

GUIDE TO *Winning With*
— WHOLE FOODS —
MARKET SHOPPERS



**WHOLE
FOODS**
MARKET

WHOLEFOODSMARKET.COM

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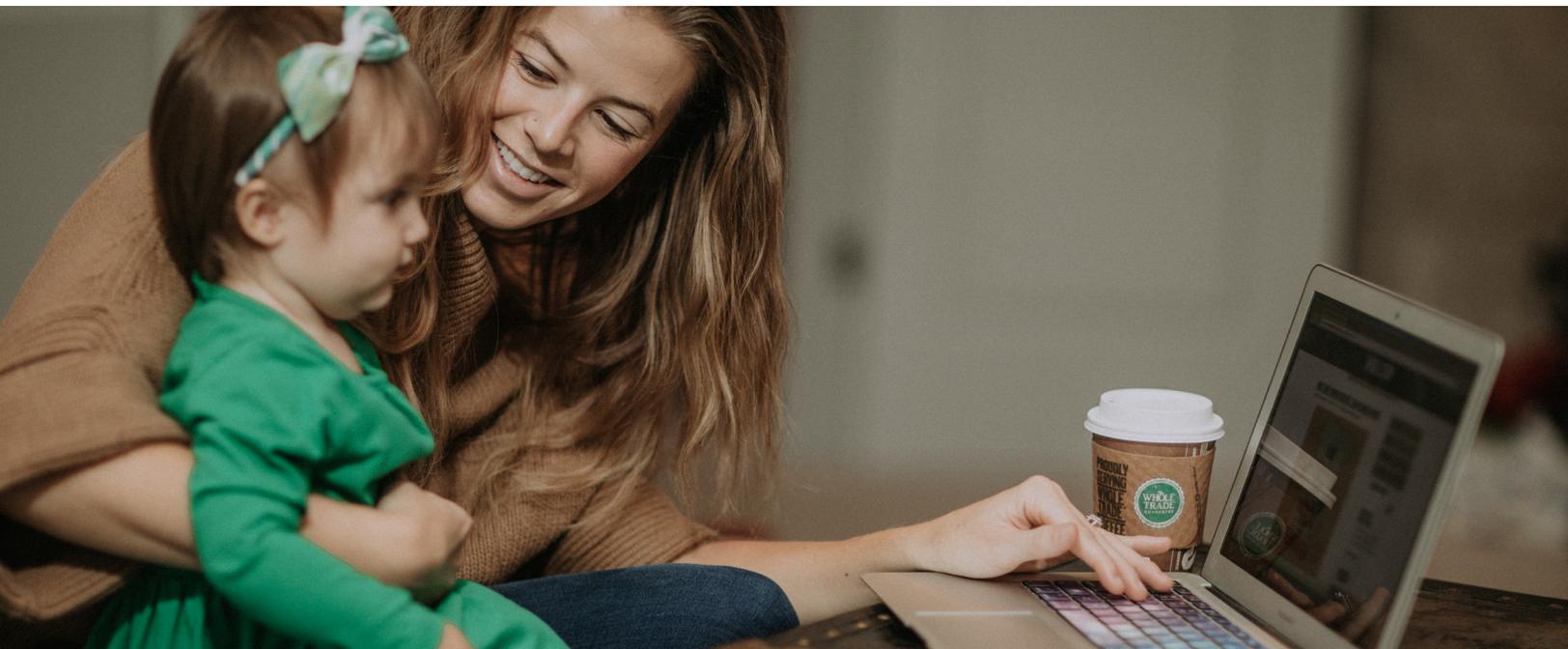
GREEN PURSE | PR

Natural products companies all over the world want to tap into the large and lucrative American market. For many, the dream is to get their products onto the shelves of Whole Foods Market, one of the country's leading natural foods grocer.

Green Purse PR understands Whole Foods Market shoppers extremely well. Nearly every single brand we have worked with over the past eight years is sold in Whole Foods Market. We've worked on behalf of our clients directly with Whole Foods Market, at the national level, regional level and store level. We have had outstanding success, such as with brands like, Saffron Road, now a Whole Foods Market super star.

