



Neurolabs



PLAYBOOK

The Perfect Store KPI Playbook

How CPG teams define, measure and act on the five levers of in-store execution

28

CPG brands and bottlers, in real conversations

The insight behind this playbook, across EMEA and the Americas

Introduction

Every CPG business has a version of perfect store execution. Some call it a picture of success, some call it PICOS, some call it a store check standard. The name changes. The commercial logic does not: when the right range sits on the right shelf, at the right share, at the right price, with the promotion and the display live, that store sells more.

Most brands agree on the ambition. Far fewer agree on how to measure it.

What counts as a facing?

Is a product in the back room out of stock?

Does "2 for £5" pass a price check if the tag shows a unit price?

Does a display count as executed if one qualifying SKU is on it?

Those rules decide whether a perfect store score means anything. They also decide whether the score arrives in time to fix the store or just describes a week that has already gone.

This playbook is built from what 28 CPG brands and bottlers across EMEA and the Americas told us about how they run perfect store today: the KPIs they track, the rules behind them and where the process breaks. Every example is anonymised. The goal is practical. By the end you should be able to write or rewrite a perfect store scorecard that is precise, fair to the field and quick enough to act on.

BUILT FROM REAL CONVERSATIONS

28

CPG brands and bottlers

9

in EMEA

19

in the Americas

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CHAPTER 01

What brands call the perfect store

A perfect store programme sets one standard for what a store should look like, and what the field should do, when it is trading well for your brand. It turns a commercial plan, the range, space, promotions and activation you agreed with the retailer, into a checklist the field can score and act on.

Across the conversations behind this playbook, five levers come up again and again:

-
- 01 **Availability.** Is every SKU in the agreed range on shelf and shoppable?
 - 02 **Share of shelf.** Do you hold the space you agreed or paid for, against the competitors that matter?
 - 03 **Price and promotion.** Is the shelf-edge price in line with expectations? Is the promotional mechanic live as agreed?
 - 04 **Secondary space, displays, POSM and coolers.** Were the end caps, FSDUs, shippers, branded coolers and point-of-sale materials you funded actually set up?
 - 05 **Planogram and contract compliance.** Does the shelf layout follow the plan, the brand block and the contracted position?
-

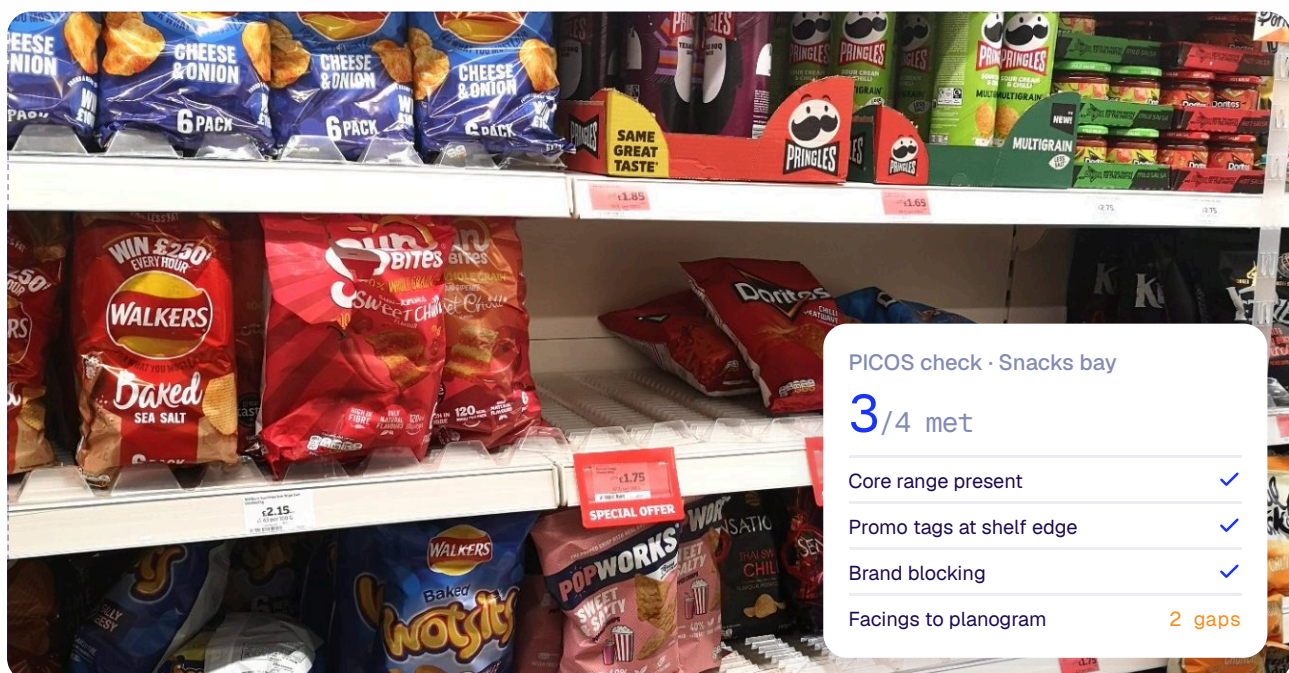
Teams weight these levers differently by market, channel and category. That is the right instinct. A perfect store standard should describe what good looks like in a specific store type, not a single global ideal.

