

Commercial Excellence Academy

by  Asbiverse Group

Optimizing Route to Shopper® Capability for Winning in Retail

www.commercialexcellence.academy

Route to Shopper®

A Strategic Framework for
Integrated Shopper-based Value
Creation in the Paint Industry

Route to Shopper® Framework for Paint Industry

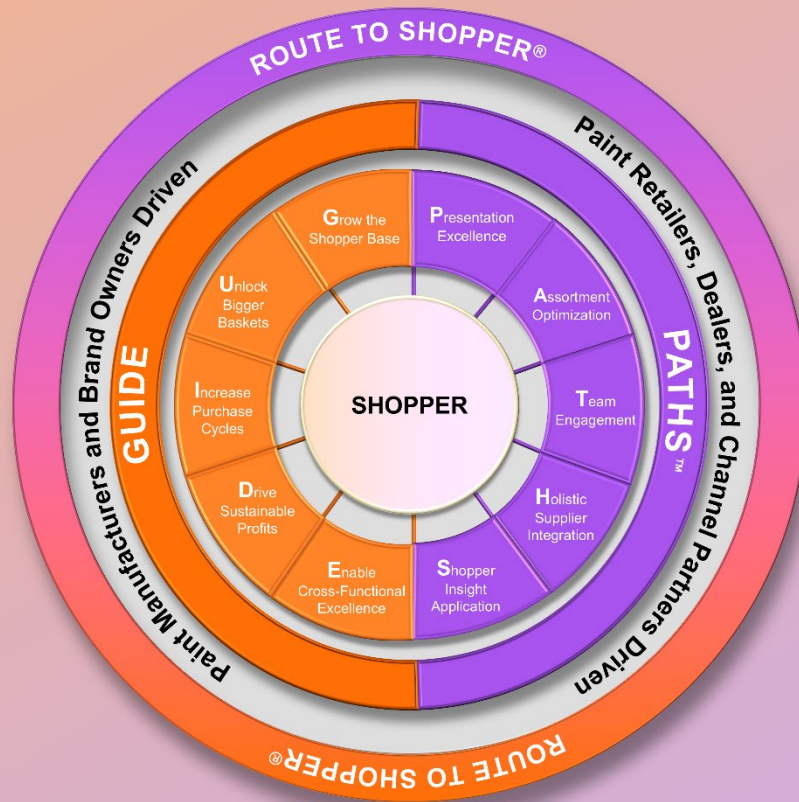
A Strategic Blueprint for Paint Industry Excellence

A Strategic Positioning Document from the Commercial Excellence Academy

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The Route to Shopper® Framework incorporating GUIDE – PATHS™ for Paint Industry



Executive Overview

What does it really take to win a shopper's consideration in a world of endless options?

In the paint and coatings marketplace, winning requires more than superior product formulations. Success demands a sophisticated understanding of the complete commercial ecosystem, connecting innovation, shopper behaviour, channel execution, and category strategy into a cohesive framework that drives sustainable growth.

The **Route to Shopper®** Framework provides paint industry leaders with this unified commercial approach, enabling organizations to build the capabilities needed to thrive in an increasingly complex market characterized by shifting consumer preferences, channel dynamics, and intensifying competitive pressures.

This document outlines how **Route to Shopper®** can transform your approach to the market, building capabilities that create lasting competitive advantage through shopper-led growth, channel-specific strategies, category expansion, and stronger brand visibility across decorative paints, industrial coatings, and waterproofing solutions.

Strategic Context: The Changing Canvas of the Paint Industry

Industry Transformation Drivers

The paint and coatings industry faces unprecedented transformation across multiple dimensions:

Shopper Evolution

- DIY segment expansion beyond traditional demographics
- Growing contractor influence as trusted advisors in paint selection
- Rising demand for personalized colour experiences and customization
- Heightened expectations for technical expertise and application guidance
- Increasing focus on health, sustainability, and environmental impact

Channel Dynamics

- Blurring boundaries between general trade, modern trade, and specialty channels

- Digital acceleration transforming research, selection, and purchase journeys
- Rise of omnichannel expectations requiring seamless experiences
- Growing importance of colour consultation as a service differentiator
- Evolution of contractor loyalty programs and professional networks

Commercial Challenges

- Margin pressure from raw material volatility and competitive intensity
- Balancing premium innovation with value-tier accessibility
- Maintaining brand differentiation in a technically complex category
- Coordinating consistent execution across fragmented channel networks
- Managing complex portfolios spanning decorative, industrial, and specialty segments

