



shopperations

## CASE STUDY

# RIVIANA FOODS

HOW WE BUILT SHOPPER MARKETING  
CAPABILITIES IN < 90 DAYS



**CRAIG BILOW**

*Director of Shopper Marketing*

**“Studies have found that more than 40 to 50 percent of senior outside hires fail to achieve desired results,” states Michael D. Watkins, author of *The First 90 Days: Proven Strategies for Getting Up to Speed Faster and Smarter*.**

For many, this reality depends on their actions in the first 90 days on the job. This is why when Craig Bilow was given the opportunity to lead shopper marketing at Riviana Foods, he knew that he had a limited time to make an impact.

## THE PROBLEM

However, Bilow was up against more than just a corporate deadline to create results for Riviana. Like many shopper marketing leaders, Riviana was hampered by:



**Outdated spreadsheets requiring manual updating and maintenance**



**Difficulty understanding the client need with a part-time, headquarters-based shopper marketer**



**Fractured communication internally resulting in apprehension to invest in shopper marketing**



**Strained relationships between Riviana's field-based team and their retailer partners.**

If Riviana could overcome their process and operational challenges, Bilow knew that the shopper marketing would be able to enable source-level creativity, simplify communications, build transparency within the organization and create harmony between retailers and Riviana. And most importantly, drive sales for their business.

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## THE SOLUTION

Even with a clear plan, Bilow recognized that as the sole shopper marketing leader in the organization, he and his team needed a tool to enable the new shopper marketing strategy to come to life quickly. This is why he turned to Shopperations to digitize the management and planning of the complex shopper marketing programs Riviana runs.

Although Riviana has a decentralized shopper marketing organization and agency partner, Shopperations provides Bilow with a single view of shopper marketing budgets, planning and actuals. **This one-version-of-the-truth provides a high-level view of shopper marketing spending and activity while also making data-driven, on-the-fly planning decisions possible.**

Couple this with the ability to easily create selling materials for retail partners and Riviana has transformed collaboration for a more mutually beneficial partnership.

## THE RESULTS

For all of these capabilities to position shopper marketing as a driver in the company, Bilow and Shopperations worked together to move from idea to execution in just 90 days.

With such a short timeline, much was learned about how to position your organization for the launch of successful shopper marketing program:



**Value extreme transparency**



**Have a hands-on tech leader**



**Focus on the budget**



**Lead with confidence**

Employing these best practices with a best-in-class shopper marketing solution in Shopperations, not only led to a successful implementation and a successful first year, but also a 30% increase in shopper marketing investment after the first year.

Needless to say, Riviana Foods is embracing the more strategic approach to shopper marketing empowered by Shopperations. With this foundation, the future is filled with opportunities to expand creativity, build stronger relationships with retailers and drive results for Riviana Foods.

## **COVID-19**

The Covid-19 Pandemic turned every company's shopper marketing plans upside down. While no company could have anticipated the disruption, Riviana Foods and Shopperations were positioned to react to the need for immediate change.

- Within 24 hours of being asked to pause in-store shopper marketing programs by their retail partners, Riviana used Shopperations to identify EVERY program that was running or scheduled to run during the at-risk.
- With this information, the decentralized team was able to contact vendors to cancel impacted programs reducing outstanding liability for Riviana.
- The company was then able to bank these dollars for later investment once the landscape was better understood.