The standard is rarely visual alone. Many bottlers pair the picture with sales priorities: the actions a rep must complete on each visit, such as selling in a new SKU, placing a cooler or agreeing a secondary display. The strongest frameworks hold visuals, actions and definitions in one place, so each channel and store type gets the version that fits it.

Picture of success and PICOS

Picture of success, often shortened to PICOS, is the term many bottlers and CPG field teams use for their perfect store standard. In practice it is usually a channel-by-channel visual reference: what a cooler, an ambient rack, a gondola end or a till-point fixture should look like in a convenience store versus a hypermarket. Reps score each visit against it, often from 0 to 100.

The strength of PICOS is that it is visual and specific. The weakness is the same as any perfect store standard: if the score lands weeks after the visit, it grades the past instead of improving the present.



CHAPTER 02

What 28 CPG teams actually measure

We looked at how 9 brands in EMEA and 19 brands and bottlers in the US and Latin America describe their perfect store priorities. This is not a survey. It reflects which levers each team raised as a priority in conversation, so treat the numbers as directional.

Lever raised as a priority

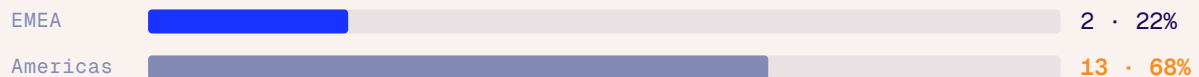
■ EMEA (9 brands) ■ Americas (19 brands)

● Orange figure = top priority in region

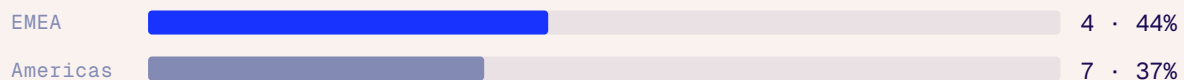
Share of shelf / facings



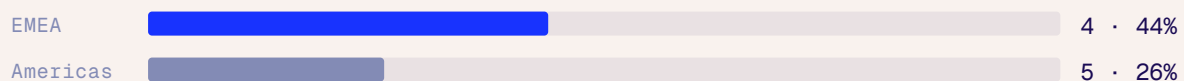
Price and promotion compliance



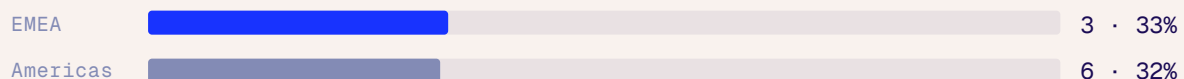
Secondary space, displays, POSM, coolers



Availability / out of stock



Planogram / contract compliance



Number of teams that raised each lever as a priority and share of teams in that region.

Three findings stand out

01 EMEA leads with share of shelf. The Americas lead with price.

In EMEA, facings and share of shelf were the most common priority, usually measured against named competitors. In the US and Latin America, price and promotion compliance came first by a distance, driven largely by beverage bottlers and confectionery brands where shelf price is part of the commercial agreement.