We are literally inside Whole Foods Market stores nearly every single day of the year. We are constantly keeping a pulse on shopper perceptions through our online forum. Whole Foods Market is a substantial part of our business and a retailer close to our own hearts, We are keen to help more brands be successful and capture the attention of the extremely valuable and coveted Whole Foods Market shopper. With the recent acquisition of Whole Foods Market by Amazon, we are now also closely monitoring Amazon Prime subscribers. Subscribers of Amazon Prime who also shop at Whole Foods Market are an even more valuable shopper to understand and connect with.

Now let's take a deep dive into the Whole Foods Market shopper, shall we?



YOU DON'T REALLY KNOW A SHOPPER UNTIL YOU'VE SHOPPED WITH THEM.

That's our premise and the perspective from which we have built Green Purse PR, and our information products, like this one, designed to help you '#GetInHerCart,' which also happens to be the name of our blog.

Our public relations strategy and execution work is driven by our unique understanding of shoppers resulting from our shop-along research. Through our shop-alongs, we are able to uncover valuable shopper insights that impact everything from product packaging and retail merchandising, to brand imagery and social communications content.

We have conducted research with Whole Foods Market shoppers and have a good understanding of how they currently think, behave and buy. The goal of this *Guide to Winning with Whole Foods Market Shoppers* is to give you insight into the retailer's shoppers in general, and give you actionable steps to take your understanding to the next level - to get to know your shoppers buying products in your category. The shopper intelligence we share in this guide is based upon our shop-along research, one-on-one interviews, social listening, online surveys and questions in our private community where we are constantly learning from health-conscious mothers.



NOT ALL WHOLE FOODS MARKET SHOPPERS ARE THE SAME.

No kidding! Obviously we all know that, however there are some commonalities that are worth taking note of. After shopping along with hundreds of shoppers in grocery retailers from New York City to Singapore, we've become very good at identifying super useful insights to help our clients better understand, serve the needs of and connect with shoppers, especially women.



NOT ALL WHOLE FOODS MARKET SHOPPERS ARE THE SAME.

Here are some of the common ground Whole Foods Market shoppers tend to share.

- Healthy diet and lifestyle are a priority. This is the store people shop at if they care about things like antibiotic-free, pesticide-free, fair trade, humane, non-GMO, organic and overall just better for you options. Shoppers take comfort in knowing Whole Foods Market has standards for all products to meet minimum criteria, such as all meats sold at Whole Foods Market do not contain antibiotics.
- Better educated around topics pertaining to food and its direct connection to health and quality of life. This crowd is way more likely to value third party certifications or product attributes. For example, the Whole Foods Market shopper is more likely to appreciate terms such as grass fed, grass finished and non-GMO.
- Likely to have higher than average household incomes. These shoppers spend a lot of their disposable income at Whole Foods Market. Many shoppers tell us that aside from housing, they tend to spend most of their disposable income on weekly groceries at Whole Foods Market, as well as supplies ordered via Amazon.com. Shoppers often tell us they consider shopping at Whole Foods Market a good investment for themselves and their families' wellbeing. We hear shoppers recite the well-known saying, "pay now or pay later," with regards to staying healthy and staving off disease.



"I don't spend a lot of money on clothes, but I splurge when it comes to the food I consume."

image source: twitter.com/grocergeek

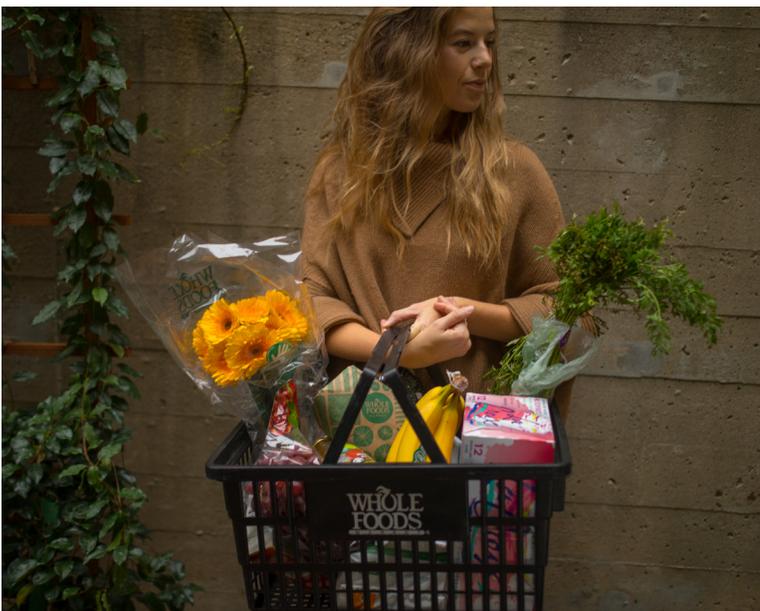
NOT ALL WHOLE FOODS MARKET SHOPPERS ARE THE SAME.

