

Job title: Buyer

Core information

Location: London head office ▾ Hybrid working ▾	Line of Business or Shared Capability Area: John Lewis Commercial
Reports to: Buying Manager	
People Management: Yes ▾ Assignment Management: Yes ▾	
Partnership Level: Partnership level 6	Manager's Partnership level: Partnership level 5
Number of direct reports: Up to 4	Partnership level(s) of direct reports: Partnership level 8 Partnership level 9 ▾

About the John Lewis Partnership

The Partnership is the UK's largest employee-owned business and home to our two well-loved retail brands - John Lewis & Partners and Waitrose & Partners, as well as expanding into new areas beyond retail.

We aren't an ordinary business though. The Partnership is different because everyone who works here isn't just an employee. We are Partners, with a shared responsibility for our success, and we share the rewards when we're successful.

Everything we do is powered by our unique purpose: **Working in Partnership for a happier world.** Our Purpose inspires our principles, drives our decisions and acts as our guide, so that everything we do contributes to Happier People, Happier Business and a Happier World.

Critical purpose of the role

You will be a highly experienced Buyer who uses their expert knowledge to plan and buy the best range for customers within your category. Your remit will be to deliver agreed KPIs including; sales, profit, stock, margin and achieving required customer metrics and hit rates.

You will be buying an assortment of high strategic importance and/or complexity within your category's commercial product assortment that optimises market trends and creates a competitive advantage. You will be an experienced negotiator adept at independently managing supplier relationships.

Working with your merchandiser, you will analyse commercial input and market data from all channels to develop and bring to market, own brand and /or branded ranges, working alongside all relevant specialist functions to deliver a category assortment with a competitive pricing architecture.

You will maximise opportunities as they arise and lead the in-season trading to potentialise the outcome for both customers and your category.

You will be People Manager of your category team's Buying Assistants, creating the conditions for them to thrive, and balancing their focus and priorities as required.

You will take an active role in supporting the Buying Manager/ Category Lead in leading the team and as a highly experienced Buyer, and take responsibility for coaching the team through challenges . You may be asked to have oversight over the roll-up of other offices within your Category.

Responsible for sourcing Pan-Partnership product for relevant categories



Primary Outcomes & Accountabilities

- Act in accordance with the Partnership's purpose and democratic principles, constructively participating in co-ownership, and demonstrating to customers and each other that it is a better way of doing business. Share your knowledge, experiences, ideas and opinion to improve the Partnership, speaking honestly and frequently.
- Invest in your personal and professional development to achieve your potential, by doing more, doing better, or doing different. Continuously engage with and actively contribute to your Profession.
- You will work at pace and agility within a collaborative environment with your Buying Manager L5, Head of Buying, Trade Planning, Trading & Product Operations team, Design and Product Technology. Externally you will hold a strong relationship with your suppliers, Brands and external teams.
- You will be accountable for the commercial success of a product range as defined and agreed with your Buying Manager L5 and the commercial and customer success of a product range through range planning and agile in-season trading.
- You will ensure you have up to date expert market knowledge for the category and can predict future market dynamics.
- You are accountable for building and maintaining strong supplier relationships ensuring that they adhere to the required standards and agreed terms.
- You will be accountable for making decisions on the product assortment: development, sourcing, brand positioning, price structure and margins. These will be in line with category and customer strategy. In collaboration with merchandising, you will need to make season trading and volume decisions along with the commercial terms and product lifecycle with the suppliers.
- You may need to deputise for your Buying Manager L5 when appropriate.
- Team Management and Development:
 - Foster a collaborative and high-performance team culture, providing leadership and guidance to the buying team.
 - Support the professional development and growth of team members, ensuring a skilled and motivated workforce capable of achieving departmental objectives

Measures of success

Margin and Controllable Contribution:

Monitor and optimise margin performance, ensuring profitability while effectively managing costs.

Implement strategies to maximise contribution margin across the category, driving overall financial performance.

Cost of Goods Sold (COGs) Management:

Analyse and manage COGs to ensure competitive pricing while maintaining quality standards.

Implement cost-saving initiatives without compromising on product quality or customer satisfaction.

Sales Revenue and Market Share:

Drive sales revenue growth through effective assortment planning and promotional strategies.

Monitor market share metrics and implement strategies to gain market share within the category.

Reduction in Stock Loss and Improvement in Cash Flow:

Identify opportunities to reduce stock loss and optimise inventory management practices.

Improve cash flow by implementing efficient purchasing and inventory replenishment strategies.

Partner Net Promoter Score (NPS) and Customer Satisfaction Metrics:

Monitor Partner NPS and customer satisfaction metrics to gauge the impact of assortment decisions on overall satisfaction.

Implement feedback mechanisms and initiatives to enhance partner and customer experience.