The Capability Imperative

These shifts create an urgent need for new commercial capabilities that bridge traditional organizational silos. Paint industry leaders must develop:

- 1. Shopper-centric Strategy Development**
 - Integrating technical innovation with genuine shopper needs
 - Translating formulation advantages into meaningful shopper benefits
 - Building segment-specific value propositions that resonate across different user groups
- 2. Channel-specific Execution Excellence**
 - Tailoring approaches across general trade, modern trade, project specification, and digital
 - Creating distinctive experiences that drive preference in each channel context
 - Building dealer and distributor capabilities to extend brand reach and influence
- 3. Cross-functional Commercial Alignment**
 - Connecting R&D, marketing, sales, and supply chain around shopper needs
 - Ensuring consistent messaging from inspiration to application
 - Deploying resources against the highest-value opportunities

The **Route to Shopper®** Framework addresses these imperatives by providing a comprehensive approach to capability building that spans the entire commercial ecosystem, creating alignment between paint manufacturers and their channel partners.

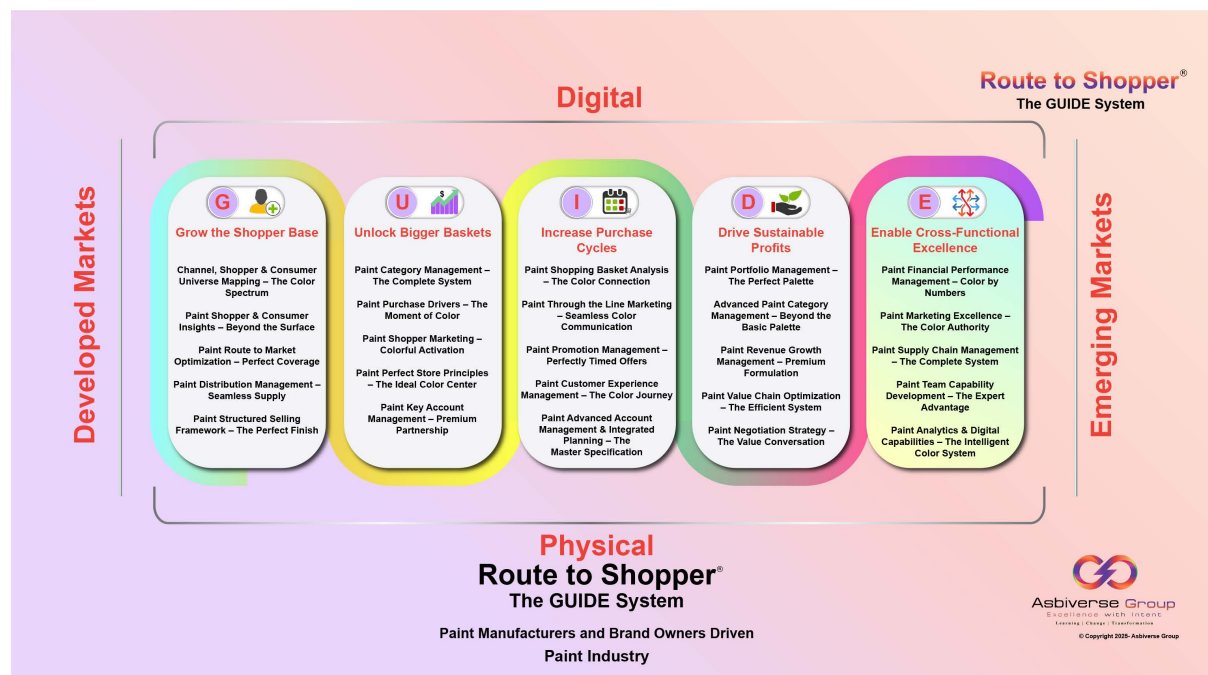
The Route to Shopper® Framework for the Paint Industry

The **Route to Shopper®** Framework consists of two complementary frameworks that create a comprehensive approach to commercial excellence:

- **GUIDE Framework** for paint manufacturers and brand owners
- **PATHS Framework** for retailers, dealer networks, and channel partners

Together, these frameworks establish a "common commercial language" that aligns strategies, enabling the entire ecosystem to deliver superior shopper experiences while driving sustainable business growth.