02 Secondary space is a priority everywhere.

Roughly four in ten teams in both regions put displays, POSM or coolers near the top of the list. For several it is the core KPI, because that is where trade spend is most concentrated and least verified.

03 The same two frustrations repeat across both regions.

First, the data arrives too late: display reviews two weeks behind, store check scores a month after the visit, manual audits taking 40 minutes per store. Second, teams take huge volumes of photos that nobody has time to review. One brand holds more than ten million field photos that have never been indexed. Most teams also want results inside the sales force automation tool their reps already use, not in another app.

⚠ DATA ARRIVES TOO LATE

4 weeks

From data collection to insight

⚠ PHOTOS NOBODY REVIEWS

10M+

Field photos one brand holds that have never been indexed

CHAPTER 03

Availability

Availability is the lever closest to lost volume. If the product is not on shelf, nothing else on the scorecard matters for that SKU.

The KPI

FORMULA

On-shelf availability (%) = SKUs present on shelf ÷ SKUs in the agreed range for that store × 100

Measure it per store per visit, then roll up by banner, region and SKU. The SKU view is usually the most useful: it tells you whether you have a store problem or a supply problem.

The rules that matter

- 01 Separate true out of stock from out of shelf.** A product with stock in the back room is a merchandising failure, not a supply failure. The fix is different, so the reason code should be too. Several teams told us this distinction is their first ask.
- 02 Flag misplaced product.** A SKU on the wrong shelf or in the wrong bay is lost to the shopper even though it's in the store.