- Likely to live in a city or suburban area. Whole Foods Market is in 42 states across the country with currently 444 stores. Most stores are focused around larger metros and towns. You will not find Whole Foods Market stores in rural areas, at least not yet.
- She is Earth-friendly, meaning that she is likely to be the type of person who recycles. She probably brings her own grocery bags to the store (most of the time.) If she chooses to eat animal products like meat, she is likely to care how livestock are treated and will seek out products that pasture raised, and humanely raised.
- They shop here for their weekly groceries, but get enticed by other items too. “I’m a sucker for the Whole Body department,” one woman told us. While she may be popping in for her routine grocery shop, it’s common for her to spot something fun and new, like specialty bath salts, lip-gloss or a seasonal candle for her home.
- Willing to pay more for organic or non-GMO products.
- She loves discovering new or new-to-her products. She enjoys being ‘in-the-know,’ sharing new products with her network and chiming in on topics she is knowledgeable of and passionate about.
- While she may buy all (or nearly all) of her groceries at Whole Foods Market, she is likely to buy household staples, toiletries and cosmetics elsewhere. A lot of women tell us they prefer to buy their paper towels and toilet paper elsewhere, in bulk from Amazon.com or Costco.
- They learn about products on social media (especially Instagram.)
- She craves instant gratification. She is likely to be an Amazon Prime or Amazon Now subscriber.
- Likes to support local businesses, but comfortable with buying some products from around the world too.

WHAT SHE LOVES ABOUT WHOLE FOODS MARKET

It's important to understand that many Whole Foods Market shoppers are extremely loyal, and truly love their local store. Here are some of the things shoppers tell us they love most about shopping with Whole Foods Market.

- Curated selection of products she does not have to worry about, offering her peace of mind that she is making healthier choices.
- Pleasant shopping experience. While store amenities vary from store to store, shoppers tell us they enjoy the coffee shop, hot bar & salad bar, in-store dining, and cooking classes. For those who shop with Whole Foods Market online, they report that experience too is easy to navigate and quick.
- Discovering new (or new-to-her) products that she might not find anywhere else.
- Convenience. Having the option to order groceries online via Instacart and now also Amazon.com is such a help. While Instacart is not available everywhere in the USA, we find that a lot of city dwelling women (especially mothers) use Instacart regularly, combined with in-store shopping trips.



"One word - coffee." Why go to Starbucks when I can pop in for a quick coffee that tastes delicious and is healthier for me."

"I order some of my weekly staples from my phone on the Instacart app while I'm on the on my way to from work and schedule the delivery to arrive at my door around the time I get back home."

WHAT SHE LOVES ABOUT WHOLE FOODS MARKET

"Whole Foods changed my life! I started shopping there around 20 years ago. I love their standards; I inheritably trust them."

"I literally plan my Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners from the holiday booklets they have in the store during the holidays. Saves me a lot of time having to think about what all to make."

"The salad bar! I literally might starve during the work week without it."

"Where I live traffic is a nightmare. Being able to order some of my favorite products from Whole Foods on Amazon.com is a life changer. If I use Amazon Now, I can even get some products delivered within an hour or two."

"Love that I can buy most any kind of meat I want and know that it does not have antibiotics. I can also make special orders for custom meats, like beef sausage with a particular flavoring."

"As a Muslim, it's not always easy finding food options that are both halal and healthy. I can actually find quite a few things at Whole Foods that are halal."

"Whole Foods makes grocery shopping fun again. My infant loves looking at all the colorful fruit and vegetables."

"Vegan options at the food bar."

"My local store offers a punch card for coffees. When you've bought your 10th coffee (including specialty coffees,) the next one is free. A small perk, but it makes me feel appreciated."

