromised; instead the opinions of several researchers were related. Therefore, the various theories chosen to support the constructed model are extracted from several literatures and fragmented research studies published in different retail journals. It is very important to keep in mind that this theoretical perspective does not allow us to describe all marketing-related aspects of ASF.

Theories and frameworks that centre on sales promotion and consumer behaviour were many. This means that we searched through an extensive amount of theory before we found the previous research that could work as a framework, and to produce more width and depth to this study. We decided to make a mind-map of the variables in various retailing, consumer behaviour and promotion literatures that are considered to be vital in sales promotion. These variables were then narrowed down to those factors that we deem to be essential in exploring in-store consumer behavioural effects of ASF. The mind-map enabled us to identify the

relevant variables, and by this establish which behaviour to code in our observation scheme when observing (Attachment 1). In such, the model is aimed to provide a framework for consumer behaviour-relevant insights when the consumer is exposed to ASF. For example, if the use of ASF results in increased time in-store, this may influence, among other things, search activity and in the end be a positive result for the retailer. The following table shows the theoretical approach taken in this study.

Table 1: Previous studies

Studies	Studies analyzing	Impact on
Titus and Everett (1995)	Consumer search process	How consumers physically search trough retail settings
Burton, Lichtenstein and Netemeyer (1999)	Exposure to ASF	Sales
Corstjens and Corstjens (1995)	Retail promotion	Consumer behavior
Borges, Cliquet and Fady (2005)	Consumer shopping routes	Explainatory
Gjbrechts, Campo and Goosens (2003)	Store Flyers	Store traffic and sales

2. 3 Case study method

Yin (1984) distinguishes three types of cases; the critical case, the unique case, and the revelatory case. As we have clearly specified hypothesis, and a case is chosen on the ground that it will allow us a better understanding of the circumstances in which the hypothesis will and will not hold this is a critical case (Bryman and Bell, 2003). When specifying the research problem, we concluded that in order to establish to what extent the use of ASF will influence in-store consumer behaviour; we need to empirically measure consumer behaviour effects.

2.3.1 Empirical data

We will in the following discuss the empirical data needed to fulfill our research problem. Further, relevant concepts will be depicted and recording variables will be defined.

2.3.1.1 High marginal areas
When we refer to high marginal areas within the retail store, the following definition is prevailing throughout this study:

"areas where the products found there represent on average a higher profit margin for the retailer and consequently important that the customers are visiting and making purchases".

Further, these areas are complementary in order for the consumers to compose different meals, which mean that in order to put together a breakfast, lunch or a dinner, these areas have to be visited.

In dialog with the ICA manager (Wittzell, 2006), the high marginal areas for the ICA Supermarket Linero are identified and presented in following model:

Model 1: High margin areas in ICA Supermarket Linero
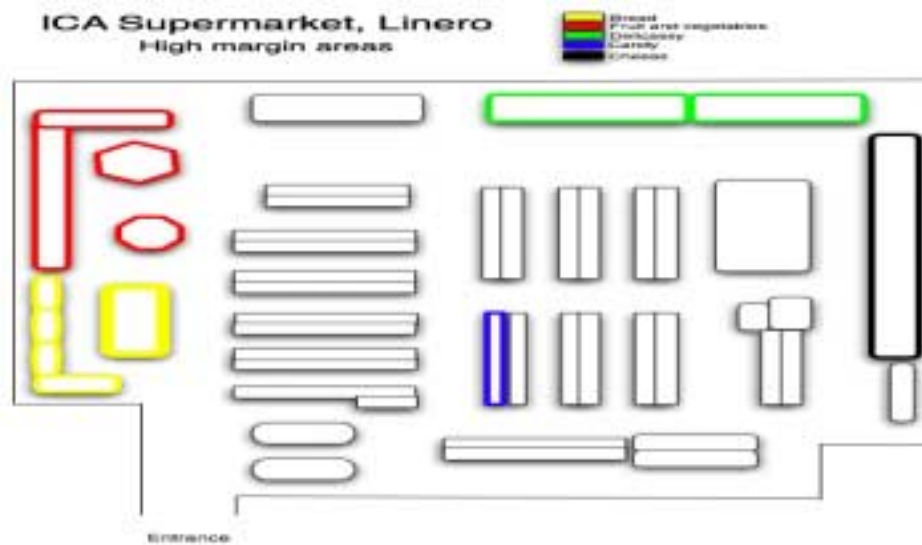
2.3.1.2 Time, frequency, search activity and opportunistic behaviour
To answer the questions if consumers that use ASF will spend more time in store; if they will have increased search activity; if they spend more time and higher frequency in high marginal areas and if they have higher frequency off race track, we needed to measure the variables as defined below:

Total time in store is defined as the time from the consumers enter the store until they pay the cashier minus time spent in check out line.

Time spent in the checkout line is defined as the time from the consumer get in the checkout line until the consumer has paid the cashier.
The store traffic influence the time consumers spend in the queue, and the time in check out line was therefore subtracted. The reason for this is that one consumer can spend 5 minutes in the check out line while another can spend 30 seconds. If this time would not have been subtracted it would have caused misalignment in data recorded regarding our search activity variables.

Increased search activity is defined as total time in store minus time in high marginal areas.
Consequently the remaining time is spent on racetrack and in the aisles searching.

Time in high margin areas are defined from the consumer enter the high margin area, until they exit. In addition, be recorded the consumers need to have their head and eyes need focused towards the shelving.
If consumers only pass this area it will not be recorded, only the route will be plotted.

Opportunistic behaviour is defined as when the consumer only purchases promoted products displayed in ASF.

2.3.1.3 Promoted and non promoted products
The ASF which are applicable for week 17, when the observations were conducted, consist of 4 pages and a total of 65 different promoted products. Out of these 65 promoted products, a majority of 40 products are within categories which are located in the defined high marginal

areas (Model 1). We have selectively chosen 18 of these promoted products to be a part of our observation scheme, shown in the table below.

Table 2:

High Margin Areas:		Promoted products
	A1	Pågen Rasker
Bread	A2	Skanör Grove
	A3	Kulla Grove
	B1	Lettuse
Fruit/Vegetables	B2	Ruccola
	B3	Lettuse Mix
	B4	Tomatoes
	C1	Entrekôte
Delicassy	C2	Kassler
	C3	Cognacs Medwurst
Candy	D1	Chocladkakor
	D2	Riesen
	E1	Hollansk Gouda
	E2	Brännvins ost
Cheese	E3	Halloumi
	E4	Gräddädel
	E5	Hushollsost
	E6	Riven Ost

The limitation in products selected is done because we wanted a clear overview of promoted products to be recorded. Moreover, we wanted to secure that all high marginal areas were represented.

After conducting the observations we identified a weakness in the selection of promoted products. This is due to that we included tomatoes, which can be classified as a everyday product, and therefore often bought on a regular basis. This may influence our results when we measure the effects of the ASF, because it is hard to conclude if this product was bought as a consequence of the ASF. We solved this problem by presenting the results both with and without tomatoes.

To answer the question if ASF trigger consumers to purchase promoted products we needed to measure the number of promoted products purchased from the group that used ASF. We also were interested in both the total number of promoted and non promoted products purchased by the respondents that used the ASF. This measurement is firstly needed to establish the effects ASF have on purchases, and secondly to answer the question if ASF result in opportunistic behaviour. To measure opportunistic behaviour we needed to compare the number of promoted products to the number of non-promoted products purchased by the respondents that used ASF. In order to find differences between the respondents that used ASF and the control group which not used ASF, the purchases made by the latter group also had to be recorded. The following definitions were used when measuring these variables:

A promoted product is defined as a product that is displayed in ASF and located in the high margin areas.

A non-promoted product is defined as a product not displayed in the ASF, but located in the high marginal areas.

To purchase promoted or non promoted goods is defined as that the consumers must put the products in their basket, bring it to the check out line and pay to the cashier.

2.3.1.4 Routes

To answer the question if the ASF will result in that the consumers will have a different route throughout the store, we used the following definitions (Borges, Cliquet and Fady, 2005):

Racerack: *"The main thoroughfare on the outside edge of the aisles is so named because travel in these sections tends to average to be faster than travel in other zones. This is likely due to the higher amount of travel, but not necessarily shopping that occurs here versus other areas"*

The Aisles: *"This section is important because most people make the implicit assumption that majority of shopping occurs there"*

The Produce section: *"This is of obvious importance to any grocery store, both in the minds of the consumer and in the financial statement of the store"*

The Check out area: *"is necessarily part of any shopping path"*

We are interested in measuring the frequency taken off racetrack by the respondents. In order to be able to do this, the drawing from the movements off all the respondents was used. We counted the number of times that the individual respondents went off racetrack. As an example, if one respondent came into the store, followed the racetrack until high margin area B, then entered this area and further went back to the racetrack, this was recorded as one tour off racetrack.

We plotted the route that each respondent followed into the recording scheme that we had drawn of the exact store layout (Attachment 1). By doing this we were able to identify the in store movements of all individual respondent, and by this, a picture of the overall store traffic. However, by manually drawing the consumers' routes into observation schemes it were impossible to plot the exact movements made by the respondents. This means that in our schemes we plotted when the respondents went between two aisles, but if they went back and forth between these aisles, this would not be captured in our observation scheme. There exists other and better ways of performing research on consumer movements and routes in a retail environment. For example, Larson, Bradlow and Fader (2005) presented the path taken by consumers in a grocery store by using RFID (radio frequency identification) tags located at their shopping carts. This way would have resulted in that a more accurate route would have been captured. However, due to limited time and resources this was not an option for us. We solved this by defining 19 different checkpoints (A-T) throughout the store which are found in the following model:

Model 2:

ICA Supermarket, Linero
Store areas and checkpoints
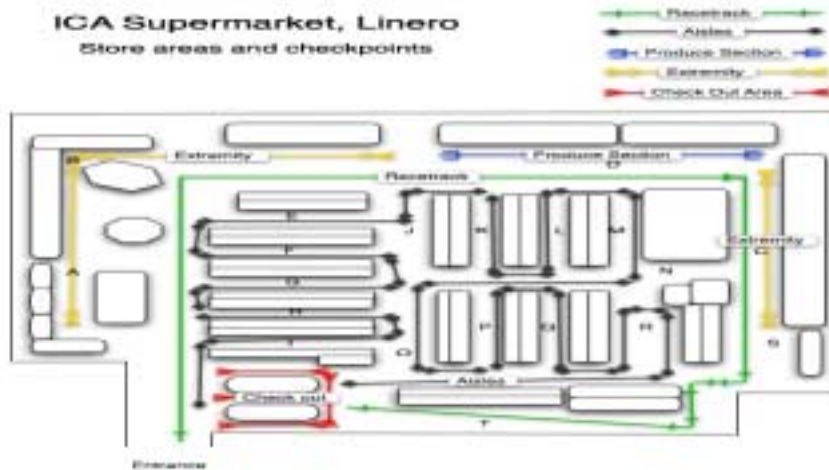
After drawing the movements of all individual respondents into the scheme during the observations in store, we used a computer drawing program and transferred this into an electronic document. Further, the computer program was used to count the number of respondents that passed the different checkpoints. There are possibilities that by handling the data twice, that some of the movements depicted not give an accurate picture of the actual movements that took place in store. The reason for having the checkpoints is to be able to get a statistically validation on if the routes differed from the groups that use ASF and those who not. Consequently:

Extremity, checkpoint A+B+C
Produce section, checkpoint D
Aisles, checkpoint E+F+G+H+I+J+K+L+M+N+O+P+Q+R
Racetrack, checkpoint T+S+C

It is important to outline that by using checkpoints, there exists a weakness, due to that the checkpoint are not visited in a sequential order. The ideal would have been if we could compare continuous routes taken from entrance area to the check out, between the respondents. However, the drawings of the routes are used as a tool to overcome this weakness.

2.3.1.5 Home distributed ASF
As discussed earlier, ASF are in addition to being available in-store, distributed to the consumers' homes. When designing this study we were discussing taking the effects of home-distributed ASF into consideration. We were considering to ask the respondents after we had observed them if they had read ASF at home. However, ASF is applicable for one week at the time and is only one out of many flyers that the respondents receive in their mail box. Would it be possible for them to remember if they had read this particular one? They maybe could remember having read some flyers, without knowing which one, and would reply yes to our question. This would give invalidity to our study. In addition, by asking them posterity we would be fronting an ethical difficulty. Because we then had to reveal that we had observed them without their acknowledgment. This could have resulted in angry and frustrated feelings from the respondents, that potentially also could have effected the store and the employees. Moreover, if we had asked them at the end of the observation; other respondents would most likely have noticed us, and this would have wrecked our unobtrusive observation. However,

we find it important to use our empirical data to establish if there are some indication whether the home distributed ASF has behavioural effects in-store. We solved this issue by looking at the number of promoted products which were bought by the respondents that not used ASF in store. This number can both indicate if the respondents have read the ASF at home and further the effects regarding the sales trigger effect of the home distributed ASF.

An ideal campaign for us would be if the ASF was not sent home to consumers during the week that we did our observations. By this we would eliminate the problem of behavioural effects from those who read at home. All measured behaviour would be in direct relation to the use of ASF in-store which is our main interest in this study. Furthermore, there should be no posters in-store during that week because this would have enhanced our evidence that the changed, if any, behavioural effects come from the use of ASF. Gijsbrechts, Campo and Goossens (2003) have found positive relationship between the numbers of pages in ASF and store sales. This gives an indication that an increased number of pages in the ASF would have resulted in more search activity, more difference in promoted and non-promoted products purchased and so on. In other words, more pages would have, according to this study, resulted in stronger behavioural effects when using ASF. An ideal campaign would have entailed an ideal designed ASF to influence in store consumer behaviour.