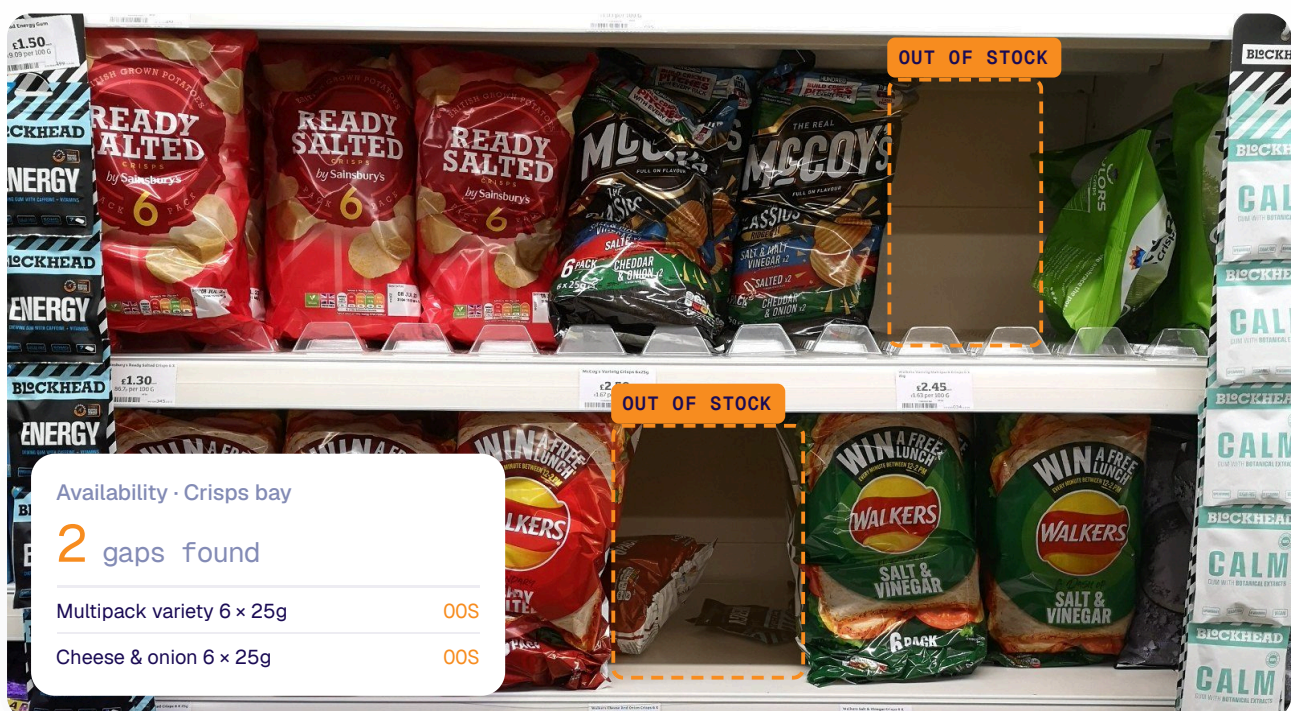


- 03 Track repeat misses.** A single missing SKU on one visit may be noise. The same SKU missing across three consecutive visits is a pattern. One brand told us it wants exactly that alert.
- 04 Decide how gaps count.** If a facing is empty, does it count against availability, share of shelf or both? Pick one rule and apply it everywhere.
- 05 Match the KPI to the channel.** One brand told us that in cash and carry, availability is the only KPI that matters and facings are irrelevant. In modern trade the same brand weights share of shelf far higher.



Where it goes wrong

Availability scored from a monthly sample tells you a store was out of stock at some point. It does not tell you for how long or what it cost. The value is in spotting the hole the day it opens, then sending someone who can fill it.



CHAPTER 04

Share of shelf

Share of shelf tells you whether you hold the space you agreed or paid for. It's the most common perfect store KPI in EMEA and one of the most argued about, because small changes in counting rules move the number.

Two ways to calculate it

FORMULA A

Facings share of shelf (%) = your brand's facings ÷ total facings in the category × 100

FORMULA B

Linear share of shelf (%) = your brand's shelf length ÷ total category shelf length × 100

Facings share is easier to count and easier to explain to the field. Linear share is a truer reflection of the space a shopper sees, especially when pack sizes differ. One confectionery brand we spoke to tracks both and calculates them across every photo taken in a visit, not photo by photo.



The rules that matter

- 01 **Count front facings only.** Several teams exclude products stacked on top or behind the front row.
- 02 **Decide how empty facings count.** One frozen food brand counts gaps as out of stock rather than as lost share. Either rule can work. Mixing them across markets breaks comparisons.
- 03 **Define the category boundary.** Mixed shelves make share by category hard. One sauces brand told us its products share bays with unrelated categories, so it needs competitor facings by SKU rather than a single category share.
- 04 **Set targets by segment, not just category.** One spirits brand requires 80% or more of facings in its premium vodka segment. Today its reps count those facings one by one.
- 05 **Set rules by channel.** The same brand may calculate share differently in wholesale, modern trade and convenience. Write that down in the standard so the number is comparable within a channel.



Fair share

Share of shelf on its own does not tell you whether the space is right. Compare it to your value share of the category. If your share of shelf is well below your share of sales, you are likely losing volume to out of stocks and lost visibility. If it's well above, the retailer may push back at the next range review.

CHAPTER 05

Price and promotion compliance

Price and promotion compliance was the most common priority in the Americas. The reason is commercial: for many bottlers and confectionery brands, shelf price is part of the agreement with the retailer. Execution scores are also increasingly tied to rep incentives.

The KPI

FORMULA

Price compliance (%) = SKUs with a correct, visible shelf price ÷ SKUs checked × 100

One bottler breaks this into two steps, which makes the failure easier to fix: first, is the item priced at all? Second, does the price match the reference price?

The rules that matter

- 01 Read the mechanic as written.** A promotion of "2 for £5" should be checked as "2 for £5", not converted to a unit price. Converting hides the most common failure: the mechanic is missing even though the price is roughly right.
- 02 Use a failure taxonomy.** One bottler wants every failure classified as no product, no price, wrong price or wrong fixture. Each one has a different owner and a different fix.

Example. The plan says 2 for £5. The shelf tag shows £2.50 each, with no mention of the offer.

CONVERTED TO UNIT PRICE

Planned	2 for £5
Converted to	£2.50 each
Tag shows	£2.50 each

✗ Passes, wrongly

The shopper never sees the offer, so the promotion does not run. The score says it did.