"I almost always pop in during the mornings. You will rarely find me there on a weekend (too crowded,) but the mornings are so peaceful and perfect."

"Love that I can get produce from around the world. It's a treat to be able to buy some of the world's very best, like wine from France, pasta from Italy and lamb from New Zealand."

"I'm looking to nourish, not punish my body (and my family's.) Whole Foods makes healthier options easy and accessible."



WHAT SHE LOVES ABOUT WHOLE FOODS MARKET



"The fruit department is the best. I like to 'eat the rainbow' so to speak. There you can find all sorts of fruit from around the world, fruit that I've never seen or heard of before. I just recently discovered a citrus fruit there called Buddha's hand; looks appropriate for Halloween (it's an ugly fruit,) but delicious taste."



"My local Whole Foods has a lot of kid-friendly activities. We just did trick or treating for Halloween, there have been story times and tons of other events related to holidays and seasons."

HOW SHE RESEARCHES PRODUCTS

In addition to her own research that she might conduct, she relies most heavily upon Whole Foods Market to do most of the homework for her. The Whole Foods Market shoppers we spoke to have a high level of trust in the retailer, and overall feel comfortable buying most anything in the store as they believe Whole Foods Market has fairly strict criteria that products have to meet in order to get onto their shelves. When she does feel compelled to do her own research on products, she refers to Google, bloggers, her own personal network, and the Environmental Working Group.



“Usually I feel comfortable just trusting Whole Foods Market to make the call for me, but in some cases, like sunscreen, I’ve looked up sunscreen products in the Environmental Working Group database to see what they give better scores to.”

WHAT STANDS OUT TO HER AT THE RETAIL SHELF

- Beautiful merchandising. Pretty things catch her eye – floral displays, a beautiful display of fruit and creative end caps. Shoppers tell us they love to encounter a unique display and often they like to take photos and share on social media.
- Third party certifications like USDA Organic, Non-GMO, Global Animal Partnership, Certified Humane, Cruelty Free and Fair Trade.
- More information the better. She likes to see the people and stories behind the brand on packaging, shelf talkers and other in-store displays.



“My baby loves looking at the flowers each time we’re in the store. I take a lot of photos of her in the shopping cart admiring the flowers. Same thing for fall pumpkins, Christmas trees and other seasonal products.”

HOW SHE PERCEIVES AMAZON + WHOLE FOODS MARKET

As Amazon recently acquired Whole Foods Market, and changes such as price discounts, have already been implemented, we recently asked shoppers what they thought of the changes so far. Of those we surveyed, the majority are overwhelmingly positive. We anticipate that the average Whole Foods Market shopper will continue to welcome changes at Whole Foods Market and love the integration of Amazon Prime with a Whole Foods Market loyalty program.

"Of course I'm happy!! Amazon Prime is also going to become their loyalty program. The two companies are where we spend most of our money so any discounts and integrations are in our best interest. The first round of discounts are on organic foods we buy weekly so I'm thrilled."

"Two of my favorite things coming together! I'm excited to see how this plays out and look forward to hopefully being rewarded for all that I spend both with Amazon Prime and Whole Foods Market. I must qualify to be an official 'Whole Foodie' by now."

Look for the shopper experience with Whole Foods Market to get even more convenient and rewarding. Early research suggests also that Whole Foods Market is bringing in some new customers, mostly from other natural channel stores.

We will continue to monitor shopper perception as changes from Amazon (like the new Amazon Lockers) impact Whole Foods Market and its shoppers. Stay tuned to our #GetInHerCart blog, as we are likely to have more for you on this topic soon.

SHOPPER TOUCH POINTS

WHERE TO CONNECT WITH HER:

She is a heavy Instagram user, followed by Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter and SnapChat.

