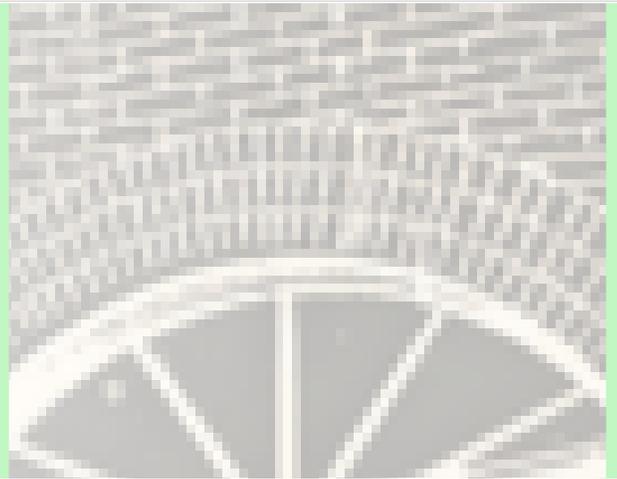




Schenck Foods, a broadline distributor, achieved double-digit incremental case growth and increased sales rep productivity using Pepper's data-backed Growth Agent platform.

KEY OUTCOMES



Problem

Competing on Quality in a Market Dominated by Scale

[Schenck Foods](#) has spent nearly a century building its reputation as a family-owned broadline distributor that wins on service and relationships. But competing against national broadliners increasingly meant fighting perception rather than product. Customers were often buying identical or equivalent items under private-label packaging from the "big three," even when Schenck could offer the same specs—and a better experience.

As Director of Sales Robert Verdecchia put it, *"Customers don't really know what's in the box. You can tell them it's the same product, the same spec, but they don't always believe it."* That reality made it harder for Schenck to reclaim share, even in categories where customers were already buying and consuming significant volume.

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probability opportunities. As Verdecchia described it, “Time is the sales rep’s best friend and worst enemy.” Reps could visit ten accounts, hear “no” repeatedly, and still walk away empty-handed. Over time, that kind of rejection doesn’t just slow growth—it changes behavior. Reps become more hesitant to ask, less willing to prospect, and more likely to fall back on routine instead of opportunity.

Traditional supplier incentive programs weren’t solving the problem either. The days of large, unfocused promotions were largely gone, and what remained often lacked clarity, focus, or measurable return. Schenck needed a way to concentrate effort where it mattered most, help reps win more often, and give suppliers confidence that their investment was driving real behavior change—not just subsidizing existing volume.

Solution

A Distributor-First Growth Engine Built on Real Buying Behavior

Pepper’s Growth Agent (formerly Profit IQ) enabled Schenck to run supplier-funded, data-driven growth campaigns that aligned distributor, supplier, and sales rep incentives.

Pepper automatically analyzed historical case movement to establish a clear baseline by customer, product, and category.

- **Targeted Opportunity Identification**

Sales reps received highly specific lead lists showing customers already buying within a category (e.g., chicken, paper goods) but not purchasing a participating supplier's brand.

- **Supplier-Funded Incentives (SPIFFs)**

Suppliers invested dollars behind incremental growth only—ensuring spend was tied to behavior change, not existing volume.

- **Real-Time Visibility and Scoreboards**

Sales reps could track progress, compare performance, and compete internally, reinforcing momentum throughout the campaign.

- **Immediate Sampling and Rapid Feedback**

Because products were already in Schenck warehouse, customers received samples quickly, tested them immediately, and often reordered within days.

Schenck successfully executed multiple Growth Agent campaigns, including programs with **Pilgrim's, Sofidel / SD**, and later **Aspire**, with each iteration increasing internal confidence and adoption.

Sustained Growth, Faster Adoption, and a Re-Engaged Sales Team

Once Schenck began running Growth Agent programs, the impact showed up in how the sales organization behaved day to day. Instead of spending cycles on speculative outreach, reps were able to walk into conversations with a clear advantage: the customer was already buying the category, **it was simply a question of winning the brand**. That shift mattered because it changed the emotional math of selling. Reps weren't bracing for constant rejection; they were working lists that produced real "yes" outcomes, which kept momentum high and encouraged more activity rather than less.

Focused Selling Replaced Guesswork

Reps stopped "spraying and praying" and instead concentrated on customers where the data showed a strong likelihood of success. According to Verdecchia, reps heard "yes" far more often than "no," reversing the usual psychological drag of prospecting.

Double-Digit Incremental Case Growth

During campaign periods, Schenck saw double-digit increases in case volume

Rapid Sales Team Adoption

Initial skepticism gave way to enthusiasm as early adopters shared wins. Once scoreboards went live, participation became competitive and contagious—driving broader engagement across the sales organization.

Supplier Demand for Repeat Programs

Following early campaigns, Schenck sales team immediately asked, “Who’s next?” Subsequent programs were launched quickly, including longer-term growth and retention-focused initiatives extending up to ten months.

Stronger Competitive Position Against National Broadliners

Growth Agent programs gave Schenck a credible, modern alternative to private-label pressure—helping reclaim share while reinforcing their service-first, relationship-driven model.”

As Robert puts it: “Time is the sales rep’s best friend and worst enemy—and this helps us spend it where it actually matters.”

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