GUIDE Framework for Paint Manufacturers and Brand Owners



The **GUIDE** Framework provides paint manufacturers with a structured approach to developing commercial strategy:

G: Grow the Shopper Base

Expanding reach and relevance across multiple consumer segments

- Segmenting and targeting underserved shopper groups with tailored propositions
- Developing compelling conversion strategies for first-time painters and DIY enthusiasts

- Creating contractor engagement programs that build loyalty and advocacy
- Establishing designer networks and specification channels for project business
- Expanding geographical footprint through tailored regional approaches

U: Unlock Bigger Baskets

Driving system selling and premium trade-up

- Creating project-based selling approaches that increase basket size
- Developing premium tier strategies to encourage trading up
- Establishing surface-specific systems connecting primers, topcoats, and finishing products
- Building complementary category connections (tools, accessories, surface preparation)
- Implementing colour consultation models that drive comprehensive solutions

I: Increase Purchase Cycles

Building frequency through relationships and triggers

- Developing maintenance schedules and repaint trigger communications
- Creating seasonal refresh campaigns that drive colour updates
- Establishing paint lifecycle management programs
- Building contractor retention and repeat business systems
- Implementing reminder and relationship management approaches

D: Drive Sustainable Profits

Optimizing margin and operational efficiency

- Implementing strategic pricing architecture across good-better-best tiers
- Developing pack size and format strategies aligned with shopper needs
- Creating promotion effectiveness models that protect margins
- Establishing performance-based channel investment approaches
- Building procurement and supply chain optimization strategies

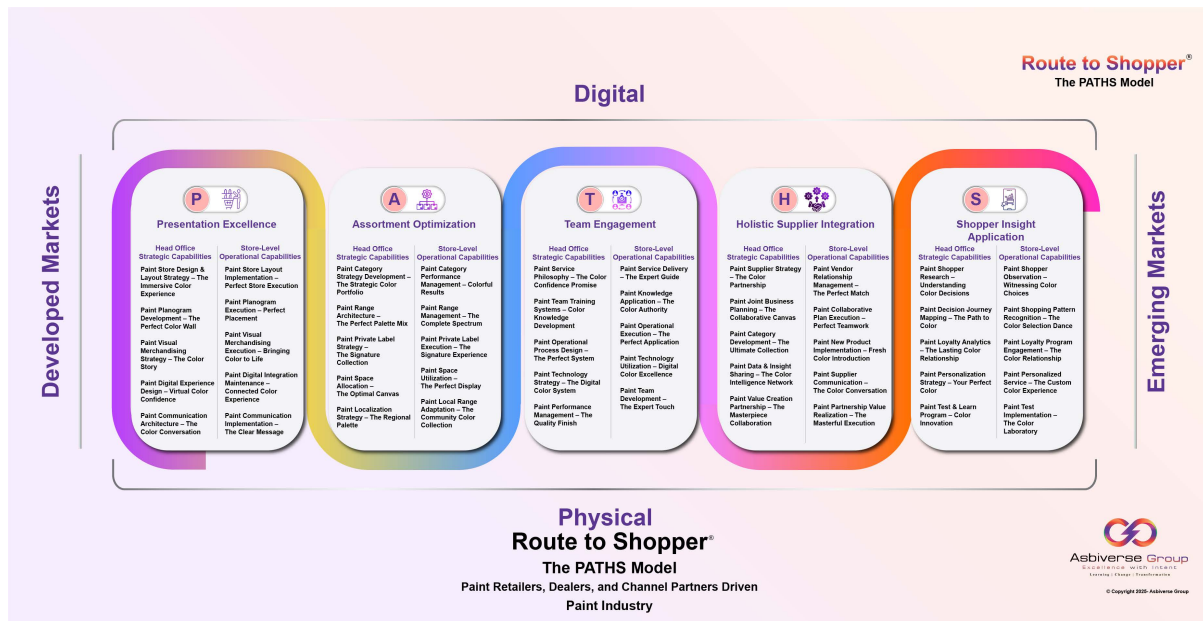
E: Enable Cross-functional Excellence

Creating organization-wide alignment and capability

- Developing integrated innovation-to-market processes

- Creating cross-functional shopper insight systems
- Establishing aligned KPIs and performance management
- Building technical training and knowledge transfer capabilities
- Implementing digital tools and data analytics across functions

PATHS Framework for Retailers, Dealer Networks, and Channel Partners



The **PATHS** Framework provides retailers and channel partners with the capabilities to create distinctive shopping experiences:

P: Presentation Excellence

Creating compelling physical and digital environments

- Developing colour display systems that simplify selection
- Creating finish and effect demonstration approaches
- Establishing digital visualization tools and technologies
- Implementing project solution merchandising systems
- Building technical demonstration and proof-point displays