2.3.2 Alternative Design

An alternative design was considered; a qualitative approach, employing interviews and participant observation. The role of us as "participant-as-observer" would entail that the respondents would be aware of our status as researchers. As argued later, this would involve several limitations in our study. When considering this approach we thought of interviewing the respondents when entering the store. We would ask them what they have planned to buy. Further, we would ask them if they would use the ASF, and allow us to observe them when using it. After, the observation we would then interview them again, and also check their pre-shopping list against what products they actually had purchased. It is sometimes suggested that the quantitative researcher is concerned with people's behaviour and the qualitative researcher with the meaning of action (Bryman and Bell, 2003). We found this suggestion to be applicable for our study. We are interested in measuring the behavioural impact from the use of ASF. We have a clearly specified set of research questions. Qualitative research is a research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data. Therefore, after some consideration we decided that this was not the most appropriate design for our study. In addition, we were interested in maximize the reliability and validity of measurements of key concepts in our study, which would not have been applicable with this design.

2.3.3 The grocery retail store; ICA Supermarket, Linero

The corporation chosen for the case study is ICA Supermarket, Linero and it will be regarded as the sole representative for a grocery retail store. The examination of in-store consumer behaviour will be employed through structured observations of consumers' who are in store, and the categories from the recording system will be measured.

According to Yin, a case study is:

> *"... an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence is used". (Yin 1986, p. 19)*

It is important to distinguish between case and unit of analysis. We can have numerous units of analysis within one single case. Yin (1994) describes case studies based on single and multiple units of analysis, using the terms holistic and embedded case studies. Case studies are *embedded* if we are also interested in subunits within one or several cases. Given that we are interested in in-store consumer behaviour of different consumers segments, we need to study a number of consumers (unit of analysis) within the case chosen. In order to measure if the ASF have a behavioural impact we will employ elements of a field experimental design. Two groups will be established, one group of respondents that use ASF in store, which can be viewed as an experimental group. The second group of respondents will be those who not use ASF in store, and this group will function as a control group. If there would be no control group, we would be less sure that the ASF are producing the behavioural change. The presence of a control group coupled with random assignment results in that our confidence in the causal finding is greatly enhanced. Such use of quantitative methods in case studies is in accordance with the view expressed by Stake, that "some case studies are qualitative, some are not" (Stake, 1994).

2.3.4 Structured observation

Structured observations are a method for systematically observing the behaviour of individuals in terms of a schedule of categories. Structured observations will be employed in this study. It is a technique in which the researcher employs explicitly formulated rules for the observation and recording of behaviour. One of its main advantage is that it allows behaviour to be observed directly, unlike in survey research, which only allows behaviour to be inferred (Bryman and Bell, 2003). Each respondent in our study is observed using the same rules. Our observations scheme (Attachment 1) is designed as specific as possible to ensure that we observe exactly what aspects of behaviour that we need to answer our research problem. The aim of the observation scheme is to ensure that each respondent's behaviour is systematically recorded so that it is possible to aggregate the behaviour of all those in the sample in respect of each type of behaviour being recorded. The observation scheme specifies the categories of behaviour that are to be observed and how behaviour is allocated to those categories. It was important for us to design an easy to operate recording system, this due to that we were supposed to be unobtrusive and not being observed by those being observed. It would have been difficult to pretend to be an everyday shopper and at the same time operate a complex recording system.

Practitioners of structured observations have been concerned with the degree of inter-observer consistency. Essentially, this issue entails considering the degree to which two or more observers of the same behaviour agree in terms of their coding of that behaviour on the observations schedule – that is, inter-observer consistency (Bryman and Bell, 2003). It is clearly not an easy matter to achieve reliability in structured observations. However, this point should not be exaggerated, because some studies have been able to achieve high levels of reliability for many of their measures (Ibid). Indeed, Delamont and Hamilton (1984) which have criticised structures observations have written that "there is no doubt that observers can be trained to use complex coding schedules with considerable reliability". This is a point of some significance in view of the fact that validity presupposes reliability. We will employ test observations in order to have the opportunity to harmonize our observations and recording system.

While conducting the test observations several difficulties came into being. Firstly, we needed one watch that recorded the total time spent in-store, and one watch to record time spent in the different high marginal areas. We solved this problem by using the watch on the mobile

phone to record total time, and the arm watch to record time spent in different areas of the store. Secondly, even if we had an easy to record system we should observe several behavioural aspects simultaneous as we wrote down these aspects into our observation scheme. Furthermore, we should be not be observed by those who we were observing when doing all these "activities". We solved this problem by observing, and then stop behind an aisle when writing down, but still having the outlook of the respondent. What we found after some test observations was that there were several mirrors in the ceiling and around several shelves. These mirrors provided us with the opportunity to observe the respondents even as they did not see us and that we were writing in our observation schemes. Another matter that provided us with the possibility to observe from a distance was that before the observations started; we went through the store, and located all the promoted goods and accurately investigated its colour and so on. By doing this there was no need for us to stand in close range of the respondent to observe if the consumers picked the promoted products. A third problem that raised during the test observations was that when we were writing in our observation schemes we lost the respondents. This problem occurred several times during the test observations. This may also be an end of that this was our first time employing observations. Again, the mirrors were helping us. In addition, we also had to take a larger chance of being observed by those being observed, to make sure that we constantly were having the respondents in eyesight. In such, we had to write in our observation schemes when being in the eyesight of the respondents. However, we believe that it was more our own feelings of being aware of that we were there as researchers, than it was that the respondents who noticed us, when we sometimes felt that they were suspicious of our behaviour.

Reliability may also be difficult to achieve on occasions, because of the effects of such factors as observers fatigue and lapses in attention. Therefore, attention was given to if we were getting inattentive and tired. If this occurred we stopped the observations for that day, and continued the next day. After observing the first day from 9 am to 17 am we were surprised how tired we were. By doing the observations we needed to stay in constant focus to be able to record all the different behavioural aspects.

McCall (1984) has concluded that, when compared to interviews and questionnaires, structured observation: Provides (*a*) more reliable information about events; (*b*) greater precision regarding their timing, duration and frequency; (*c*) greater accuracy in the time ordering of variables; and (*d*) more accurate and economical reconstructions of large-scale social episodes. This is a very strong endorsement for structured observation. We were considering questionnaires, but as we are recording, among other things; timing, duration and frequency, we found structured observations to be the most appropriate method.

2.3.5 Sampling

Definition of sample is the segmentation of the population that is selected for investigation (Bryman and Bell, 2003). The population in this study is the customers of the grocery store ICA Supermarket, Linero. We employed a probability sample, which is a sample that has been selected using random selection so that each unit in the population has a known chance of being selected. It is generally assumed that a representative sample is more likely to be the outcome when this method of selection from the population is employed (Ibid). In this study, based on information from ICA Linero management, we differed in time when observations were conducted. This due to that there are different consumer segments at different time at the day. An example is that between 10 am and 12 pm there are almost only senior citizens and lunch consumers. This means that the age aspect was addressed. To make the sample as representative as possible we sampled from different age groups.

Gender aspects were also addressed in the recording system. Gender differentiation refers to the social processes that create and exaggerate biological differences (West and Zimmerman, 1987). Gender differentiation also distinguishes activities, interest, and places as either female or male (Padaric and Reskin, 2002). Do men and women differ in the sources, and use of ASF? We are interested to measure the in-store consumer behaviour differences between the genders, as well as if there is any imbalance between the genders in numbers who uses ASF. Men are becoming less ``semi-detached'' from the daily business of the family meaning that they adopt an influence in areas traditionally regarded as women's decisions (Martinez and Polo, 1999). However, still, conventional wisdom holds that the majority of sales promotion, such as the ASF, users is female (Harmon and Hill, 2003).

The decision about sample size is not a straightforward one: it depends on a number of considerations and there is no one definitive answer. Number of respondents in this study was aimed at 100; 50 that used the ASF and 50 that did not. We planned to use three days in conducting this number of observations. To reach 50 respondents in the unit that did not use the ASF was unproblematic, because there were a huge number of consumers to sample from. However, the unit that did use the ASF showed to be problematic due to the very limited number of respondents to sample from. It turned out to be very few consumers that used the ASF, even if we placed the ASF more visible. This limited number of respondent to choose from caused problems in several ways. Firstly, it was very time consuming to wait for those who used ASF. Moreover, this time consuming resulted in that we needed to spend more days' in-store, and on the fourth day it became very difficult for us to be un-noticed. This due to the fact, that respondents' that we had observed earlier, started to come back to the store. Another problem was that we had to wait in the entrance area to see if they took the ASF and then start to observe them. This caused difficulties for us to blend naturally in to the environment. Consumers also started to ask questions about what we were doing. This may indicate that we also had been noticed earlier days when observing. This even if our target was to observe without being noticed by the respondents. At this time we felt that we were disturbing the consumers and in consideration to the ICA management we had to stop at 39 respondents that used ASF even though the ideal would have been 50 respondents of both units.

2.4 Measure validity

Measurement validity relates to the question of whether a measure is measuring what is supposed to measure. The validity of any measure will be affected by; whether the measure reflects the concept it has been designed to measure and error that arises from the implementation of the measure in process (Bryman and Bell, 2003). Have we established the correct operational measures for the concepts being studied? In this study we should ask ourselves if we are really measuring the in-store consumer behavioural impact of the ASF, and if we are, are we measuring it in the right way?

We considered several methods to best fulfil our research problem. First, we considered interviewing the respondents and in addition asking them to participate in an observation as described in the alternative design. However, we excluded this idea when taking into consideration how the respondents would be affected when they would know that we observed them. Do people change their behaviour because they know they are being observed? Would they in an extended way search for the promoted goods because they would know that this was what we were looking for? Would there be some loose of face of only buying the price discount products? There are several factors towards in store behaviour that

could be affected that the respondents knew that we were observing them, and their behaviour would have to be considered atypical. As a result, we could hardly regard the results of structured observation research as indicative of what happens in reality (Bryman and Bell, 2003). Webb et al, (1966) wrote about the reactive measurement effect; by which they meant that the research subject's knowledge that he is participating in a scholarly search may confound the investigator's data. Reactive effects are likely to occur in any research in which participants know they are the focus of investigation (Bryman and Bell, 2003). Therefore, an unobtrusive measure will be the most appropriate method. An unobtrusive measure is a method of observation that directly removes the observer from the set of interactions or events being studied' (Denzin, 1970). Webb et al. distinguish between four main categories of unobtrusive measure. One category is simple observations which will be employed in this study. Simple observation refers to 'situations in which the observer has no control over the behaviour or sign in question, and plays an unobserved, passive, and non-intrusive role in the research situation' (Webb et al. 1966)

We also discussed the ethical aspects of observing the subjects without their awareness, and if we could cause some trouble to the ICA´s customers. Because when working with a case study it was important for us not to harm the store or its customers in any way. However, an unobtrusive method was approved by the store manager. We considered borrowing ICA clothes and pretending to be employees. In such, we could better be invisible and un-troublesome to the consumers and create an easier atmosphere for us to observe. First, both we and the ICA manager thought this was a good idea. However, after some consideration we found that this would be a dangerous way because the consumers could start to ask us professional questions regarding the store, and we would be in no position to answer these questions. In co-operation with the store manager we found it better to act as regular customers carrying a shopping basket with some merchandise. Further, we had our observation schemes inside an ASF, in order to blend into the research environment as neutral as possible.

2.5 Internal validity

Have all rival explanations and possibilities been considered? Is the evidence convergent? Internal validity is concerned with the question of whether a conclusion that incorporated a causal relationship between two or more variables holds water (Bryman and Bell, 2003). In this particular study, have we captured the in-store consumer behavioural effects from the use of ASF? By combining the findings from previous field studies, previous research regarding ASF and the use of a control group, we should be confident that the behavioural influence from ASF is captured. The purpose of the control group used in this study is to eliminate the possible rival explanations of our causal findings. As argued previously, the presence of a control group coupled with random assignment has resulted in that we have eliminated threats to our causal findings.

2.6 External validity (generality)

As the research interest of this study is theory driven and the research methodology is based on a deductive approach, theoretical and analytical generalisation is the priority. Yin (1994) states that, in order to generalize to other cases, the findings must be replicated to a second or third case. As this study is based on one case, it is difficult to speak in terms of replication. When a sample has been selected using probability sampling, as in this study, any findings can be generalized only to the population from which that sample was taken (Brymann and Bell, 2003). The population in this study is the customers of ICA Supermarket Linero. The population is in different age groups, different genders and different life and family -cycles.

As argued before, we have aimed at make a representative sample as possible from this population, and this means that we have a variety of individuals who are differentiated by gender, age, ethnicity, social class and so on. This provides a sample that reflects the population (Ibid) of an ICA Supermarket with similar retailer strategy, size, assortment, turnover and location. It is reasonable that we can generalize our findings to being applicable to other ICA Supermarket stores.

2.7 Reliability

Would someone else conducting this research project come to the same conclusions, if the same procedure was followed? There are reasons to be confident that the statistical data analysis and interpretations would be replicable. In terms of reliability, every effort has been made to justify and describe in detail what was done. Moreover, conclusions are deferred until the assumptions have been tested in the quantitative study.

Chapter 3 Theory

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In the following chapter, we will present our theoretical background which is found from different sources within the field of retail promotion, retail strategy and in-store consumer behavior. This theoretical discussion will generate a conceptual model of how a specific promotion tool as the ASF can influence in-store consumer behavior. We will due to this, propose several hypothesis along with presentation of the theory, which in turn will be tested and provide answers to our research problem.