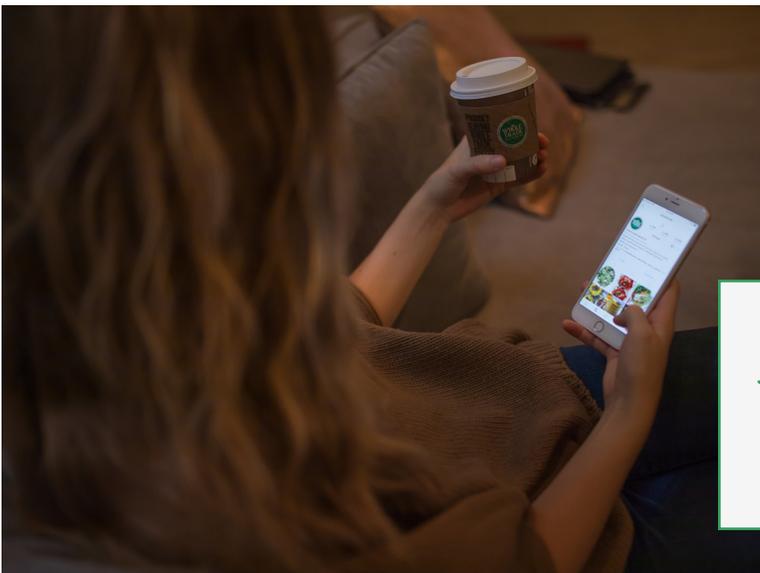


SHOPPER TOUCH POINTS

WHO SHE FOLLOWS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Here are a list of influencers, media outlets, and bloggers that Whole Foods Market shoppers tell us they follow on social media sites, like Instagram. These are ideal places for brands sold at Whole Foods Market to have their products showcased, either through editorial features, sponsored posts, content creation (like recipes,) collaborations or advertising.

<u>A Cup of Jo</u>	<u>Healthfully Ever After</u>	<u>Real and Vibrant</u>
<u>Alpha Foodie</u>	<u>Healthy Mood</u>	<u>Real Mom Nutrition</u>
<u>Brooklyn Supper</u>	<u>Hippie Lane</u>	<u>Sarah Waldman</u>
<u>Conscious Cooking</u>	<u>Hungry Blonde</u>	<u>Sharing Healthy Eats</u>
<u>Cookie & Kate</u>	<u>Isabel Eats</u>	<u>Skinny Taste</u>
<u>Eat the Gains</u>	<u>Jessica Gavin</u>	<u>The Colorful Kitchen</u>
<u>Eating Bird Food</u>	<u>Kale Junkie</u>	<u>The Mediterranean Dish</u>
<u>Eating Made Easy</u>	<u>Last Ingredient</u>	<u>The Original Dish</u>
<u>Feasting at Home</u>	<u>Love & Lemons</u>	<u>The Plantiful Chef</u>
<u>Feed Your Glow</u>	<u>Lyndi in the City</u>	<u>The Real Food RDs</u>
<u>Feel Good Foodie</u>	<u>Nutriliciously</u>	<u>Wellness Mama</u>
<u>Grass Fed Girl</u>	<u>Paleo Running Momma</u>	



*"I'm a sucker for marketing."
Suggests getting featured in popular blogs
like, A Cup of Jo. (When asked how brands
sold at WFM could best connect with her.)*

SHOPPER TOUCH POINTS

Aside from an interest in a healthy diet and lifestyle, Whole Foods Market shoppers report they are also following influencers who focus on health, fitness, exercise, travel, home décor, fashion, children's fashion and parenting.



"The best way to reach me is by being featured on Whole Foods' social media or health living blogs I follow. I also notice promotions in the store and demos."

SHOPPER TOUCH POINTS

MEDIA OUTLETS

She follows, reads regularly or subscribes to. These media outlets are also places where your products could be potentially featured via editorial, sponsorships or advertising.

[All Recipes](#)
[Chalkboard Mag](#)
[Civil Eats](#)
[Delish](#)
[Domino](#)
[Epicurious](#)
[Food Network](#)
[Food52](#)
[Glitter Guide](#)

[Goop](#)
[How You Glow](#)
[Huffington Post Parents](#)
[Kiwi Magazine](#)
[Mind Body Green](#)
[Modern Farmer](#)
[Oh She Glows](#)
[PopSugar](#)
[Real Simple](#)

[Refinery29](#)
[Saveur](#)
[Scary Mommy](#)
[Shape Magazine](#)
[The Kitchn](#)
[Well + Good](#)
[Women's Health](#)
[BRIT+CO](#)

The Best Beauty Products for Moms-To-Be

Where possible, incorporate organic and natural products into your routine during pregnancy. Check out our Natural and Organic Skincare issue for more ideas on products that you can use while pregnant.