READ AS WRITTEN

Planned	2 for £5
Checked as	2 for £5
Tag shows	£2.50 each

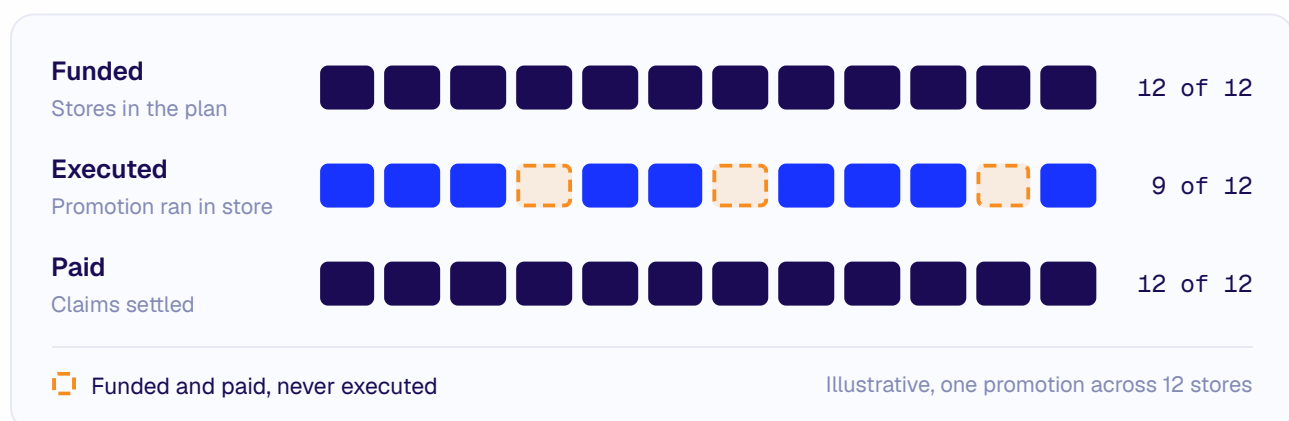
✓ Fails: mechanic missing

The gap is caught and routed to whoever owns shelf-edge material.

- 03 **Use ranges where prices are not fixed.** In markets where you cannot set the shelf price, check against a target range. Teams we spoke to use thresholds such as plus or minus 10% of suggested retail price, or a maximum price per pack.
- 04 **Get the tag-to-product link right.** The hardest part of automated price checks is linking the right tag to the right product, especially with similar pack sizes side by side. Ask any vendor how they handle it.
- 05 **Keep it fair.** If price compliance feeds a rep incentive, the audit has to be consistent across stores and reps. That argues for one rule set applied by the same method everywhere.

Promotion execution

Promotion compliance asks a bigger question than price: did the activity we funded actually happen in the stores we funded it in? One brand runs more than 2,000 promotion files a month and has no reliable way to check which ones executed in store. The result is promotion payments made on trust and post-campaign reviews that cannot separate a weak mechanic from a weak execution.



2,000+

 PAID ON TRUST

Promotion files one brand runs each month, with no reliable way to check which ones executed in store

CHAPTER 06

Secondary space, displays, POSM and coolers

A large share of trade spend is activated off the base shelf: end caps, gondola ends, FSDUs, shippers, pallets, branded coolers and the point-of-sale materials that go with them. Those placements are where the money is most specific and the read is weakest.

The KPI

Start simple:

FORMULA

Display execution (%) = funded displays found executed ÷ funded displays due × 100

Then add a reason code for every miss. One bottler rolling out display checks began with exactly that: a yes or no per display, plus a reason when the answer is no. It covers about a third of customers today with a plan to reach all of them.

The rules that matter

- 01 **Define what "executed" means.** A display with one qualifying SKU may pass today. Some displays should require more. One bottler wants a minimum of four SKUs on a specific multi-pack display before it counts.
- 02 **Check the paid end cap properly.** One food brand checks paid end caps monthly for four things: the right SKUs, no competitor product, POSM present and at least 30% own-product mix.
- 03 **Check coolers for purity and asset compliance.** Branded coolers are a capital asset. One brewer has around 100,000 branded fridges to check for asset and POSM compliance. Another beverage brand wants cooler purity checks to catch competitor product in its own fridges.