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3.0 Theory

There are a number of studies that have empirically analyzed the influence of feature promotion as the ASF and its impact on store traffic and sales (Blattberg and Fox, 1995, Mulhern and Padgett, 1995, Urbany et al., 2000, Burton, Lichtenstein and Netemeyer, 1999). On the whole these studies support the positive relation of feature promotion on traffic and sales, but there are, however, studies that found that ASF have no significant effect on store traffic and sales (Burton, Lichtenstein and Netemeyer, 1999). Increased traffic can be seen as an effect of the ASF distributed home to the consumers, and sales as an effect combined of both the ASF distributed home and the ASF found in store. However, we claim that only looking at sales to predict the in-store effects of ASF is to narrow. The first objective of this study is to establish a model that depict the consumer behavior effects of the ASF when used in-store. Further, consumer routes in a retail supermarket have been studied by Borges, Cliquet and Fady (2005). Their study researches consumer routes in general, and do not look into how a promotion tool as the ASF may influence these routes. The second objective of this study is therefore too see if there are differences in the routes according to whether the consumers use ASF or not.

The following discussion aims to find variables that are important to measure in order to establish an understanding of both positive and potential negative effects that ASF will have on in store consumer behavior. By using several previous studies on related issues we are creating a conceptual model which in turn will be tested empirically in this study. The reason for this is that there are no pre-existing models that explain behavioral patterns as a consequence of using ASF in-store.

First, we will look into ICA Supermarket and identify its retail strategy, in order to better understand the motivation for using the ASF as a promotion tool and further give an indication in which direction the behavioral effects of the ASF can influence the retailer performance.

Secondly, we discuss retail promotion in general and further look specific into ASF and the underlying objectives for using this promotion tool.

3.1 Retail strategy

Even though practitioners are very interested in price format and academic researchers (Blattberg and Neslin 1990, Neslin 1994) consider it a topic worthy of research, few studies investigate the relationship between store price format and consumer behavior (Bell and

Lattin, 1998). This study is researching in-store consumer behavior effects the ASF may cause in a retail environment. We have found ICA to be a retailer that aligns with the HiLo retailer strategy. The reason for this is that their price format is to give temporarily discount on several different products across a number of different categories. In addition to this, HiLo retailers tend to make extensive use of store flyers to communicate these promotional offers to the consumers (Gijsbrechts, Campo and Goosens, 2003). As we have mentioned, ICA Supermarket spend 100% of its promotion budget on this promotion tool. In comparison, the EDLP strategy proposes the lowest prices everyday without promotions (Bell and Lattin, 1998). ASF are as mentioned representing a large percentage of the total promotion budget of the HiLo retailers and consequently dependent on that the ASF are having desirable effects on in-store consumer behavior. The associations between shopping trip type and purchase of price specials is of special importance to HiLo retailers because the different types of shopping trips may produce shopping baskets of varying profitability, depending on the consumers level of promotional purchasing (Walters and Jamil, 2000). This is due to the fact that the products promoted in the ASF can be seen as "loss leaders" and further in some cases represents small and even negative margins for the retailer (ICA, 2006). As a consequence these retailers are dependent on that the customers not are showing opportunistic behavior, as defined previously.

One of the major goals of ICA is to make sure that the customers are composing all their different meals while shopping in the store. To achieve this, ICA is dependent on that the customers visit as many of the store areas as possible. The promoted products in the ASF are consequently located in different areas of the store in order to make the customers visit these areas, and more important make purchases. By analyzing the ASF, 62% of the promoted products displayed are located in what ICA defines warm or high marginal areas. The remaining 38% of the promoted products are located in cold areas, where the margins for the retailer are less than in the high margin areas, and at some times even negative (ICA, 2006).

The promoted products displayed in ASF are not easily found in the store, which we believe is a strategy that consequently makes the consumer search for the products. As we see it, this is done in order to make the customers increase the search activity, which in turn potentially leads to that the consumers spend more time in high margin areas and totally in store. As a consequence of this the customers are exposed for other products while searching for the price deal.

3.2 Retail promotion and its objectives

Webster (1965) defines sales promotion as:

 "an action-focused marketing event whose purpose is to have an impact on the behaviour of the firm's customers".

Several important aspects of sales promotion should be highlighted to complete this definition. First, sales promotions involve some type of inducement that provides an extra incentive to buy (Schultz and Robinson, 1982) which represents the key element in a promotional program. Secondly, this incentive is additional to the basic benefits provided by the brand and temporarily changes in its perceived price or value (Strang, 1983). It is also seen as an acceleration tool designed to speed up the selling process and maximize sales volume (Neslin 1994). Blattberg and Neslin (1990) have identified tree different categories of sales promotions, which are presented in the following model:

Model 3: Sales promotion
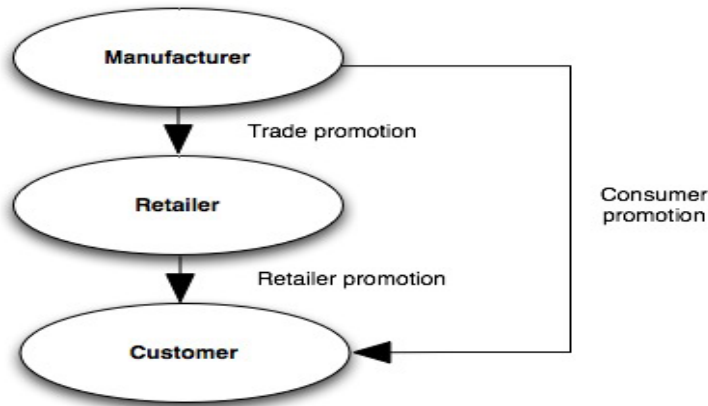
3.3 ASF

ASF can according to the previous model be classified as both a retailer and manufacturer promotion towards the customers. The ASF is a weekly newspaper that is both distributed home to the consumers and found displayed on a variety of locations in-store. As argued, we have found that the placing of the ASF in several ICA stores is of a more random character rather than a strategically placing. This is also strengthen by the fact that ICA has no guidelines of where this are to be placed in-store (Wittzell, 2006). Compared to feature promotions in newspapers and magazines, ASF typically compromise promotions for a larger number of products, with complex cross-category relationships (Gijsbrechts, Campo and Goosens, 2003). This can be related back to the objective for ICA to make sure that the customers compose different meals, and therefore have chosen to display promoted products in the ASF that are located in all the different high margin areas.

Especially in the context of the HiLo retailer strategy, ASF are means of appealing to the deal prone, store switching segment by generating traffic to the store and create sales among these customers (Gijsbrechts,, Campo and Goosens, 2003). They further propose that feature promotions as ASF also shape choices made by regular customers, and hence, affect retailer profit margins. ASF present numerous price orientated appeals that can be viewed as a form of "quick" response mass media advertising (Shimp, 1997). The time frame is an important element, and exposure to promotion such as the ASF closer to the purchase act is assumed to be more efficient because these consumers are more accessible for information about offers (Gjibrechts, Campo and Goosens, 2003). Ajzek (1988), and Petty, Unnava and Strathman (1991) propose that if exposure to price and brand information in the advertisements leads to a favourable attitude toward a price deal, the proximity in time between attitude formation and opportunity to act should increase the likelihood of the consumer engaging in targeted in-store consumer behaviour. This is an argument that supports the importance of understanding the effects of ASF on in-store consumer behaviour.

Gijsbrechts, Campo and Goosens (2003), further bring up the difficult trade off, between promotion of the retailers private labels and collecting fees from the manufacturer's brands. ASF have due to the latter an important economical element, where the ASF may constitute an important source of income from the retailer, arising from the mentioned fees charged to the manufacturers whose brands appear in the flyer (Ibid). It seems clear that the retailer have large power in relation to the manufacturers, however, we are not aiming to go further into

this discussion. On the other hand, it is quite clear that gaining knowledge of the effect of the ASF on in-store consumer behavior; not only have implications for the retailers, but also for the manufacturers which invest a lot to get their brands displayed in this feature promotion tool. The discussion above indicates that the ASF not necessarily is representing a marketing cost for the retailer, but rather a profitable income which we also have elaborated in the introduction. In addition to this, ASF are also the most demanding promotion tool in terms of retailer decisions (Ibid). These decisions entail planning the layout, composition, producing and distribution of the ASF which represent time consuming activities. At the ICA Supermarket format, the individual retailer decides which products to appear on the front and back page, whereas the rest of the ASF are decided centrally in the ICA head office (Wittzell, 2006).

As we see it, ASF have two important dimensions where the first is the marketing costs related to producing, distributing and planning the layout of the ASF. As indicated, a large percentage of the retailer budget is used on the ASF and in the case for ICA Supermarket this represent 100% of the promotion budget.

The second, and even more interesting dimension of the ASF, is to which extent this promotion tool have desirable effects according to in-store consumer behavior. Given the effort and costs as mentioned in the first dimension, the importance of making a conceptual model of the effects ASF have on consumer behavior and routes seems clear.

3.4 Retail Promotion objectives

Retailer promotions in general have according to Blattberg and Neslin (1990) several objectives to be achieved, which are as following:

- generate store traffic
- to move excess inventory
- to enhance store image
- to create price image

Rossiter and Percy (1987) distinguish between two types of promotion action objectives, which is trial and usage. The trial action objective refers to attracting new customers to the store, and the usage is to inducing the customers to visit the store more often. They further hold the usage objective as the most important but states that a more frequent visit is of less importance if the consumers' amount spent remains constant. It is therefore important for the retailer performance that the customers spend larger amounts on each visit to the store. As we see it, the ASF is in this case one of the tools used in order to achieve the latter objective.

Borges, Cliquet and Fady (2005) further states that the objective for HiLo retailers to use ASF is to increase performance based on building consumer traffic to the store and market basket composition.

We find it interesting that retail promotion objectives are defined more externally, as generating store traffic, enhance store image and create price image. When it comes to how retail promotion and the ASF should influence the in-store consumer behavior, the objectives are vaguer. This is also what we are aiming to create knowledge about, and are grounded in our research problem. Given the effort and costs that are invested in the ASF, we find it strange that there seems to be a lack of research and focus from both academics and the

retailers on how this actually influence consumer behavior when used as part of the shopping trip.

3.5 ASF and its effect on in-store consumer behaviour

3.5.1 ASF and product purchase

Sales promotions are beneficial to retailers in several aspects. Firstly, promotional variables are often used to trigger unplanned purchases (Inman et al. 1990). Burton, Lichtenstein and Netemeyer (1999) are referring to studies that found that consumers exposure to the ASF in a retail supermarket is significantly and positively related to the number of advertised products purchased. It is found that exposure to the ASF result in more than 100% increase in the number of advertised products purchased, when consumers that not are using ASF condition as a baseline. Our assumption is therefore that one of the effects of ASF used in-store is that it triggers the consumers to purchase promoted products found displayed in the ASF. We therefore posit:

Hypothesis 1: ASF trigger consumers to purchase promoted products.

As a consequence of the latter discussion, we believe that the consumers that use ASF in-store purchase more promoted products than those who not use the ASF. The reason for this is that, Ajzek (1988), Petty, Unnava and Strathman (1991) and Corstjens and Corstjens (1995) claim that advertising seen during the shopping trip and at the point of sales has certain advantages over advertising seen during other leisure activities. Further, exposure to price and brand information in the advertisements leads to a favourable attitude toward a price deal, the proximity in time between attitude formation and opportunity to act should increase the likelihood of the consumer engaging in targeted in-store consumer behaviour

Hypothesis 2: Consumers using ASF in-store purchase more promoted products than those who are not influenced by the ASF

The second aspect where sales promotion is beneficial to the retailer is if promotions encourage consumers to purchase non-promoted products (Mulhern and Padgett, 1995). Knowing that many of the products displayed in the ASF are products that represent small margins, and even negative for some products, it seems clear that it is important that the consumers not only purchasing the promoted products. This is because the level of promotional purchases influences the retailer performance and efficiency (Borges, Cliquet and Fady, 2005). Once in the store, shoppers rarely only purchase featured products but also spend substantial amounts on non promoted products (Gjibrechts, Campo and Goosens, 2003). However, we have an assumption that consumers using the ASF purchase less non promoted products. The reason for this is that there also are evidences that purchases on deal can cannibalize regular purchases, and hence have a negative impact on store performance (Ibid). The fact that the ASF consist of a total of 40 products located in all the defined high marginal areas, we believe that the consumers therefore can compose their shopping basket with only promoted products. As consequence of this, we posit:

Hypothesis 3: Consumers using ASF purchase less non promoted goods than those who are not influenced by ASF

Given the fact that we believe that the consumers using ASF purchase more promoted products and less non promoted products, indicates that use the ASF influence the consumers level of promotional purchasing. As mentioned, the retail performance will be uncertain if the consumers only purchase promoted products. This consumer behavioral pattern is defined as opportunistic behavior (Borges, Cliquet and Fady, 2005). As a consequence of hypothesis 2 and 3, we posit that the fourth effect of ASF is that:

Hypothesis 4: Use of ASF will result in opportunistic behavior

3.5.2 ASF and its effects on consumer search strategy

In grocery retailing a set of categories tends to be bought on regular basis through multiple shopping trips and retailers need to pay attention to the product category selection to avoid featuring items that are frequently bought together in the same ASF (Borges, Cliquet and Fady, 2005). They further claim that failure to do so may lead to redundancy effect of the ASF, which means that the categories on sale are usually bought together without any promotional stimulus. In a HiLo retailing strategy, price specials are defined as the backbone of the marketing strategy, and we will therefore further investigate if the ASF influence the likelihood for consumers to enter into the defined high margin areas. Products and price specials are selected and designed so that the promoted products displayed in the ASF are located in all the different high margin areas of the store. The objective for this is to attract the customers into these areas which represent an overall higher margin on the products located there (Wittzell, 2006).