A: Assortment Optimization

Curating the right product mix for each channel context

- Creating segment-specific assortment architecture (DIY, Professional, Project)
- Developing channel-appropriate range depth and breadth

- Establishing good-better-best tier representation
- Building system and solution-based assortment approach
- Implementing localization strategies for regional preferences

T: Team Engagement

Developing knowledgeable and effective teams

- Creating comprehensive product knowledge programs
- Developing colour consultation and selection skills
- Building technical recommendation and problem-solving capabilities
- Establishing solution selling and attachment techniques
- Implementing performance management and motivation systems

H: Holistic Supplier Integration

Creating aligned partnerships with manufacturers

- Developing collaborative planning and execution processes
- Creating shared data and insight exchange systems
- Building joint promotion and activation approaches
- Establishing shared training and capability development
- Implementing aligned KPIs and business review processes

S: Shopper Insight Application

Leveraging understanding to enhance the shopping experience

- Creating shopper journey mapping and pain point resolution
- Developing segment-specific service models and approaches
- Building measurement systems for experience optimization
- Establishing feedback collection and continuous improvement
- Implementing test-and-learn methodologies for innovation

Route to Shopper® in Action: Hypothetical Applications

Example 1: Urban DIY Repaint Activation

Business Challenge: A premium paint manufacturer seeks to capture the growing urban DIY segment undertaking home refresh projects, particularly among young professionals and first-time homeowners who lack painting experience but desire personalized spaces.

Route to Shopper® Application:

GUIDE Framework Implementation:

- **G:** Developed targeted segmentation identifying three urban DIY personas; Confident Refreshers, Anxious first-timers, and Design Enthusiasts, each with distinct need states and barriers
- **U:** Created project-based bundling strategies combining primer, paint, and essential tools with clear quantity guides for different room sizes
- **I:** Implemented a digital repaint reminder program tied to seasonal colour trends and living space evolution
- **D:** Established premium small-format packaging specifically designed for urban apartment projects
- **E:** Aligned digital marketing, in-store experience, and supply chain to ensure consistent messaging and availability

PATHS Framework Implementation:

- **P:** Deployed compact colour selection centres with digital screens showing before/after visualizations in space-constrained urban stores
- **A:** Curated apartment-friendly assortments focused on low-odour, quick-dry formulations with smaller pack sizes
- **T:** Trained store associates on apartment painting challenges (limited workspace, ventilation considerations, rental restrictions)
- **H:** Coordinated weekly stock replenishment ensuring top trend colours remained available during peak weekend DIY periods
- **S:** Implemented shopper feedback capture revealing colour confidence as the primary purchase barrier

Potential Outcomes:

- 30% increase in average transaction value through system selling
- Significant improvement in colour selection confidence through digital consultation
- Higher project completion satisfaction and social sharing
- Reduced product returns and complaints through better preparation
- Establishment of loyal first-time painter community

Example 2: Contractor-led Waterproofing Campaign

Business Challenge: A specialty coatings producer aims to expand its waterproofing category through professional contractors who can cross-sell these solutions during regular painting projects, particularly in regions with extreme weather conditions.

Route to Shopper® Application:

GUIDE Framework Implementation:

- **G:** Identified high-potential contractors based on project types and regional weather patterns
- **U:** Developed tiered waterproofing systems that complement existing paint projects
- **I:** Created seasonal inspection programs encouraging regular maintenance checks
- **D:** Implemented contractor-specific pack sizes and loyalty incentives maximizing productivity and profitability
- **E:** Established cross-functional "Waterproofing Specialist" certification program connecting technical, marketing, and sales teams

PATHS Framework Implementation:

- **P:** Created demonstration stations showing waterproofing effectiveness through comparative displays
- **A:** Optimized waterproofing product assortment by climate zone and construction type
- **T:** Developed comprehensive technical training for dealer staff focusing on problem identification and solution specification
- **H:** Established joint manufacturer-dealer lead generation and project tracking system
- **S:** Implemented project documentation process capturing before/during/after evidence of waterproofing value

Potential Outcomes:

- Significant category expansion beyond traditional paint projects
- Higher contractor loyalty and advocacy through enhanced expertise
- Improved margins mix through specialty product attachment
- Greater resilience against seasonal painting fluctuations
- Stronger technical differentiation in the contractor channel

Potential Outcomes from Route to Shopper® Deployment

Organizations implementing the **Route to Shopper®** Framework can expect transformative results across multiple performance dimensions:

Commercial Performance

- Expanded market reach through targeted segment strategies

- Increased average transaction value via system selling
- Improved purchase frequency through relationship management
- Enhanced margin through premium mix and operational efficiency
- Greater share of wallet within existing customer base

Channel Development

- Strengthened dealer network performance and capability
- More effective resource allocation across channel partners
- Improved in-store execution and compliance
- Enhanced digital integration and omnichannel experience
- Stronger manufacturer-retailer strategic alignment

Shopper Experience

- Higher confidence in product selection decisions
- Improved project outcomes and satisfaction
- More personalized service and solutions
- Seamless integration across physical and digital touchpoints
- Stronger emotional connection and brand loyalty

Organizational Capability

- Better cross-functional alignment and collaboration
- Enhanced market responsiveness and agility
- More effective resource allocation against opportunities
- Stronger data-driven decision-making capabilities
- Improved talent development and retention

AI & Digital Enablement in the Paint Industry

The **Route to Shopper®** Framework provides a strategic foundation for integrating emerging technologies into your commercial approach:

AI-powered Colour Intelligence

- Predictive analysis of colour trend adoption across regions
- Personalized colour recommendation engines based on preference patterns
- Automated colour scheme generation for complementary selections
- Regional colour preference mapping and localization support
- Designer collaboration platforms with AI-assisted creation tools

Visualization Technologies

- Augmented reality applications for real-time room visualization
- Photo-based colour matching and scheme development
- Digital twins of physical spaces for project planning
- Light condition simulation showing colour appearance variations
- Before/after project visualization with accurate rendering

Predictive Analytics for Commercial Optimization

- Demand forecasting for seasonal colour and product trends
- Weather-triggered promotion and inventory optimization
- Contractor project pipeline and material requirement prediction
- Repaint cycle anticipation and proactive engagement
- Stock balancing across distribution network based on regional demand

Digital Engagement Platforms

- Contractor portals integrating specification, ordering, and support
- Colour community platforms for inspiration and sharing
- Project management apps connecting products to application
- Training and certification systems for professionals
- Customer relationship platforms maintaining project history

Connected Operations

- End-to-end visibility from manufacturing to application
- Tinting machine integration with inventory and forecasting
- Auto-replenishment systems for high-velocity products
- Digital quality control and formulation consistency
- Sustainable packaging and waste reduction tracking

The Commercial Excellence Academy's Role

The Commercial Excellence Academy serves as your trusted partner in building these essential capabilities:

Strategic Capability Assessment

- Comprehensive diagnostic of current commercial capabilities
- Gap analysis against industry best practices
- Prioritization of highest-impact opportunity areas
- Customized development roadmap creation
- Cross-functional alignment and engagement

Capability Building Programs

- Structured learning journeys for commercial teams
- Practical tools and frameworks for immediate application
- Cross-functional capability development
- Channel partner capability enhancement
- Leadership alignment and sponsorship

Implementation Support

- Pilot program design and execution
- Change management and organizational adoption
- Performance measurement and ROI tracking
- Best practice sharing and knowledge management
- Continuous improvement and refinement

Knowledge Partnerships

- Access to industry-specific insights and benchmarks
- Thought leadership on emerging trends and technologies
- Networking opportunities with industry peers
- Ongoing support and advisory services
- Custom research and capability development

Your Path Forward: Call to Action

As a senior commercial leader in the paint and coatings industry, you face unprecedented challenges and opportunities in today's dynamic market. The **Route to Shopper®** Framework offers a proven pathway to building the capabilities required for sustainable success.

We invite you to:

1. **Envision** a future where your organization leads through shopper-centric excellence
2. **Assess** your current capabilities against the **Route to Shopper®** Framework
3. **Prioritize** the highest-impact opportunity areas for your business
4. **Align** your leadership team around a shared capability development agenda
5. **Activate** a structured approach to building these critical capabilities

The Commercial Excellence Academy stands ready to support your journey toward commercial leadership in the paint and coatings industry. By investing

in the capabilities outlined in the **Route to Shopper®** Framework, you position your organization not just to compete but to define excellence in the markets you serve.

Next Steps

- Schedule a **Route to Shopper®** orientation session for your leadership team
- Participate in our paint industry capability diagnostic assessment
- Connect with our industry specialists for a customized consultation

Contact

To begin a strategic dialogue on implementing the **Route to Shopper®** Framework in your organization, please contact:

Strategic Partnerships Team

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