JULIAN MERCER

BUYER

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Buyer with 8+ years selecting and negotiating vendor assortments for beauty and sporting goods retailers. Builds buy plans from sales data, negotiates margin and terms, and manages open-to-buy so categories grow without carrying excess stock.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Senior Buyer Mar 2023 - Present
Ulta Beauty, Bolingbrook, IL

- Buy a $90M skin care category, setting the assortment and managing open-to-buy across more than 60 vendors.
- Negotiated improved cost and markdown support with eight vendors, adding about 1.5 points of category margin.
- Cut slow-moving items by 14% through a quarterly assortment review and refocused space on top sellers.
- Mentor an assistant buyer on line reviews, purchase orders, and sales analysis.

Buyer Feb 2021 - Feb 2023

- Managed a $35M hair care assortment and wrote seasonal buy plans using sales trends and vendor insight.
- Launched 40 new items per season after vendor reviews, with 70% meeting their first-quarter sales targets.
- Reviewed weekly sell-through and reorder points, which improved in-stock rate from 93% to 96%.
- Planned promotions with marketing and vendors, delivering event sales above plan in four of five events.

Assistant Buyer Aug 2019 - Jan 2021
Kohl's, Menomonee Falls, WI

- Placed and tracked purchase orders for activewear and checked delivery dates and costs with suppliers.
- Analysed sales by style and size, and suggested reorders that lowered missed sales on best sellers.
- Compared vendor lead times and landed costs on 25 styles and shifted two orders to faster suppliers, which reduced stockouts at peak season.
- Prepared line review presentations and sample comparisons for the buyer and divisional merchandise manager.

Buying Associate Jun 2018 - Jul 2019
Dick's Sporting Goods, Pittsburgh, PA

- Maintained item setup, cost files, and vendor data for footwear, resolving errors before they delayed shipments.
- Built a size curve template from three seasons of sales history that the team used to set initial buys for footwear and cut early markdowns.
- Built weekly sales and inventory reports that supported markdown and reorder decisions.
- Assisted with vendor meetings and recorded negotiation outcomes and follow-up items.

CORE SKILLS

Vendor negotiation | Assortment planning | Open-to-buy | Buy plans | Line reviews | Margin management | Sales analysis | Purchase orders | Sell-through analysis | Promotion planning | Supplier relationships | Forecasting | Excel | SQL | Tableau

EDUCATION

B.S. in Merchandising, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN

CERTIFICATIONS

Microsoft Office Specialist: Excel Expert | Google Data Analytics Certificate | Tableau Desktop Specialist