Environmental psychologists have recognized the importance of understanding how individuals search through complex environments to locate desired destinations (e.g., Passini 1984, Downs and Stea 1977; Weisman 1981). This search process, commonly referred to as *wayfinding,* has been conceptualized by Downs and Stea (1977) as "the process of solving one class of spatial problems, the movement of a person from one location on the earth surface to another". Passini (1984) later equated wayfinding with another related concept, spatial orientation, which he defined as "the ability of a person to determine where they are within a physical setting, including the ability that consists in determining what to do to reach a place". These definitions suggest wayfinding to be a problem-solving activity that requires individuals to define the problem space (i.e. identify the range of possible actions) and to select the appropriate course of action. Consumers searching for desired products in the retail stores must be concerned with knowing not only their spatial coordinates within the shopping environment but also the underlying logic used to organize, to categorize and to arrange merchandise. Shoppers accomplish this by identifying the category of products within which they are searching (i.e. recognizing the common characteristic(s)) shared by items clustered together. Wayfinding has also largely been viewed as an activity in which individuals search for a specific destination point (Titus and Everett, 1995). If the consumer is searching for the promoted products in ASF, the placing of promoted products in-store will be the specific destination points. These destination points are equal to earlier defined high marginal sections. Will the use of ASF result in a different wayfinding activity, i.e. that consumers that are influenced by ASF will more frequent enter these destination points? This lead to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 5: Consumers using ASF visit high margin areas more frequently

In addition to this, we also assume that the customer that use ASF overall spend more time in these areas because the products promoted often are not easy to locate in the shelf. This is

done by the retailer so that the consumers have to search for the promoted products believing that by spending longer time in these areas the likelihood for being displayed for non promoted products increase (Mulhern and Padgett, 1995). We therefore believe that by using the ASF in-store the time spent in high margin areas are higher than the customers that do not use the ASF, which lead to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 6: Consumers using ASF spend longer time in high margin areas

When it comes to the different areas within the store, we have used definitions from Larson, Bradlow and Fader (2005) and applied this in the layout of ICA Supermarket, Linero (Model 2). They have conducted an explanatory study of consumer shopping routes, but there is however, a knowledge gap when it comes to how a stimulus as the ASF is influencing the consumer shopping routes. From a retailer perspective, understanding how the consumer move inside the store is of large relevance in order to make sure that the layout are designed so that the consumers entering as many of the different store areas as possible. This can be related back to the discussion of high margin areas. We are aiming to find if there are differences in the route related to if the consumers use the ASF or not. According to the fact that none of the promoted products in the ASF can be found by only using the racetrack throughout the store (Attachment 2) we assume that consumers using the ASF and in the search for price specials take a higher frequency off the racetrack. This lead to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 7: Consumers that use the ASF take more frequent tours off the racetrack

Consumers are continually faced with the task of finding their way through a wide variety of retail environments. Titus and Everett, (1995) addresses the question about how consumers physically search through the retail settings. They provide us with a conceptual model of the consumer's retail search process (CRSP). The CRSP model integrates research finding relevant to an understanding of consumer retail search behaviour. Literature from such diverse fields of scientific inquiry as environmental psychology, human factors, architecture, and marketing are reviewed and served as the theoretical basis of the CRSP model. This theoretical basis has been used to understand the search behaviour from those influenced by ASF. All elements from the CRSP model are not applicable to our study, therefore we will use elements as a theoretical basis to compose and reinforce the conceptual model developed in our study.

Titus and Everett's CRSP model suggest that the design of the shopping environment, the nature of the search task, and the unique characteristics of the individual shape consumers' perceptions of the shopping environment. Shopper perception, in turn, influences the search strategy employed by consumers. These strategies affect the occurrence of search behaviours, such as reading signs, examining products, and entering and exiting specific areas in the shopping environment. The pattern of search behaviour displayed during the retail search process directly influences consumer's satisfaction with the retail search experience. Although the model bears some resemble to other consumers model (e.g. Bettman 1979; Darden and Dorsch 1990; and Punj and Stewart 1983) it differs in its explicit recognition of important environmental constructs (e.g. environmental legibility and stimulation) and by illustrating their impact on CRSP. Past research suggest that consumers interact with retail shopping environments for a variety of ways (Tauber 1992). These interactions generally consist of either goal-directed pre-purchase activity, or some form of ongoing search activity such as browsing behaviour (Bloch, Sherrell, and Ridgway 1986). In either case, consumers

must content with the task of finding their way through the retail environment. The ASF may influence the goal-directed pre-purchase activity in that ASF is sent home to the consumers, however, as argued before this is outside the frames of this study. It is the ongoing search activity in-store that is of interest to us. Will ASF result in increased in-store search activity such as browsing behaviour? Although past research has addressed many important issues concerning consumer pre-purchase and ongoing search activity (Beatty and Smith 1987), little is know about the process by which consumers physically search through retail shopping environments. Even thought there is a huge body of research concerning patterns, there are no researchers that consider how ASF can influence the search activity of the consumer. The outcome of search activity and its patterns used in the retail process may hold significant implications for retailers. Consequently, we posit:

Hypothesis 8: The ASF will result in increased search activity.

Previous research also evidence that there are a positive correlation between time spent in store and number of products purchased (Gilbert and Jackaria, 2002). As a consequence of the latter discussion and hypothesis, we believe that another effect of the ASF is that the consumers that use this also spend totally longer time in store.

Hypothesis 9: The ASF will result in increased total time spent in-store.

3.5.3 ASF and its effects on routes

Titus and Everett (1995) claim that consumers perform a variety of behaviours as they move through, and interact with, shopping environments (e.g., read signage, inspect products, and talk with employees). Although researchers have addressed issues concerning consumer movement in retail shopping environments (e.g., Milliman 1982; Heller 1988), few studies have attempted to link the pattern of consumer movement to the use of a particular sales promotion tool such as ASF. As a result of previous discussions and hypothesises concerning in-store consumer patterns we believe that the route taken by the respondents that use ASF will be different from those who not use ASF. Therefore, we draw the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 10: Consumers using ASF have a consistent route in-store that differ from those who not are influenced by the ASF

3.5.4 Demography and use of ASF

Demographics variables as gender and age influence the likelihood for exposing themselves for the ASF (Webster, 1965)**.** In addition, several researchers have suggested that consumers' response to promotions, such as ASF, is partly determined by lifestyle and demographic variables, but results have been somewhat inconsistent (Blattberg and Neslin, 1990; Mittal 1994). We want to measure who are the respondents that are prone to ASF in terms of gender and age. Conventional wisdom holds that the majority of sales promotion, such as the ASF, users are female (Harmon and Hill, 2003). Consequently, we posit:

Hypothesis 11: Females and older customers are more likely to use the ASF

3.6 Conceptual model

On the basis of previous discussion we now present the effects we believe that ASF have on in-store consumer behaviour. When it comes to frequency we believe that ASF leads increased number of visits in high margin areas, and increased tours off racetrack. Further, we believe that ASF influence the time dimension. This is to say that the consumers that use ASF

spend longer time in high margin areas, longer time searching the store, and as a consequence, spend longer time totally in-store. Moreover, we believe that ASF influence the product purchase. More precisely, we believe that consumers that use ASF purchase more promoted products and less non promoted products. As a consequence of this, we believe that the consumers that use ASF show an opportunistic behaviour. In the model we have indicated in which direction the effects potentially will influence retailer performance. The validated model will be presented in the conclusion.

Model 4:

ASF AND ITS EFFECTS ON IN-STORE BEHAVIOUR
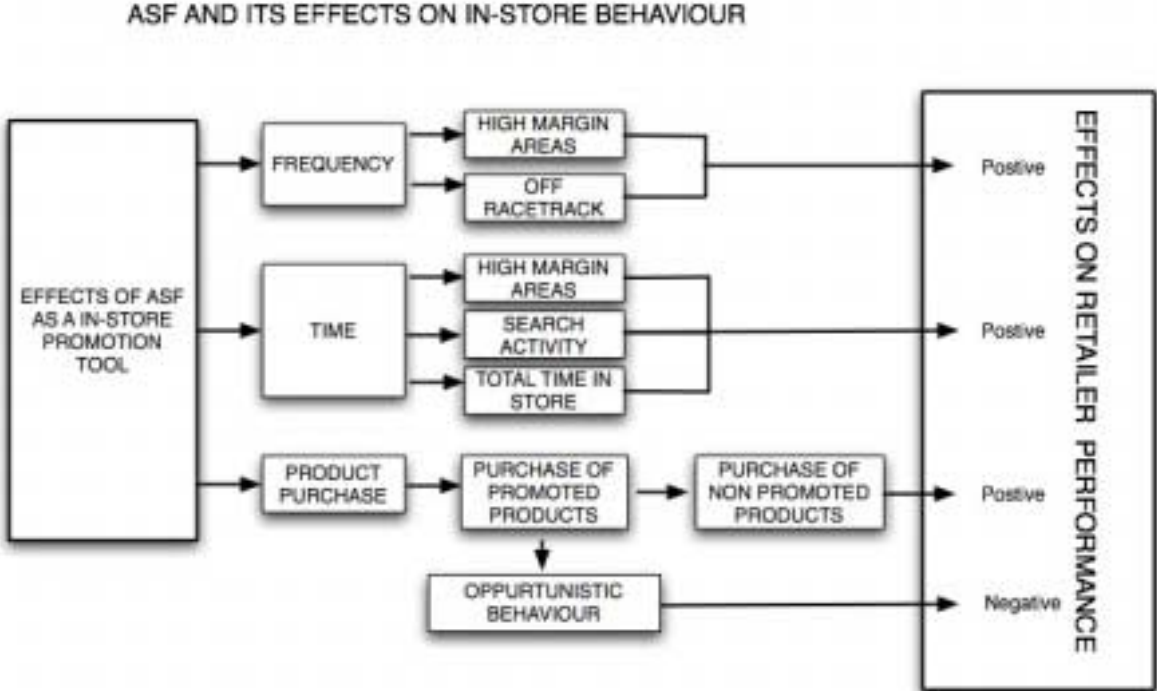
3.6.1 Objectives

As argued earlier, there is no specific objectives defined when it comes to how ASF should influence in-store consumer behaviour. Based on previous discussion we define in-store consumer behaviour objectives of the ASF to be:

1   lead to increased frequency in high margin areas
2   lead to increased numbers off racetrack
3   lead to increased time in high margin areas
4   lead to increased search activity
5   lead to increased total time in store
6   lead to purchased of promoted products and a substantial amount of non promoted products

In addition to this, we have two variables that are not included in the model. These two variables are regarding gender and the proneness to use ASF and the routes taken throughout the store. These variables are treated separately in the result and discussion chapters.

Chapter 4 Results

In this chapter we present the descriptive statistic of mean separated between the respondents that use ASF and those who do not use it. In addition, some cross tabulation is used. Further, tests of the hypothesis drawn in the theory part will be performed by using independent sample t-test based on the grouping variable; which is, if the respondents use the ASF or not. By use of the t-test we can statistically measure and test if the difference in two different populations mean value is significant on the 0.05% confidence level.

4.0 Results

The quantitative field studies where conducted between 24th of April to 27th of April at ICA Supermarket, which is located at Linero. ICA Linero is approximately 10 km outside Lund City. A total of 90 observations were conducted. Results concerning time are presented in seconds. To be able to conclude if there are significantly differences between the respondents that used ASF and those who not, the significance level must be 0.05 or below.

4.1 ASF and effects on in-store consumer behaviour

First part presents the results from the testing of the variables in the conceptual model.

4.1.1 Total respondents and gender

Figure 1:

GENDER	Frequency	Percent
Male	28	31,1
Female	62	68,9
Total	90	100,0

Figure 1 show that males and females respectively represent 31.1% and 68.9% of the total respondents. It was difficult to have sufficient number of males to sample from due to limited number of males' in-store. This indicates that females do most of the shopping for the household.

4.1.2 Total respondents and age

Figure 2:

AGE	Frequency	Percent
> 20	2	2,2
21-40	29	32,2
41-60	33	36,7
< 61	26	28,9
Total	90	100,0

Figure 2 show that the age group under 20 is underrepresented, by representing only 2.2% of the respondents. This is due to the fact that this group was seldom present in the ICA store, probably because the parents do most of the grocery shopping.

4.1.3 Total respondents and use of ASF

Figure 3:

Use of ASF	Frequency	Percent
Yes	39	43,3
No	51	56,7
Total	90	100,0

Figure 3 show that a total of 39 respondents used ASF in-store and 51 respondents did not.

4.1.4 Use of ASF, gender and age

Figure 4:

GENDER	AGE	ASF Yes	ASF No	Total
Male	> 20	0	2	2
	21–40	2	8	10
	41–60	2	4	6
	< 61	7	3	10
	Total male	11	17	28
Female	> 20	0	0	0
	21–40	9	10	19
	41–60	12	15	27
	< 61	7	9	16
	Total female	28	34	62
	Total	39	51	90

Figure 4 show that the age group between 21-40 years represents 28% of the total respondents that used ASF. The groups between 41-60 years and above 61 represent 36% each. The age group under 20 is underrepresented also when it comes to responding to the ASF.

An interesting finding is that there are large gender differences within the age group between 41-60 years, where males and females respectively represent 5.1% and 30% of the total respondents that used ASF. Further, in the age group between 21-40 years, males and females respectively represent 5.1% and 23.1%. In the age group over 61 years, males and females represent 17.9% each of the total respondents that used ASF.
We also see that females under 20 are not represented in the results, due to the fact that this group was underrepresented in the store and consequently not possible to sample from.

In total, males and females represented respectively 18% and 72% of the respondents that used the ASF in-store.

Figure 5:

GENDER		ASF
Male	> 20	0 %
	21-40	18,2 %
	41-60	18,2 %
< 61	63,6 %
	Total	100%
Female	> 20	0 %
	21-40	32,1 %
	41-60	42,9 %
	< 61	25 %
	Total	100 %

Figure 5 show that within the male group that used ASF, 63.6% are over 61 years, Within the female group the result are more spread, where the age group between 41-60 years represent 42.9% and the group over 61 are the smallest with 25%.

