

Shoppers drawn 'straight down the middle'

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(Phys.org)—Shoppers are naturally drawn to products displayed centrally according to researchers at Aston Business School (ABS).

Dr Dina Rasolofoarison from ABS and researchers at Hautes Études Commerciales de Paris (HEC) and Concordia University have discovered that [consumers](#) are more likely to choose brands if they are placed horizontal in the centre of a display.

The researchers found that a shopper's eye is naturally drawn to the middle of supermarket aisles without even being aware -a tendency which is known as 'horizontal centrality.'

To collect the data for the studies eye-tracking devices were used to investigate how location can influence our choices. The researchers found that [shoppers](#) had a tendency to increase their visual focus on the central option in the display in the final five seconds prior to making a decision and this determined which option they would choose. Shoppers did not accurately recall the choice process that took place and were not aware of any conscious visual focus.

Dr Rasolofoarison who led the research for Aston said; "The centrally located brand within each product category was chosen more often even when it wasn't placed in the centre of the shelf or the visual field."

"The research discovered that the whole process is a subconscious one and that consumers do not accurately recall their reasons for their decision. They were not aware of any conscious [visual focus](#) on one area of the display over another. In essence, we may be making the most natural choice, but not always the best choice."

The paper, published in the [Journal of Consumer Research](#), concludes that shoppers might make better choices if they were aware of how they are influenced by placement.

More information: www.jstor.org/discover/10.1086...1&sid=21101519896553

Provided by Aston University

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