- 04 Count fixtures and materials separately.** One brand scores posters, primary execution (shelf tape and price tags) and secondary frames as three separate items. A display frame counts once, separate from the posters inside it.
- 05 Score speed, not just presence.** One brand's manual review of secondary placements runs about two weeks behind. By the time a correction is issued, the display has often come down.



⚠️ TOO MANY TO CHECK BY HAND

100,000

Branded fridges one brewer has to check for asset and POSM compliance

⚠️ DATA ARRIVES TOO LATE

2 weeks

How far one brand's manual review of secondary placements runs behind

CHAPTER 07

Planogram compliance and what to do without a planogram

When there is a planogram

FORMULA

Planogram compliance (%) = positions matching the planogram ÷ positions in the planogram × 100

Planogram compliance checks that the shelf follows the agreed layout: the right SKUs in the right positions, the brand block intact and the contracted facings and shelf height delivered. One biscuit brand's KPI for next year is a single measured brand block across its sub-categories. A brewer tracks contract compliance on facings and position.

The challenge is scale. One beauty retailer we spoke to runs 17 planogram cycles a year across 3,000 franchise stores from static PDFs. Each cycle takes more than three days to execute against a target of half a day. A beverage bottler audits cold vault space compliance by hand in spreadsheets at around 40 minutes per store.

REAL EXAMPLE

A beauty retailer, from our conversations

 6× OVER TARGET

17

Planogram cycles a year

3,000

Franchise stores, run from static PDFs

3+ days

Per cycle, against a target of half a day

When there is no planogram that holds

The classic perfect store assumes a planogram. Many estates don't have one that holds. Some chains run thousands of store-level planograms. Some franchisees don't follow one at all. In traditional trade there was never a plan. Brands that sell through agencies, or into retailers that own the planogram, don't control the layout.

That doesn't stop you measuring. Three approaches work:

01 Measure what doesn't need a plan.

Of the five levers, only space and placement need a planogram. Availability, price and promotion presence can all be checked without one.

02 Track adjacency.

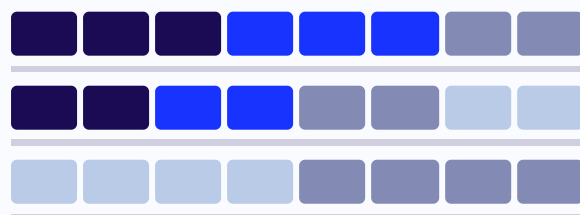
One spirits brand that cannot control retailer planograms tracks adjacency instead: its brands next to the specific competitors it wants to be compared with.

03 Learn the standard from your best stores.

Image recognition captures the realogram of each store, the layout as it really is. Compare stores against each other, find what your best-performing stores have in common, then make that the standard. One healthcare brand with no planogram KPI wants exactly this to compare shelves before and after category resets.

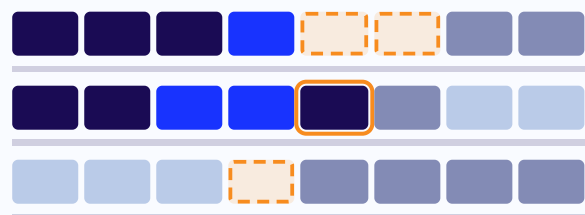
PLANOGRAM

The layout as planned



REALOGRAM

The layout as it really is



Gap Product in the wrong place

Each colour is one SKU family

CHAPTER 08

Building a scorecard that holds up

A perfect store scorecard is only useful if the field trusts it and managers can act on it. Use this structure as a starting point.

LEVER	KPI	KEY RULE TO WRITE DOWN	MODERN TRADE	CONVENIENCE
01 Availability	On-shelf availability %	True OOS vs out of shelf	30%	30%
02 Share of shelf	Facings or linear share %	Front facings only, gaps rule	25%	10%
03 Price and promotion	Price compliance %, promo live	Read mechanic as written	20%	25%
04 Secondary space and POSM	Display execution %, cooler purity	Minimum qualifying SKUs	15%	30%
05 Planogram	Planogram compliance %	Or best-store standard	10%	5%
TOTAL WEIGHT  Heaviest lever per channel			100%	100%

The weights above are illustrative. Set your own from where volume is won and lost in each channel.