4.1.5 ASF reading time

Figure 6:

ASF reading time	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
	5	133	32,95

Figure 6 show that the respondents that use ASF read the flyer in average 32.95 seconds. Reading time ranges from those who only spend 5 seconds merely only reading the front page to those who spend 133 seconds reading the ASF in more depth.

Figure 7:

GENDER	ASF READING TIME		
	Frequency	Mean	Sig.(2-tailed)
Male	11	25,45	,398
Female	28	35,89	,432

Figure 7 show that females read the ASF 35.89 seconds in average, compared to 25.45 seconds for males. There is, however, no significant difference between the two groups.

4.1.6 Total time in store and gender

Figure 8:

GENDER	Total time in store		
	Frequency	Mean	Sig.(2-tailed)
Male	28	489,68	,201
Female	62	586,61	,161

Figure 8 show that males and females spend respectively an average of 489.68 seconds and 586.61 seconds in store. The results, however, show that there are no significant difference between gender and the total time spent in store.

Figure 9:

	ASF	Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
Total time in store	Yes	650,33	,018
	No	484,67	,024

Figure 9 takes into count if the respondents use ASF or not. The results show that those who are influenced by ASF spend significantly longer time in store.

4.1.7 ASF and influence on time spent in high margin areas

Figure 10:

	ASF	Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
Time in high margin area A	Yes	21,46	,237
	No	33,47	,231
Time in high margin area B	Yes	63,49	,228
	No	45,25	,247
Time in high margin area C	Yes	38,67	,566
	No	31,37	,570
Time in high margin area D	Yes	2,79	,478
	No	4,39	,449
Time in high margin area E	Yes	25,87	,687
	No	30,04	,679

	ASF	Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
Total time in high margin areas	Yes	152,28	,790
	No	144,53	,794

Figure 10 show that there is no significant evidence that the respondents that used the ASF spent longer time in the different high-marginal sections of the store. Further, the results show that respondents that used ASF spent 152.28 seconds totally in the high margin areas

compared to 144.53 seconds to those who not used the ASF. There are no significant differences between the two groups.

4.1.8 ASF and influence on frequency in high margin areas

Figure 11:

	ASF	Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
Frequency in the high margin areas	Yes	2,49	,424
	No	2,24	,419

Figure 11 show that the respondents that use ASF do not significantly visit the high margin areas more frequently than the respondents that not use ASF.

4.1.9 ASF and its effect on product purchase in high margin area A

Figure 12:

ASF	High Margin Area A				Total
	No Products	Pågen Rasker	Skanör Grova	Kulla Grove	
Yes	38	0	1	0	39
No	51	0	0	0	51
Total	89	0	1	0	90

Figure 12 show that only one of 90 respondents bought a product on promotion in this high margin area. This purchase was made of a respondent that used ASF.

4.1.10 ASF and its effect on product purchase in high margin area B

Figure 13:

ASF	High Margin Area B					Total
	No Products	Lettuce	Ruccola	Lettuce mix	Tomatoes	
Yes	28	2	0	0	9	39
No	42	2	2	3	2	51
Total	70	4	2	3	11	90

Figure 13 show that a total of 20 products were purchased in this area. 11 products were purchased of respondents that used ASF, and these purchases are represented by 2 product categories. A total of 9 products were made of respondents that not used the ASF, representing products from all the different categories. This means that 28% of respondents using ASF purchased products in this area, compared to 18% for those who not used the ASF.

4.1.11 ASF and its effect on product purchase in high margin area C

Figure 14:

ASF	High Margin Area C				Total
	No Products	Entrecoté	Kassler	Cognac Medwürst	
Yes	37	0	2	0	39
No	50	0	1	0	51
Total	87	0	3	0	90

Figure 14 show that a total of 3 products were purchased in these high marginal areas, represented by one single product. Two of the purchases on this product were made of respondents using ASF.

4.1.12 ASF and its effect on product purchase in high margin area D

Figure 15:

ASF	High Margin Area D			Total
	No Products	Marabou Chocladkakor	Riesen	
Yes	38	0	1	39
No	50	1	0	51
Total	88	1	1	90

Figure 15 show that a total of 2 products was purchased in this high marginal area, shared 50-50 between the two groups.

4.1.13 ASF and its effect on product purchase in high margin area E

Figure 16:

ASF	High Margin Area E							Total
	No Products	Dutch Gouda	Brännvinsost	Gräddädel	Hushållsost	Riven Ost	Halloumi	
Yes	38	0	1	0	0	0	0	39
No	49	0	0	0	0	1	1	51
Total	87	0	1	0	0	1	1	90

Figure 16 show that a total of 3 products were purchased in this high marginal area, represented by three different products. One of the purchases was made of a respondent using ASF.

4.1.14 ASF and its effect on total purchases in high marginal areas

Figure 12-16 show that a total of 29 products on promotion were purchased. Of this, respondents that used ASF stands for 16 of these purchases, compared to 13 promoted

products for respondents that not used the ASF. These purchases are made of 26 respondents which give an average of 1.1 products per respondent.

Figure 17:

ASF	Take promoted products		Total
	No	Yes	
Yes	24	15	39
No	40	11	51
Total	64	26	90

In figure 17, the variable if the respondents take/take not promoted products are included in addition to if the consumer use ASF or not. This is done because after having done considerable work into our study we found a major weakness. This weakness is that we excluded the group that potentially has read the ASF distributed home. As we see it, this comparison can give an indication of the level of promotional purchasing made by the respondents that not used the ASF in-store, but potentially have read the ASF distributed home to the individual households.

Figure 17 show that 26 persons totally take promoted products, which means that 38.5 % of the respondents using ASF purchase promoted products. 18.6% of the respondents that not used ASF in-store, but potentially have read it at home, purchase promoted products.

4.1.15 ASF and its effect on purchases of promoted products

Figure 18:

	ASF	Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
Promoted products in high margin area A	Yes	,03	,255
	No	,00	,324
Promoted products in high margin area B	Yes	,28	,237
	No	,18	,248
Promoted products in high margin area C	Yes	,05	,413
	No	,02	,441
Promoted products in high margin area D	Yes	03	,850
	No	,02	,852
Promoted products in high margin area E	Yes	,03	,726
	No	,04	,719

	ASF	Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
Total number of promoted products	Yes	,38	,255
	No	,25	,258

Figure 18 show that there are no significant difference between use of ASF and purchase of promoted products in the different high margin areas, compared to the respondents that not use ASF. These findings are supported by the fact that the respondents that use the ASF do not significantly purchase a larger total amount of purchased products.

4.1.16 ASF and its effect on purchase of non promoted products

Figure 19:

	ASF	Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
Not promoted products in high margin area A	Yes	,26	,064
	No	,57	,059
Not promoted products in high margin area B	Yes	1,05	,138
	No	,65	,159
Not promoted products in high margin area C	Yes	,21	,394
	No	,29	,389
Not promoted products in high margin area D	Yes	,08	,421
	No	,14	,397
Not promoted products in high margin area E	Yes	,44	,239
	No	,25	,283

	ASF	Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
Total number of not promoted products	Yes	2,03	,741
	No	1,88	,751

Figure 19 show that there is no significance that respondents that use ASF purchase less non promoted products in the different high margin areas than the respondents that not use the ASF. Results further show that respondents using ASF purchase 2.03 non promoted products compared to 1.88 the other group. Even if the mean are higher for the former group, the results show no significant difference.

4.1.17 Opportunistic Behaviour

Figure 20:

	ASF	Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
Total number of promoted products	Yes	.38	,255
	No	.25	,258
Total number of non promoted products	Yes	2.03	,741
	No	1.88	,751

Figure 20 show respondents that use ASF do not significantly purchase a larger number of promoted products compared to the respondents that not use ASF. The respondents that use ASF purchase more non promoted products compared to respondents that not use ASF, however, this is not significant.

4.1.18 ASF and its effects on search time in store

Figure 21:

	ASF	Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
Search time	Yes	349,41	.001
	No	200,76	.003

Figure 21 show that the respondents that use the ASF have significantly longer search time. This represents 2 minutes and 45 seconds in average.

4.1.19 ASF and its effects on number of times off-racetrack

Figure 22:

	ASF	Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
Number of times off racetrack	Yes	2,69	,697
	No	2,57	,710

Figure 22 show that respondents that use ASF in-store not significantly have a larger frequency off the racetrack compared to the respondents that not use the ASF.

4.2 ASF and its effects on in-store consumer routes

In the following models, we present the results from the routes used by the respondents throughout the store. We have defined 19 different checkpoints throughout the store (Model 4). First, we mapped the movements of all the individual respondents during the observations in store, and secondly we used the drawing program to measure the number of respondents that passed the different checkpoints.

The first maps presented are the females (N=34) compared with females that use the ASF (N=28). Secondly, males (N=17) are compared with males that used ASF (N=11). Thirdly, total respondents (N=51) who did not use the ASF are compared with the total number of respondents that used the ASF (N=39). The latter is what we are emphasizing upon in order to see if there are differences in the routes, and other traits that are important in relation to hypothesis 11. The gender aspect when it comes to the route is not further emphasized, but results are presented because understanding the differences according to this aspect is of relevance.

4.2.1 Females and routes

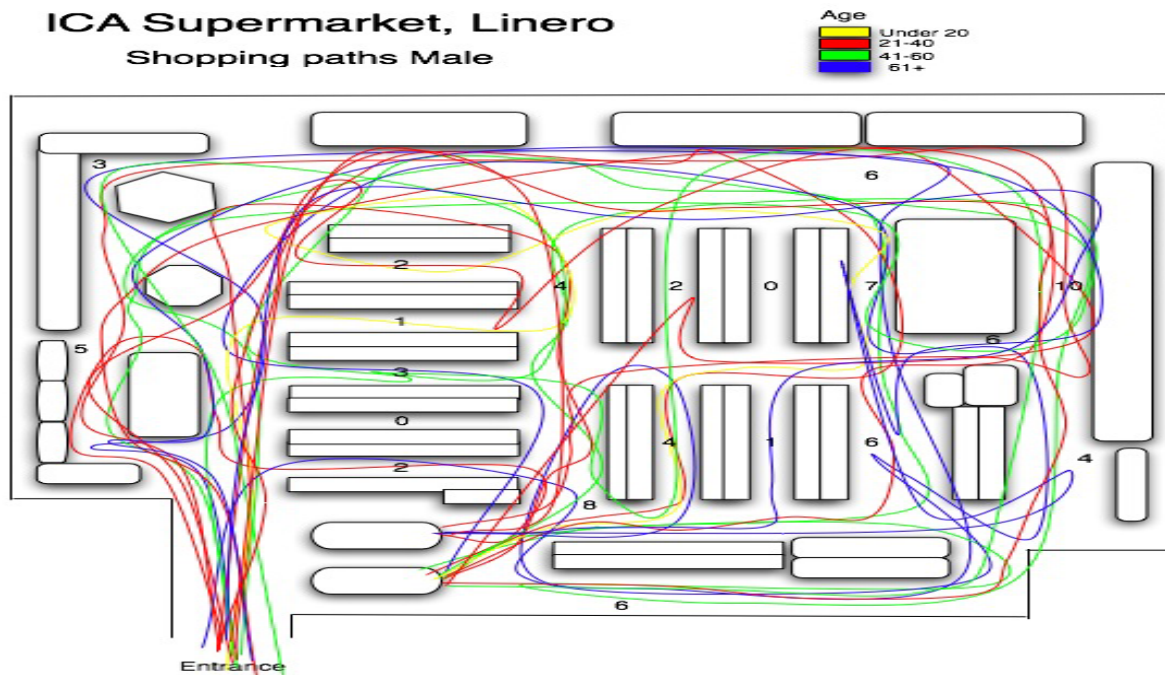Model 5: Females that are not influenced by ASF
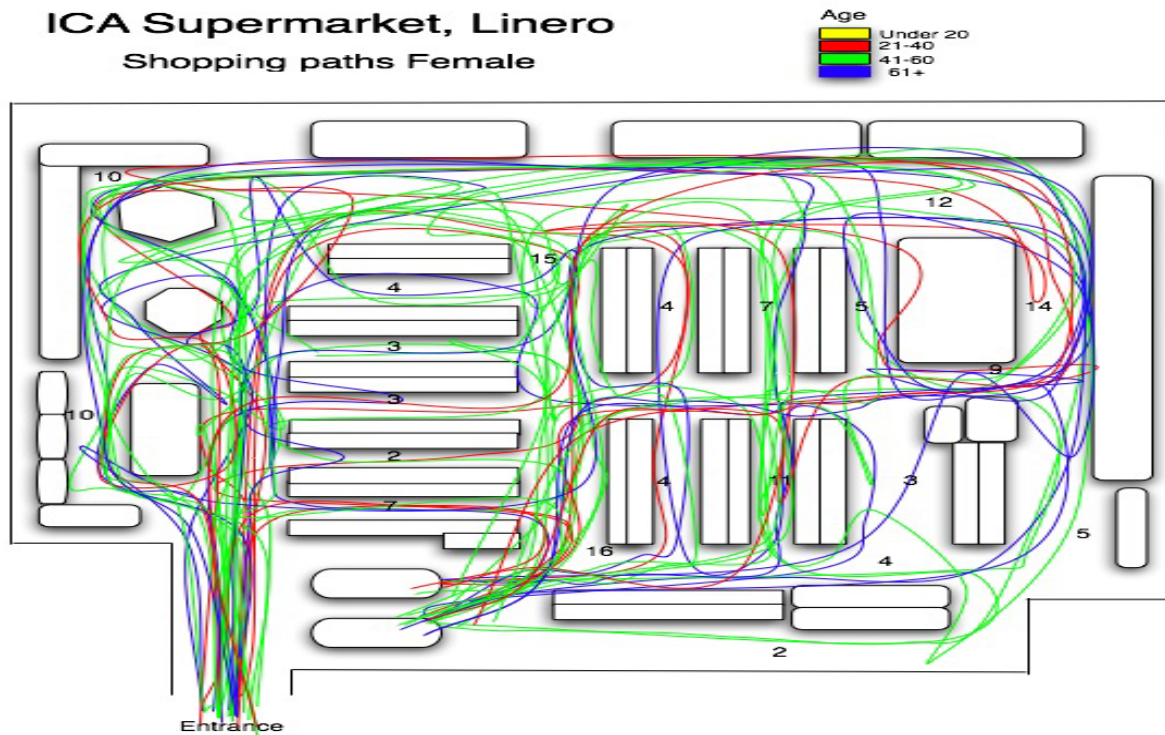