Sustainability Impact within the Category:

Track and report on sustainability metrics relevant to the category, such as reduction in environmental footprint or use of sustainable materials.

Implement initiatives to enhance sustainability practices within the category, aligning with corporate sustainability goals.

Speed to Market and Responsiveness to Market Changes:

Measure the speed to market for new products and

-Lead success-driven, cross-department working through effective stakeholder relationships. Lead through change.

- You will be People Manager to your team's Buying Assistant partner/s. Providing Coaching, development and feedback.
- You will complete the following activities:

- Support the Buying Manager L5 in creating conditions for all Partners to thrive and achieve their potential

-Responsible for all commercial negotiations inclusive of marketing funds (Media Sales team responsible for implementation & briefing (on-site + agencies))

-Speciality areas, such as Beauty, will be responsible for additional activities within physical estate planning & asset sales

- Support the Buying Manager L5 in building a product strategy.

- Develop and buy market leading own brand and/or branded ranges, managing product lifecycle from launch to exit of product ranges.

- Collaborate with specialist functions to plan and develop ranges.

- Collaborate with specialist functions to develop a sourcing strategy for your product assortment, delivering category margin targets & ensuring your supply base complies with all CSR and legal requirements.

- Collaborate with Merchandiser to prepare and share Standardised Range Plan, in line with critical path, to hand over to the Central Operations Team.

- Alongside Merchandiser, sign off product ranges and branch grading with Buying Manager L5, and Head of Buying when required, using reporting from Product Operations.

- Propose Balance To Achieve across commercial KPIs for the assortment each month in collaboration with the Merchandiser.

- Work with Merchandisers in your team to ensure Buying office negotiated rebates targets are achieved.

- Work with and comply with all critical path requirements as necessary.

- Support projects as required to support category customer experience.

- Manage relationships with central teams to support outcomes.)

assortments, ensuring timely launches and responsiveness to market trends.

Implement agile processes to adapt to market changes quickly, maximising commercial opportunities and minimising risks.

Successful Implementation of Promotional Strategies:

Evaluate the effectiveness of promotional strategies in driving sales and profitability.

Monitor key performance indicators (KPIs) related to promotions, such as uplift in sales and ROI, to assess success and optimise future campaigns.

Team Management and Development:

Foster a collaborative and high-performance team culture, providing leadership and guidance to the buying team.

Support the professional development and growth of team members, ensuring a skilled and motivated workforce capable of achieving departmental objectives.

Integrate AI solutions to enhance team productivity and process efficiency.



Skills

- **Showing Innovation**
 - Explores possibilities with enthusiasm and acts on instinct to generate well formed ideas and understands how new concepts, theories and ideas fit in with future direction and business objectives. As a result, this develops new objectives and initiatives for the business.
- **Relationship Building**
 - Authentically and proactively interacts with everyone, building rapport and making a positive impression in order to collaborate and build lasting connections across the Partnership and beyond to other businesses and contacts. Once formed, understands how to navigate politics and the impact these have on the workplace in order to get things done.
- **Commerciality**
 - Demonstrates an innate passion for and understanding of Retail. This includes knowledge of our competitors and the wider social, political and economic factors which impact our business. Understands the Partnership business model and our integrated objectives and uses this understanding to make well informed decisions that support key business objectives.
- **Customer Centric mindset**
 - Puts every customer, both internal and external, at the heart of everything, and understands the Partnership ambition to offer differentiated service that is aligned to our Values. Understands that they are empowered to deliver incredible service for every type of customer with whom they interact and act on this every time in every environment.
- **Influencing & Negotiation**
 - Works collaboratively to achieve the optimum and mutual agreement for a way forward for all parties. Resolves professional differences along the way through active listening and appropriate assertive communication to reach a win-win outcome. Is prepared to adapt communication style to each situation and has the best interest of the Partnership at the forefront of all interactions.

Qualifications & Experience (where applicable)

Essential

- **Retail Industry Experience:** A minimum of 2-5 years' experience in the retail industry, with a focus on buying, category management, or product management within the designated category. Direct experience in buying practices, merchandising strategies, and supplier negotiations is helpful for this role.
- **Negotiation Skills:** Good negotiation skills and experience in leading strategic commercial negotiations with suppliers and vendors to secure favourable terms and agreements, maximising value and profitability for the category.
- **Category Expertise:** In-depth knowledge and expertise within the designated category, including an understanding of product trends, customer preferences, and industry dynamics. Direct experience in range planning, product assortment development, and brand management within the category is highly desirable.
- **Communication Skills:** Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, both written and verbal, with the ability to effectively communicate ideas, negotiate agreements, and build relationships with internal and external stakeholders.

Desirable

- Category specific knowledge or experience.

Version	Created/updated by	Date
v1	Radek Palinowski	26/06/2024