Five principles

- 1 One rule set, written down.**
 Every counting rule in this playbook should appear in your standard. If two markets count facings differently, their scores are not comparable.
- 2 Weights by channel.**
 A cash and carry outlet and a convenience store should not share a scorecard.
- 3 Reason codes for every miss.**
 A score tells you how a store did. A reason tells you what to do next.
- 4 Fair to the field.**
 If scores feed incentives, apply the same method to every store and rep.
- 5 Scores in the tools reps already use.**
 Results should land in your SFA, not in a separate dashboard nobody opens on the road.



CHAPTER 09

From score to action to increased sales

The most common complaint across both regions was not about KPIs. It was about time. Scores that land two weeks or a month after the visit describe a trading period you can no longer change. A missing facing spotted on Tuesday can be recovered inside the week. The same gap reported next month is just a lower score in a deck.

Three shifts turn a perfect store scorecard into a tool that recovers volume:

01

Evidence, not opinion.

Image-level proof of what was on shelf ends the debate about whose number is right and gives you something to take into the retailer meeting.

02

Coverage you choose.

Reading every outlet by hand is neither realistic nor economic. Faster visits mean the same team covers more ground. Photo evidence can also come from outlets a rep rarely reaches. Widen the store universe where it pays.

03

Action at the shelf.

The rep should get the gap, the reason and the next best action while still in the aisle, ranked by the volume at stake. Managers should see the same list, prioritised, while the promotion is still live.

That is what we mean by Execution Intelligence: the layer between what your commercial team planned and what the shelf actually delivered, in near real time, so you can act while it still matters.

CHAPTER 10

10 question self-assessment

Score one point for each yes.

- | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|
| 01 | Is your perfect store standard written down by channel? | ☐ |
| 02 | Do you separate true out of stock from product in the back room? | ☐ |
| 03 | Are your share of shelf counting rules the same in every market? | ☐ |
| 04 | Do you compare share of shelf with share of sales? | ☐ |
| 05 | Do you check promotional mechanics as written, not as a unit price? | ☐ |
| 06 | Does every price or display failure carry a reason code? | ☐ |
| 07 | Can you prove which funded displays and coolers were executed this month? | ☐ |
| 08 | Do you have a standard for stores where no planogram holds? | ☐ |
| 09 | Do scores reach reps and managers within days, not weeks? | ☐ |
| 10 | Do results appear in the SFA your reps already use? | ☐ |

YOUR SCORE**0-4****FOUNDATIONS**

Start with written rules for availability and price, the two levers that move volume fastest.

5-7**SPEED**

The standard is sound but the data is probably too slow.

8-10**READY**

Your programme is built to act.

EXECUTION INTELLIGENCE

Close the gaps your score just showed you

Neurolabs turns the shelf photos your teams already take into a scored, reason-coded view of every store, in near real time. Results land in the SFA tool your reps already use, while there is still time to fix the shelf.

01	Availability	True out of stock separated from product in the back room
02	Share of shelf	Facings and linear share, counted by one rule set in every market
03	Price and promotion	Promotion mechanics read as written, with a reason code for every miss
04	Secondary space	Displays, POSM and coolers verified store by store
05	Planogram	A realogram for every store, with or without a planogram

50%

Store audit time cut

AG BARR

8x

Faster store visits

RANDSTAD

<4 wks

Live and fully catalogued

TYPICAL DEPLOYMENT

“Our reps spend more time selling and we have far greater confidence in our data.”

Head of Performance Analytics, AG Barr

See your perfect store data in actionneurolabs.ai/request-a-walkthrough**Book a walkthrough →**

ABOUT THIS RESEARCH

This playbook draws on discovery and customer conversations Neurolabs held with 28 CPG brands and bottlers across EMEA, North America and Latin America, covering food, beverages, confectionery, spirits, beauty, pet care and healthcare. Counts reflect which levers each team raised as a priority. All examples are anonymised.

ABOUT NEUROLABS

Neurolabs is the Execution Intelligence platform for CPG brands.

We give commercial teams objective, near real-time visibility of availability, share of shelf, pricing, promotion and display compliance across the stores that matter most, so they can fix execution while the window is still open.

[Request a walkthrough](#)