Model 6: Females that are influenced by ASF
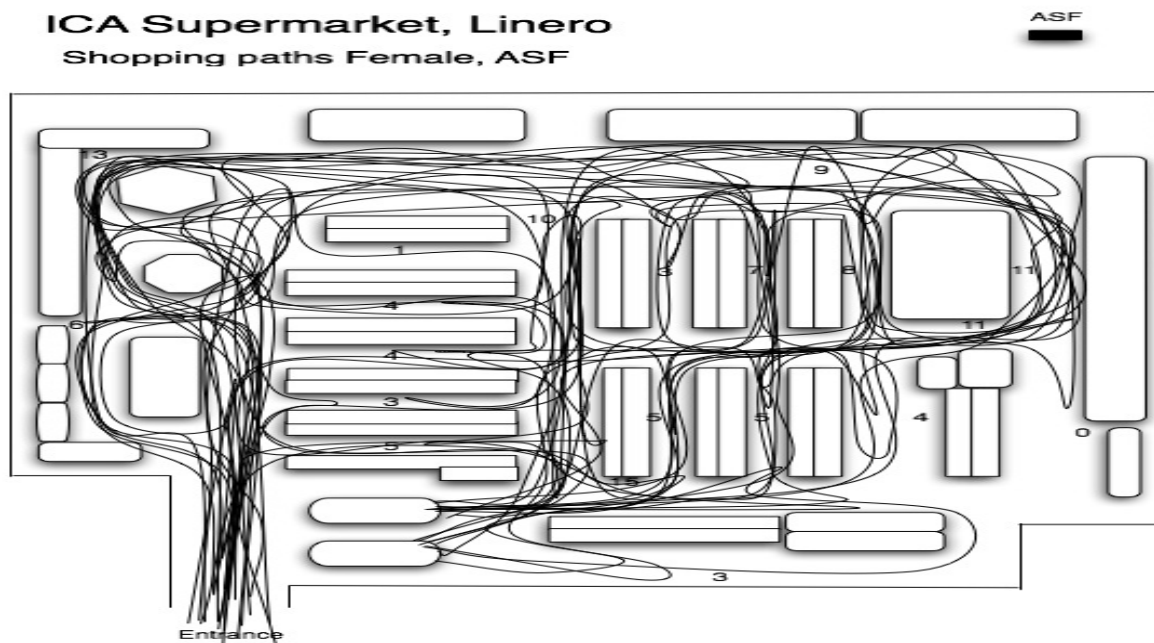
Model 6 show that after checkpoint "C", 100% of the respondents turn right and consequently off the racetrack. The right corner is not visited by the respondents that used ASF, which is the only major finding when analyzing the differences visually.

4.2.2 Males and routes

Model 7: Males that are not influenced by ASF

Model 8: Males that are influenced by ASF
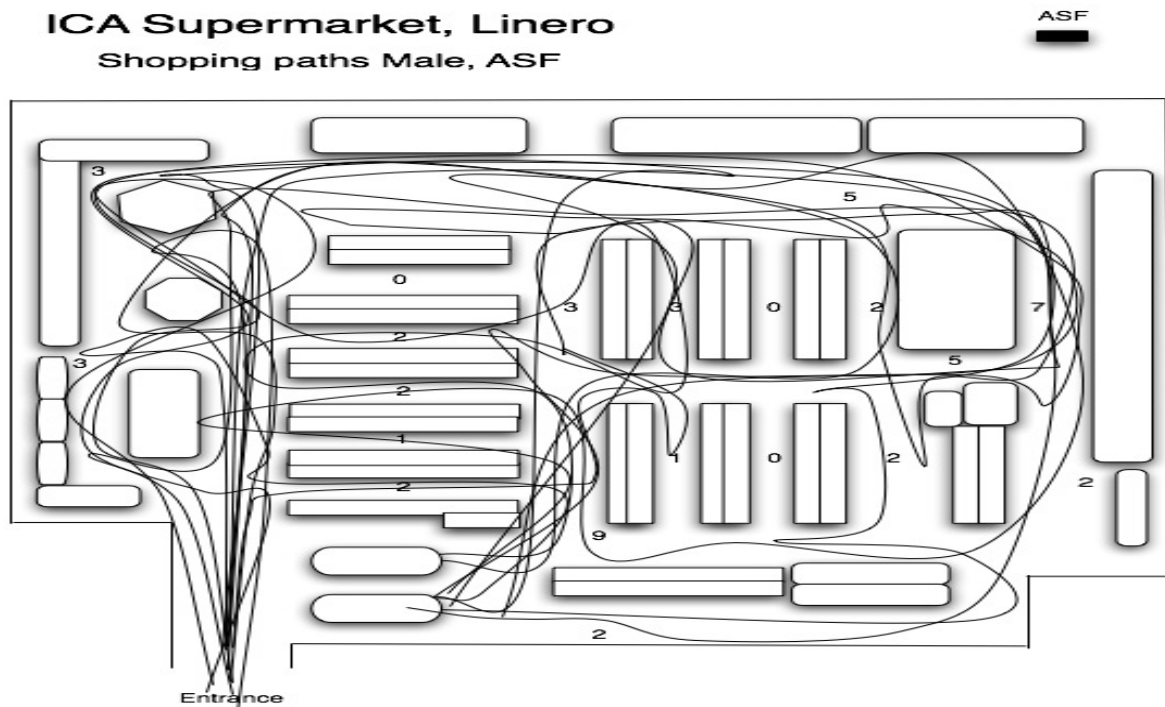
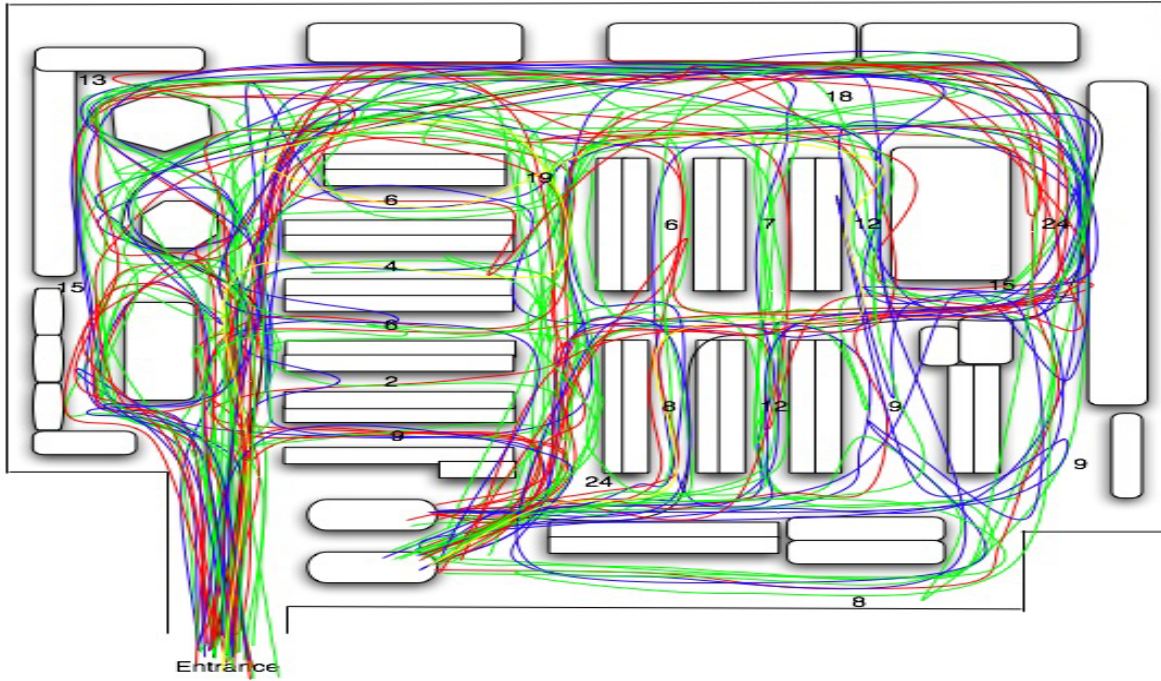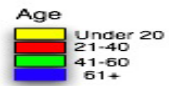Interesting findings when comparing the males is that they are not present in several of the different checkpoints in the aisles. A common finding is that males do not visit the aisle where detergents are located, which is interesting but maybe not surprisingly.
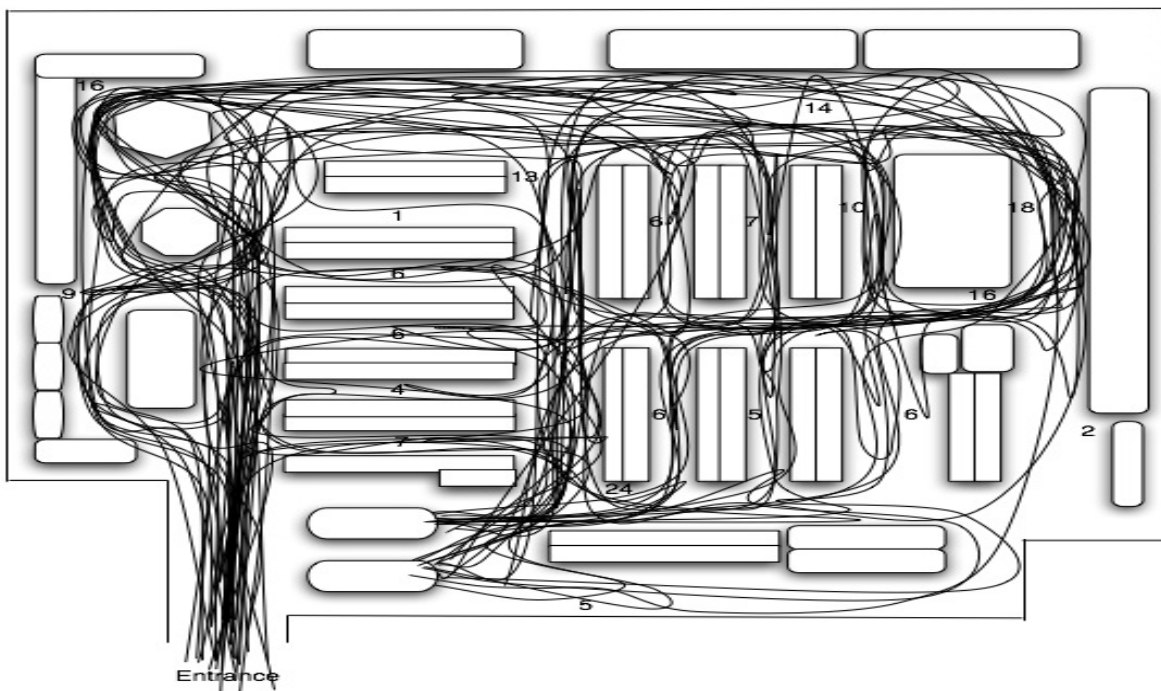
4.2.3 Routes taken by total respondents

Model 9: Male and female that are not influenced by ASF

Model 10: Male and female that are influenced by ASF

Model 10 show that the right corner of the store is in total an area with limited traffic, when using ASF. This trait is not shown by respondents that not use ASF (Model 9). This can however be related to the fact that ice cream and soda is placed in this area. As we see it, the sales on these products are seasonable, and the fact that the weather when the empirical data was collected was not that good can influence both the traffic in this area and our results.

By further comparing model 9 and 10, we see that after visiting produce section and checkpoint "D", 23 % of consumers using ASF go off the racetrack compared to 20% for those who not use the ASF. In addition, 90% of the respondents using ASF are turning right after checkpoint "C", which means that only the remaining 10% continues further on the racetrack. For the respondents that are not using ASF, 60% of the respondents are turning right after checkpoint "C", which means that the remaining 40% continues further on the racetrack.

Checkpoint "O" are the most visited checkpoint by both groups.

4.2.4 Routes and the different checkpoints

The following table, show the results in percent of how many respondents in the different groups that pass the different checkpoints.

Figure 23:

ASF	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
YES	23	41	46	36	3	15	15	10	18	33	15	18	26	41	62	15	13	15	5	13
NO	29	25	47	35	12	8	12	4	18	37	12	14	24	29	47	16	24	18	16	18

CHECKPOINTS

All numbers are percentage

Figure 23 show that most of the checkpoints are visited by the same percentage between the respondents that use ASF and those who not. In order to validate this we have further tested if there are any significant differences between the two groups by using a t-test.

Figure 24:

	ASF	Mean	Sig.
A	Yes	4.50	.412
	No	7.50	.431
B	Yes	8.00	.829
	No	6.50	.831
C	Yes	9.00	.400
	No	12.00	.400
D	Yes	7.00	.635
	No	9.00	.642
E	Yes	.50	.155
	No	3.00	.199
F	Yes	3.00	.553
	No	2.00	.553
G	Yes	3.00	1.000
	No	3.00	1.000
H	Yes	2.00	.553
	No	1.00	.553
I	Yes	3.50	.764
	No	4.50	.771
J	Yes	6.50	.691
	No	9.50	.698

	ASF	Mean	Sig.
K	Yes	3.00	1.000
	No	3.00	1.000
L	Yes	3.50	1.000
	No	3.50	1.000
M	Yes	5.00	.782
	No	6.00	.797
N	Yes	8.00	.895
	No	7.50	.899
O	Yes	12.00	1.000
	No	12.00	1.000
P	Yes	3.00	.667
	No	4.00	.705
Q	Yes	2.50	.595
	No	6.00	.614
R	Yes	3.00	.493
	No	4.50	.504
S	Yes	1.00	.089
	No	4.50	.129
T	Yes	2.50	.543
	No	4.00	.588

The results show that there are no significant differences between the two groups, concerning the different checkpoints. On the other hand, the results show that there are several checkpoints (G, K, L, and O) where the routes of the two groups are identical.