Mama Mio

A skincare brand created by four beauty experts who developed products for problem areas (stretch marks, bust firmers, and a cooling serum for the legs). Their products have what they call "no nasties" in them, meaning no parabens, petroleum, phthalates, colorants, sodium laureth, sodium sulphates, synthetic fragrances, or xenoestrogen.

Image source: Goop.com



Perfect Prenatal Vitamins from New Chapter Organics

This is an organic prenatal vitamin that GP took during pregnancy that contains nutrients to maintain general health (and great hair and nails too).

"Lately I feel like I see Whole Foods being talked about everywhere on social media. Whole Foods was just in my news feed from PopSugar."

"When I was pregnant I wanted to make the switch to healthier products - everything from shampoo, soap & feminine products, to makeup, drinks & food. I found most of the products I now buy on sites like Goop.com."

SHOPPER TOUCH POINTS

OVERVIEW OF WHOLE FOODS MARKET'S SHOPPER COMMUNICATIONS

Get familiar with the many ways Whole Foods Market communicates with its own tribe of shoppers. A lot of women tell us that they follow or subscribe to at least one of Whole Foods Market's digital communications, such as their e-newsletter or Instagram feed.

[Whole Foods Market website](#)

[Whole Story Blog](#)

[Whole Foods Market e-newsletter](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Twitter \(Whole Foods\)](#)

[Twitter \(Whole Foods News\)](#)

[Pinterest](#)

[YouTube](#)

[Snapchat](#)

[Sales flyer](#)



"I get emails from Whole Foods and saw a round-up of new products. They were honestly all something I would like to try. Next time I was in the store, I asked for the Greek cheese and I've been buying it ever since."



SHOPPER TOUCH POINTS

There are also some printed materials inside stores, such as coupon booklets and holiday menu planners.



"I don't always subscribe to or follow the brands I regularly buy, but I do pay attention to Whole Foods' emails and Facebook posts. I also follow my local area store on Instagram."

"I'm probably much more likely to follow a brand on Instagram at the invitation of a blogger I follow. Sometimes I follow brands after I've seen a food or fashion blogger featuring a product in her posts. It's honestly not something I would think to do on my own; I need to see someone else posting about it first."

"I subscribe to Whole Foods' email updates to be aware of new products, seasonal produce, promotions and special events. For example, my local WFM puts on events for kids sometime - Halloween trick or treating, for example."



STEPS YOU CAN TAKE NOW

What you can do to better connect and engage with Whole Foods Market Shoppers

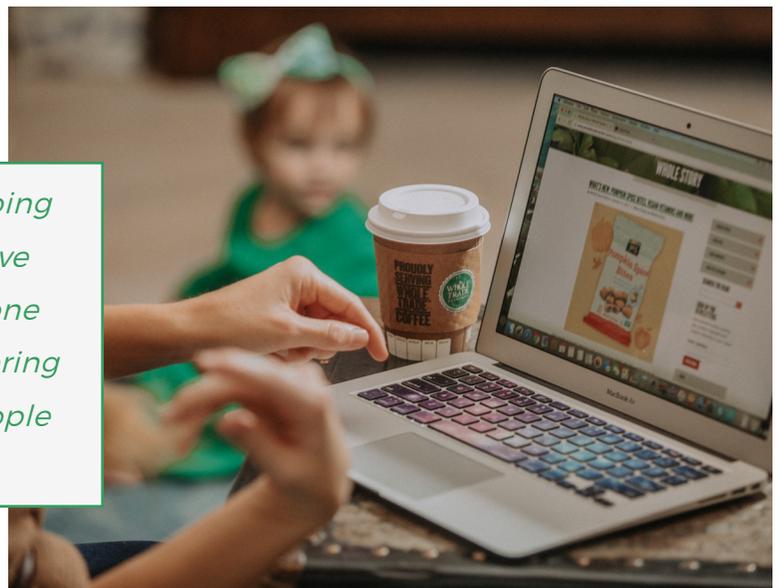
COLLABORATE WITH WHOLE FOODS MARKET

Identify ways to insert your brand and products into seasons and holidays that Whole Foods Market is already planning to showcase. Develop and foster a solid relationship with your category manager and the related marketing so you can propose ways to not only promote your products, but perhaps help Whole Foods Market even grow an entire category. No one knows Whole Foods Market shoppers like Whole Foods Market. If possible, work with the retailer to co-promote your products across not only your consumer channels, but also Whole Foods Market's channels, like their Instagram account.

