



Andy Manhart/Daily Nebraskan

Study: Suggestions do sell

By Chris Carroll
Staff Reporter

When shopping for gifts or clothes, people are more likely to be influenced by suggestive selling than when they are in a grocery store, a recent study by marketing professors showed.

Those purchasing groceries tend to favor particular brands and generally will purchase them, rather than less expensive brands, said Shelley Tapp, assistant professor of marketing at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Gift shoppers tend to be looking for ideas as well as gifts, she said, and rely on window displays and salespeople for suggestions, unlike the grocery shopper.

Tapp and Jeff Stoltman, a former assistant professor of marketing, conducted the research.

Tapp said students from business classes in the fall of 1987 were asked to fill out questionnaires about their shopping behaviors. Interviews also were conducted for the study, she

said.

The sampling was representative of typical shoppers, Tapp said, as more than 60 percent of the students were older students, married or lived in apartments off campus.

A gift shopper is more likely to enter a store if a window displays gifts that correlate with the price and subject matter he or she had in mind, Tapp said.

Once a customer is in the store, Tapp said, "How well your salesperson can click with customers," solidifying ideas for them, will determine if a sale is made.

Although gift shoppers are looking for suggestions, these shoppers have a more definite price range in mind than does the grocery shopper, Tapp said.

She said those purchasing gifts for others or clothes for themselves will take time to compare a more expensive item to one less expensive.

A shopper tends to consider who the gift is intended for and if a less expensive brand would be appropriate to the situation, Tapp said.

When completing an outfit for

themselves, shoppers may opt for the more expensive ones, especially if the outfits will be used for special occasions.

She said one way a salesperson can increase an overall sale is to suggest additional accessories, such as a scarf or belt.



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