Chapter 5 Discussion

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In this chapter, the results are discussed as they relate to our research problem and the assumptions on which the hypothesis were built. This part is once again structured according to the hypothesis of the study.

_____

5.0 Discussion

5.1 H1: ASF triggers consumers to purchase promoted goods

Figure 17 show that 15 respondents, equivalent with 38.5% of the total respondents that use ASF purchases promoted products. Figure 12-16 show that these respondents in total purchases 16 promoted products, which means that respondents that use ASF in average purchases 0.38 promoted products.

If tomatoes (Figure 13), which represent 64% of the total promoted products purchased by the respondents that used ASF, are taken out of the results the total promoted products purchased of this group are limited to 7. As we see it, tomatoes can be classified as an everyday product and therefore potentially bought even if this was not on promotion. It can therefore be argued that we should not have taken this product into the research in the first place. However, by taking this product out of the results only 18% of the respondents that use ASF purchase promoted products. In comparison, 18.6% of the respondents that do not use ASF in store purchase promoted products (figure 17).

As a conclusion, we therefore question the trigger effects of ASF when it comes to purchase the promoted products displayed in the flyer. Our results show that less than 2 out of 10 consumers purchase promoted products after reading the ASF. Our results support the findings of Burton, Lichtenstein and Netemeyer, (1999), who also found that advertising exposure do not evoke uncontrolled, irrational, impulse buying.

5.2 H2: Consumers using ASF in-store purchases more promoted products than those who are not influenced by ASF

This hypothesis concerns the effect of ASF in terms of to which extent the respondents that use ASF purchase more promoted products compared to the respondents that not use ASF in-store. If we look into the different high marginal areas, only 1 respondent purchased a promoted product in high margin area A (Figure 12), and this purchase was made of a respondent using ASF. This purchase could have been made because the respondents preferred this particular bread, and therefore it is hard to determine whether this purchase was made as a consequence of using ASF. In high margin areas C, D and E respectively 3, 2 and 3 products were purchased on promotion.

High margin area B (figure 13), where fruit and vegetables are located, 20 of the total of 29 promoted products was purchased. Compared to the remaining four high marginal areas, this area represents 69% of the total promoted products purchased by both groups. It can be argued that tomatoes located in this area are an "everyday product", and consequently may influence our results. Tomatoes represent 55% of the total purchasing made in high marginal

area B, and 82% of the respondents that purchased tomatoes used ASF in-store, which indicates that ASF may result in an increased purchase of tomatoes.

Figure 12-16 show that a total of 29 promoted products are purchased by the two groups. Consumers that use ASF represent 16 products while the remaining 13 products were purchased by respondents not using the ASF. If tomatoes in high margin area B were taken out of the research, an interesting level of only 18 products was purchased on promotion.

Exposure to ASF is, as mentioned previously, found to be significantly correlated with the number of advertised products purchased when respondents that not are influenced by ASF are used as a comparison (Burton, Lichtenstein and Netemeyer, 1999). Our results (Figure 18), however, firstly show that there are no significant differences between the use of ASF and the number of promoted products purchased in the individual high margin areas. Secondly, our result show that there is no significance in that respondents that use ASF purchase a larger total amount of the promoted products compared to the respondents that not use the ASF. Consequently, our hypothesis is not supported.

5.3 H3: Consumers using ASF purchases less non-promoted goods than those who are not influenced by ASF

Figure 19 shows that consumers that use ASF in average purchase 2.03 non promoted products in the different high margin areas compared to 1.88 products for the respondents that not use ASF. The results are pointing in the opposite direction than our hypothesis, which shows that respondents that used ASF actually are purchasing more non promoted products compared to the respondents that not used the ASF. There is, however, not statistically validation that ASF leads to purchase of more non promoted products.

Our findings do therefore not support our hypothesis, which indicates that a consequence of using ASF is that the shopping basket is composed with less non promoted compared to those who not. These findings are supported by Gijsbrechts, Campo and Goosens (2003), who also found that shoppers rarely only purchase promoted products but also spend substantial amounts on non promoted products.

5.4 H4: Use of the ASF will result in opportunistic behavior

This hypothesis is a result of H2 and H3, where we claim that the consumers that use ASF compose the shopping basket with a significant larger amount of promoted products compared to non promoted products. Our findings (Figure 20) do not support this hypothesis. By using the ASF a mean of 0.38 promoted products are purchased compared with a mean of 2.03 non promoted products. From this we can conclude that the respondent using ASF are not only purchasing promoted products, and therefore not acting in an opportunistic manner. This is important because such behavior can have negative impact on retailer profitability (Borges, Cliquet and Fady, 2005).

5.5 H5: Consumers using ASF visit high margin areas more frequently

Titus and Everett define way finding as an activity in which individual consumers search for a specific destination point. We were interested in measuring if exposure to ASF would influence the way finding activities, and as a consequence make the consumers more frequently enter into the destination points in search for the promoted products located there. Given that the areas where the promoted products are located in average represent a higher

profit margin for the retailer, it is important for the retailer performance to attract the customers into the defined high margin areas (Model 1). We believed that in the search for the promoted products consumers visits these areas more frequently than those who are not influenced by ASF. Our findings (Figure 10) show that those who use ASF do not enter into the different high marginal sections more frequent than those who do not use the ASF, represented with an average frequency of 2.49 times for the former and 2.24 times of the latter group. The results are, however, not significant and our hypothesis is not supported.

5.6 H6: Consumers using ASF spend longer time in high margin areas

We assumed that the consumer that use ASF overall would spend more time in high marginal areas. This due to that the promoted products displayed in ASF are often placed in these areas. Further, the retailer places the promoted goods displayed in ASF in a "not easy to find" place. This placing is strategically done by the retailer so that the consumer has to search for the promoted goods. This means that the objective from the use of ASF is that the consumer will spend more time in these areas, and be more exposed to non-promoted goods. As presented in figure 10, the respondent that used ASF does not spend significantly longer time in the five separate high margin areas. Further, there is not significance that use of ASF lead to that the respondents spend totally longer time in these areas. Our hypothesis is therefore not supported.

5.7 H7: Consumers that use ASF take more frequent tours off racetrack

Due to that all of the promoted products displayed in ASF are located off racetrack, we assumed that respondents that used ASF would take more frequent tour off racetrack in the search for the promoted products. In general, the racetrack has high traffic, but it is not necessarily where the purchases are made (Borges, Cliquet and Fady, 2005). In addition, the defined high margin areas are located off racetrack and it is therefore important for the retailer that the consumers go off this racetrack. We were therefore interested if the use ASF can influence the consumers to take more frequent tours off racetrack. Our results (figure 22) shows that the respondents that use ASF take in average 2.69 tours off racetrack, compared to an average of 2.57 for the respondents that not used ASF. Our hypothesis is not significant supported.

5.8 H8: The ASF will result in increased search activity

As presented in figure 21, the respondents that use ASF spend in average 5:08 minutes searching in the store, compared to 3:35 minutes for those who not used ASF. The outcome of search activity used in the retail process may hold significant implications for retailers (Titus and Everett, 1995). The finding that those who use ASF employ increased search activities in-store indicates that ASF have an influence on navigational search strategies. Navigational search strategies help direct consumers' efforts to locate and acquire desired products, information, and sensory stimulation within retail shopping environments (Ibid). When the consumers have increased search activities they will be more exposed to products and the possibility for impulse purchases increases. Impulse buying accounts for substantial volume of the goods sold across a broad range of product categories (Rook and Fisher, 1995). We were interested in see if the ASF according to Titus and Everett (1995) would result in an increased search activity in form of increased browsing behaviour, and the findings give significant support to this. In such, it is an objective from ASF that it should lead consumers to increased search activity through the aisles, and this objective is significantly supported.

5.9 H9: The ASF will result in increased total time spent in-store

Time spent in-store by consumers are essential to retailers in that previous research evidence that there are a positive correlation between time spent in-store and number of products purchased (Gilbert and Jackaria, 2002). Our findings (figure 9) shows that the respondents that used ASF spent totally 10:08 minutes in store compared to 8:07 minutes for those who not used ASF. Our findings show that those who are influenced by ASF spend significantly longer time in-store.

5.10 H10: Consumers using ASF have a consistent route in-store that differ from those who are not influenced by ASF

When the routes of the total respondents that used ASF and the total number for respondents that not used ASF are compared (model 9 and 10), we have the following findings. After visiting produce section and checkpoint "D", 23 % of consumers using ASF go off the racetrack compared to 20% for those who not use the ASF. This indicates that the two groups have similar routes. Further, 90% of the respondents using ASF are turning right after checkpoint "C", which means that only the remaining 10% continues further on the racetrack. For the respondents that are not using ASF, 60% of the respondents are turning right after checkpoint "C", which means that the remaining 40% continues further on the racetrack. This gives an indication that the majority of both groups are turning right after checkpoint "C".

Checkpoint "O" is the most visited checkpoint by both groups, and can partly be explained because this is close to the checkout. However, if we compare this with the sales in high margin area "D" (Figure 14), we claim by only generating two sales on promotion this area have larger potential.

Further, the percentage of the visits in the different checkpoints made by the two different groups is used in order to find differences in the routes (figure 23). According to this, we find more similarities than differences and have to use an additional test. As presented in figure 24, there are no significant differences in the routes followed throughout the store by consumers. This means that ASF do not results in that the consumer changes its routes throughout the store. This is supported by previous presented results in figure 11, where the use of ASF does not significantly make the consumer enter high margin areas more frequently. It is also supported by the fact that ASF do not influence the consumers to take more frequent tours off racetrack.

However, even if the consumers that use ASF are found to have significant higher search time in store, this does not seem to have impact on the routes.

5.11 H11: There will be mostly females that will choose to use the ASF in-store

As previous argued, demographic variables as gender and age influence the likelihood for exposing themselves for the ASF (Webster, 1965)**.** However, results from previous research are somewhat inconsistent. Due to this we found it important to test if conventional wisdom holds water when it argues that the majority users of sales promotion, such as ASF, are females (Harmon and Hill, 2003).

Our results (figure 4) show that the age group between 21-40 years represents 28% of the total respondents that used ASF. Further, the groups between 41-60 years and above 61 represent

36% each. The results indicate that there are no major differences between the different age groups and use of ASF.

When it comes to gender differences we have several interesting findings. Within the age group between 41-60 years, males and females respectively represent 5.1% and 30% of the total respondents that used ASF. Further, in the age group between 21-40 years, males and females respectively represent 5.1% and 23.1%. These finding strongly imply that male are less prone to use ASF compared to females in the same age group. In the age group over 61 years, males and females represent 17.9 % each of the total respondents that used ASF. The latter shows that the age group over 61, both females and males, are equally prone to use ASF.

Our findings support previous research regarding that fact that females are more prone to the use of ASF. In our study males and females respectively represent 18 % and 72 % of the use of ASF in-store. This is interesting because the promoted products in the ASF have to be matched to target consumers to the extent that consumers "buy into" the message displayed in the ASF (Newman and Foxall, 2003). In such, this information is vital for the retailers.

Chapter 6 Conclusion, contribution and implications

This chapter presents the conclusions and implications for management and future research. This research project was based on two types of research data: literature review and quantitative field studies. The research process was developed through sequential stages. First, the literature on research in sales promotion from various theoretical areas was reviewed, and a conceptual model made. Second, based on what was learnt hypothesis was drawn, and testing and validation were performed in a case study. The empirical investigations were performed in a retail grocery store, ICA Linero in April 2006.

The reason for this research project can be traced to that, although the food retail market has continued to grow steadily from the 1990's, the number of retail outlets forced out of business has also increased (Peattie, 1998). In order to remain competitive, the food retailer needs to make full use of all the tools within the marketing management toolkit. Within this toolkit, sales promotions have one of the strongest impacts on short-term consumption behaviour, and constitute an important element of retailer promotion activities (Peattie, 1998). Within the category of sales promotion, ASF is one of the most important media for featuring retail and manufacturer promotions (Arnold et al, 2001). To illustrate this, research has found that ASF represent about half of the retailer promotional budget (Gijsbrechts, Campo and Goosens, 2003). In the case of ICA Supermarket format, the ASF represent 100% of the total promotion budget and about 0.7% of the retailers' total sale. However, our study has shown that ASF is representing a marketing cost for some retailers and a profitable income from others. This income arises from the fees charged to the manufacturers whose brand appears in the ASF (Ibid). The key insights generated in this study, do not only have implications for the retailer, but also for the manufacturers due to the latter.

The ASF are both distributed home to the consumer and found in the retail store. When it comes to the latter, we surprisingly found that there are no guidelines of how the retailers should place the ASF in store.

This study has focused on retailers that align with the HiLo strategy, which is due to the fact that ASF is a key promotion tool used by these retailers. The objectives of retailer promotion and ASF are found to be defined in terms of generating store traffic, enhance store and price image. We claim to have found that these objectives are defined more externally, and that it lacks focus on how ASF should create desirable effects for the retailer when used in store.

The literature to date provided no evidence to retailers regarding to which extent the use of ASF influence in-store consumer behaviour. In store consumer behaviour were defined by us as:

" the individual consumers purchasing patterns as purchase of promoted and non promoted products, time spent in different store areas, search activities and the route that will be followed throughout the store."