HAVE A LOOK AT WHOLE FOODS MARKET SUPER STARS

From in stores to online, notice the brands that Whole Foods Market is promoting most. Brands like Halo, Beyond Meat, Saffron Road, Primal Kitchen, Dr. Bronner's, Olympia Provisions, and Simple Mills are currently having a moment at Whole Foods Market. Borrow ideas from these brands; get familiar with what Whole Foods Market is willing to do for others, ask what's been successful and try to create something similar for your brand.

"I always take special notice of brands doing product samples in the store. I really love it when the farmer, the owner or someone directly with the company is the one offering samples. It's fun to connect with the people behind the product."



NOW WHAT

Now you have more information on Whole Foods Market shoppers. Whether you're planning to pitch Whole Foods Market, or your products are already on the shelves, now it's up to you to put these insights and recommendations to use.

Being successful at Whole Foods Market (or any retailer) starts with a deep understanding of your target consumer. Now to get even more clear on how to be successful at Whole Foods Market, you need to take your shopper knowledge to the next level. This is where shop-along research comes into play, to understand how shoppers think, behave and buy in your specific product category.

Take your awareness of Whole Foods Market shoppers to the next level by conducting shopper research specific to your category in the geographic regions where your product is being sold, or is likely to be sold. Contact us to learn more about Green Purse PR's shop-along research services.

GREEN PURSE PR is a specialized research and public relations consultancy serving the natural products industry around the world. Founded in 2010 by award-winning practitioner, Lisa Mabe, Green Purse PR has expertise in both marketing to women and the specialty, natural & organic products.

We are called Green Purse PR because our clients are focused on: 1) appealing to health-conscious, eco-friendly female consumers 2) ultimately getting women to open up their purses and spend green on their products. Brands and retailers turn to us to understand and meaningfully engage women - online and off.

Our consultancy is highly specialized to work with natural & organic brands to get their products into women's shopping carts. Green Purse PR is based in Washington, DC.





LISA MABE

A recognized expert in the natural products industry, Lisa has over 13 years experience leading research and public relations programs for companies around the world. Some of Lisa's clients at Green Purse PR have included: KeHE Distributors, Saffron Road, OBE Organic, JicaChips, Changing Habits, Artisanal Premium Cheese, Atkins Ranch and Edible Arrangements International, among many others.

Lisa provides high-level, female-centric marketing research, strategy and implementation of PR programs for companies that sell their natural or organic products at grocery retailers, like Whole Foods Market. Prior to founding her own company in March 2010, Lisa worked with two leading communications agencies, Frank About Women, a leading marketing-to-women consultancy (a subsidiary of Mullen) and Proof Digital Media (a subsidiary of Burson-Marsteller.)

Lisa lives in the Washington, DC area with her husband, two young children and their Vizsla dog. When not driving client initiatives, Lisa enjoys spending time with her family, traveling, camping & overlanding, farmers markets, discovering new natural products, and horseback riding.

Having recently lived in Sydney, Australia for a couple of years, Lisa is regularly in Australia, New Zealand and Asia, where a significant portion of Green Purse PR's clients are based. Lisa works with a variety of natural, organic and specialty product categories. Much of her experience is based around premium products in categories such as: meat, healthy snacks, halal food, frozen food, and other healthy products targeting health-conscious shoppers.

BONUS CONTENT



#GETINHERCART

We'll be hosting one limited-time bonus Q&A session all about Whole Foods Market shoppers, exclusively for those who purchased this guide during our initial offering phase. For those who have purchased this guide prior to our Q&A session, we will email you with details for the live, online question and answer session.

In the mean time, subscribe to our blog, #GetInHerCart, at www.greenpursepr.com/getinhercart, for more insights on how women shop, including Whole Foods Market shoppers.



Hungry for more?

Contact Lisa Mabe at +1 202-344-9663 or lisa@greenpursepr.com to learn about our custom shop-along service.

*If this guide has been valuable to you, we want to know.
Contact us to share your feedback.*

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