Questions that we initially asked were; will those who are influenced by the ASF have a different route that differs from those who are not influenced by ASF? Will the use of ASF

result in other behavioral patterns such as increased consumers search activity and that the consumers spend totally more time in store? Do the consumers as a consequence of ASF spend more time in high-marginal areas and searching the store? Further, we were in interested in if the ASF trigger the consumers to purchase promoted product and to which extent this would influence the purchase level of non-promoted products. In such, this study has aimed at establishing the in-store behavioural effects of the use of ASF. Initial research in the field of sales and retail promotion, consumer behaviour and consumer routes such as Blattberg & Neslin (1990), Titus & Everett (1995), Corstjens and Corstjens (1995), Burton, Lichtenstein and Netemeyer (1999), Gjibrechts, Campo and Goosens (2003), Borges, Cliquet and Fady (2005), among others, provided important findings and issues for further investigation.

We made a conceptual model that depicted all the effects that we believed would be a result of ASF. In addition, this model gives an indication in which direction these effects would have on retailer performance. Due to the limited number of specified objectives off a retail promotion as the ASF have on in-store consumer behavior, we have defined several objectives that ASF to the best can achieve.

Our findings have shown that the use of ASF do influence the consumers to have a significantly increased search activity and total time spent in-store, compared to the customers that not use ASF. As we see it, ASF is therefore creating a desirable effect for the retailer. The reason for this is that there are evidences from previous research that found that there is a positive correlation between time spent in store and number of products purchased. Understanding the effects of search activities when the consumers is exposed to ASF allows marketers to design shopping environment that foster use of retailer-preferred search strategies, as in more frequently tours into high marginal areas. Better understanding of consumer retail search behaviour should improve the effectiveness of retailer's strategic placing and design decisions.

Another positive finding is that the ASF do not cause that the consumers are having opportunistic behavior. This is important because the level of promotional purchasing influence the retailer profitability (Walters and Jamil, 2000). Our result show that by using the ASF consumer are purchasing more non promoted products than promoted products, which is due to the latter important for the retailer profitability.

In marketing communication it is important have the "right message to the right segment". Due to this, the importance of knowing who are most prone to use the ASF is of relevance both for the retailer and the manufacturers. As hypothesized, females are more prone to the use of ASF (72%), and the proneness are found to be almost similar regardless the age group. More interesting is that males below 61 years only to a small extent (5.1%) respond to ASF, where the males over 61 years are equally prone when compared to females in the same age group. These demographics are in line with the profile of what was assumed from previous literature (Harmon and Hill, 2003). Implication to both retailers and manufacturers from this is that they may adapt their communication strategy either to a major segment of females, or they may try to direct their communication more towards males. In addition, we have found that females are overrepresented in-store. These insights should be used to develop communication strategies targeting females.

ASF by previous research found to trigger unplanned purchases (Inman et.al, 1990). In addition, it is found that exposure to promotion during the shopping trip and at the point of sales has certain advantages over advertising seen during other leisure activities (Corstjens and Corstjens, 1995). If consumers are exposed to ASF in store, research has found that this result in over 100% increase in the number of promoted products purchased. Our findings show that when using the ASF 38.5% of the respondents purchase promoted products. There are however weaknesses in this, because tomatoes alone represent 56% of the total number of promoted products purchased by these respondents. This can be argued to be an everyday product, and bought on a regular basis without being as a result of using ASF. Consumers that use ASF only purchase a total of 16 promoted products, and 7 if tomatoes are taken out, we claim that ASF do not trigger the consumers to purchase promoted products.

Even if we found that the consumers spend significantly longer time in store and an increased searching activity, the ASF fails to create other desirable effects on the remaining in store consumer behavior variables. The use of ASF do not lead to that the consumers take more frequent tours off racetrack, which is important to the retailer because when only using the racetrack the consumers are not exposed to the products to the same extent as in other areas of the store. The ASF also fails in order to make the consumer spend longer time in the high marginal areas, which are of obvious reasons important for the retailer because the products located there overall represent higher margins.

We believed that consumers that used ASF would have different purchasing patterns than the consumers that not used the ASF. Firstly, our results show that use of ASF do not influence the number of promoted products purchased. This has implication both for retailer and manufacturers, because when using ASF in store customers do not seem to respond to the promotion and purchase the products. Secondly, we believed that use of ASF may lead to that the consumer purchased less promoted products. Our results, show that the number of non promoted products purchased do not significantly differ as a consequence of using ASF. Both the groups have the same level of non promoted products. The implications of this are that the ASF do not lead to that the consumer purchase more of the non promoted products.

Concerning the routes taken in store, we have both used the maps where the individual movements are plotted, in addition to use of checkpoints where the number of visits have been counted. By looking at the maps, we find that one common trait to be the majority goes off racetrack in the same defined checkpoint ("C"). It is difficult to draw definite conclusions based on subjectively analyzing the movements. The information we provide, are however, of large relevance to the retailer in order to understand the traffic flow in the store. One example is that checkpoint "O" has among the highest number of visits. The candy shelf which is defined as a high margin area, and located next to this checkpoint, show only a total of two promoted products purchased. The implication of this is that this area has higher potential, regarding environmental layout and design. However, when testing and comparing the visits in the different checkpoints, we find that there are no significant differences in the routes taken as a consequence of the ASF. The results are pointing more in the direction that the consumers have the same routes regardless of the use of ASF, because more similarities than differences are found.

A weakness in this study is that the effects of the ASF distributed home to the consumers are not treated in this study. This is an area which is interesting for future research. However, our results show that 18.6% of the respondents that not used the ASF, but potentially have read at

home, purchase promoted products. Given if the tomatoes are taken out of our study, 18% of the respondents that used ASF purchase promoted products, which further is an indication of the limited effects ASF have when used in-store.

ASF have without doubt a strong position among retailers. We have shown that some retailers solely rely on the ASF and consequently spend the entire promotion budget on this communication tool. Our findings do not validate the strong position ASF have, according to the in-store consumer behavioural changes this tool creates. On the other hand, we are aware that the ASF also have other important objectives when it comes to creating brand awareness and price image both for the retail store and the manufacturers and their brands. The latter are other potentially positive effects of the ASF, which this study does not take into consideration. This is an area we leave for future research.
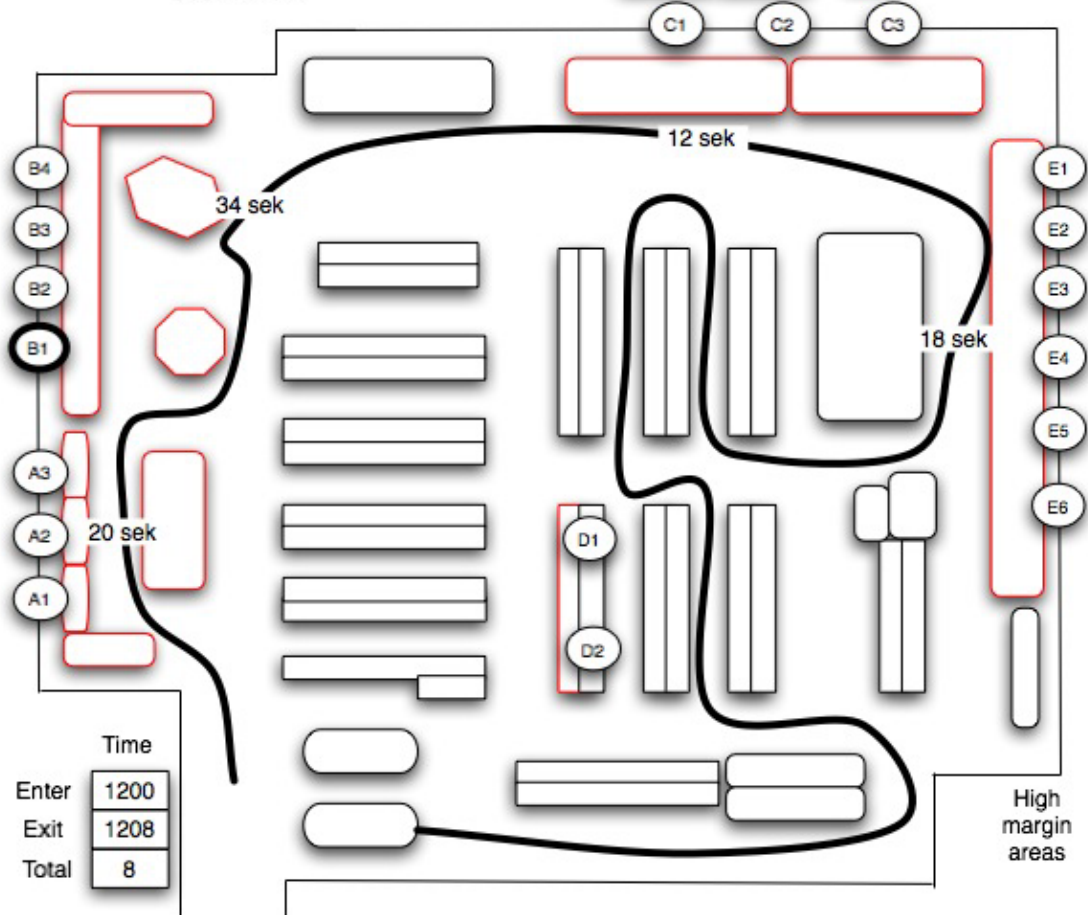
Attachments

Attachment 1: Observation scheme

Resp.nr:

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ICA Supermarket, Linero

Observation

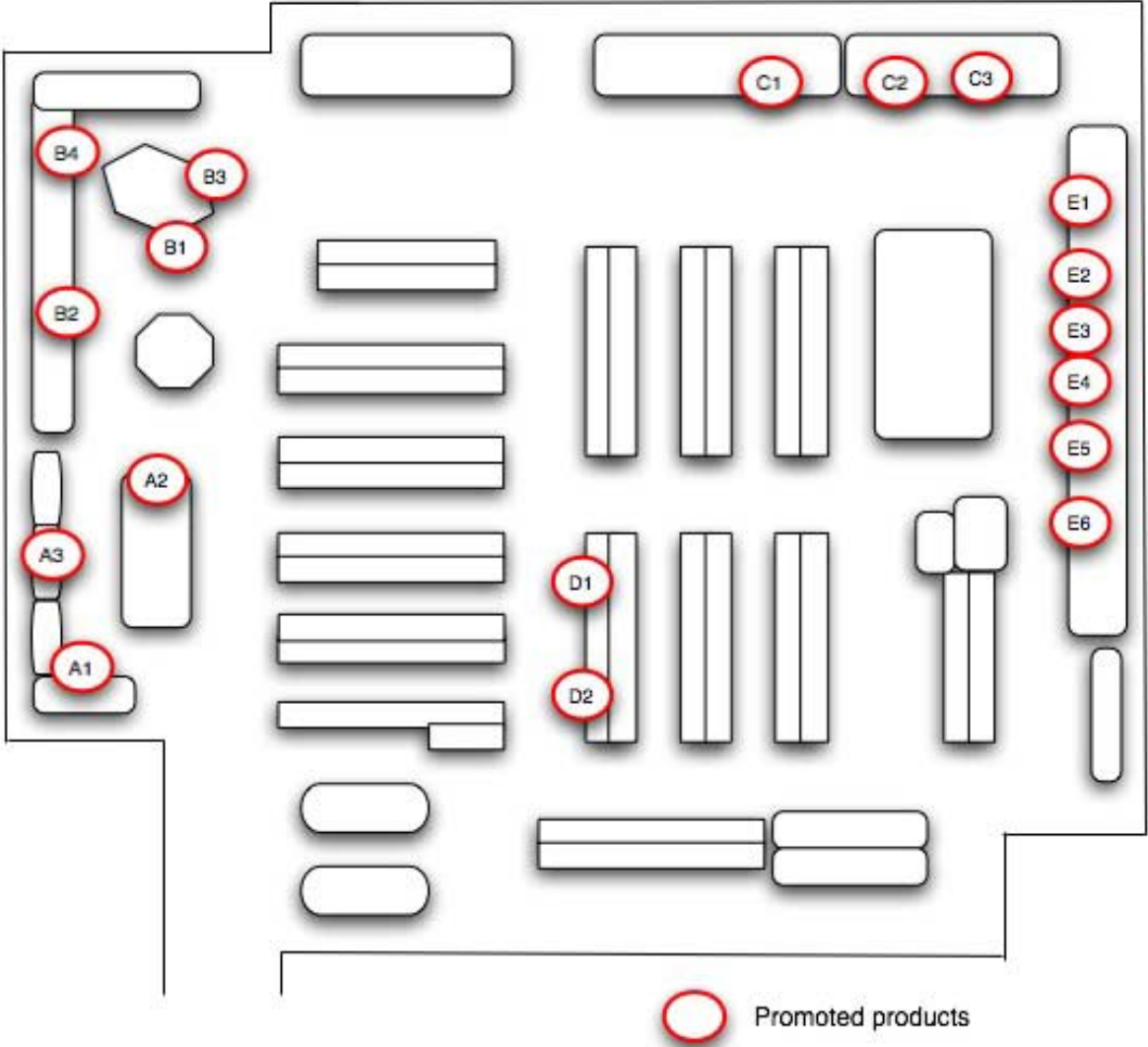|	Male	Female	Age		ASF
	X		Under 20		X
			21-40		
			41-60		
			X 61+		

C1 C2 C3

12 sek

34 sek

B4
B3
B2
B1

E1
E2
E3
E4
E5
E6

18 sek

A3
A2 20 sek
A1

D1

D2

Time

Enter	1200
Exit	1208
Total	8

High margin areas

A	B	C	D	E
1 produkt ingen promoterte	1 promotert produkt			3 produkter, ingen promoterte

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ICA Supermarket, Linero

Location of the promoted products

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