

Category Plan for Baked Bread in Lidl:
Report #4: Assessment of Category in Store

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The Baked Bread Category Defined

Assessment of Current Category Name

Currently, the baked bread category within LIDL is being labeled as “The Bakery” since it is alongside other freshly baked dessert products. Moving forward, this category should be separated to a certain extent since the baked desserts and bread categories are two different product lines that serve different needs in the eyes of the consumer.

Assessment of Current Category

Lidl offers approximately 20 different bread products, depending on the season. The category is divided into the following segments from left to right: pastries, baguettes, loaves, rolls, and pizza breads. See Figure 1 in the Appendix for category images. Baguettes are the smallest segment in terms of variety, with only 2-3 displayed at a time. Rolls are the largest segment in terms of variety, with many options such as: white, panini, cheese, ancient grain, seed etc. Loaves also display similar varieties to rolls, with notable additions including: multiseed, pumpkin-seed, and high fibre. You can also find other unrelated bakery products such as scones, muffins and donuts scattered amongst different segments, leading to inconsistency in segmentation and labelling. In the middle of the bakery section, there is a bread cutting machine for customers to cut their own bread to their preference. The category is modern and visually appealing, however it suffers from misleading labels and product positioning. Products are not distributed efficiently in accordance to the shelf labels located above the display shelves, portraying a careless image.

The Current Decision Tree

See Figure 3 in the Appendix for the original decision tree based on the current layout.

National Market Share Comparison

In correlation with national market share data, the selection of breads offered in Lidl’s bakery generally matches past/current consumer demands; White bread dominates current market sales, and is also the most common assortment offered at Lidl. However, the majority of white bread

purchased is pre-packaged, and therefore separate from this category (Passport, 2018). Lidl also has select ancient grain loaves which are tolerable for gluten-free consumers and those with wheat allergies (Conis, 2011). Consumers are less price-sensitive when shopping for bread, as they consider the type of bread and the perceived health benefits before considering prices (In-Depth Interview 1, 2019).

Local Shopper's Key Purchase Drivers/Issues

Pain Points & Barriers to Purchase

One of the main issues when it comes to the baked bread category is the display of nutritional information. This information located on the far left side of the bakery, difficult to locate at first glance. Another issue is that Lidl does not provide self-checkout or scan and go options like Tesco or many other grocery stores and top-up shops. This is a barrier for shoppers looking for a top-up or quick purchase. Even though they may prefer baked bread at Lidl, the procedure would be less time-consuming. Another barrier is that certain consumers, when buying fresh goods, look for organic certifications which is not present in the bakery (Eprints.bournemouth.ac.uk, 2019). This causes certain shoppers to steer away from freshly baked bread unless they are certain it meets their dietary requirements.

Usage Occasions & Customer Needs

Lidl is seen as a top-up shop for the majority of consumers in the area (Shopper Intelligence, 2019). Despite this, Lidl has been making an effort to provide a more all around shopping experience and offers better specialized options in certain categories including baked bread. When it comes to this category, Lidl offers things that other competing brands do not, such as a bread slicing machine so all baked bread can be cut to the consumers preference. Lidl also provides a larger range of baked bread options to select from, compared to local competitors Tesco and Centra. Lidl also provides seasonal products such as Christmas and Halloween goods, but not nearly as much as Tesco.

Assessment of What is Missing

Lidl provides a larger variety of baked bread options for customers to choose from compared to other grocery stores, however they lack organization and a sense of flow within the category.

Lidl should organize their bread category so it fits into sections such as: gluten free, multigrain, white, and specialty breads. This retail location should also look into adding breads like wheat, sourdough and soda bread into their baked bread category. Lidl also lacks in the seasonal department compared to other competing stores. They should try to implement more seasonal options such as pumpkin spice bread for the fall season. This will help boost traffic into Lidl on those seasonal times of the year by effectively promoting seasonal products in the store.

New Proposed Decision Tree

Based on the primary and secondary research that was completed, a new decision tree is proposed. See Figure 6 in the Appendix for the new decision tree diagram. Refer to Figures 4.1 - 4.3 in the Appendix for primary research findings.

Evaluation of Category in Competitor Compared to Lidl

Role & Range

Tesco is a large supermarket with a wide selection of offerings within all of their categories. Their fresh bread category serves a ‘preferred routine’ role by offering a large variety of bread including speciality roles such as beet-root, raisin bread, ciabatta, rustica, and wheaten, which are difficult to find at competing stores. Also serving a ‘convenience’ role, interviewed customers found that Tesco’s prices are considerably higher than competitors, but allows customers to purchase bread routinely and directly beside related groceries (In-Depth Interview 1, 2019).

Tesco’s category is located next to related products such as spreads, deli meats, and cheese/dairy. They also serve a ‘seasonal’ role by selling select specialty products during limited seasons and promotions.

Location & Layout

Located at the very back of the store is Tesco's bakery. As previously stated, this category is located in between spreads on the left hand side, and meats on the right. This makes it convenient for customers to purchase relatable items for making their meals/sandwiches at home. This differs from Lidl as the bakery in Lidl is one of the first categories customers see. Tesco has their rolls and baguettes in baskets on gondola shelves on the bakery wall. Some packaged scones and rolls can also be found here. Tesco also has table displays, located in the middle of the aisle farthest to the back of the store. On these tables are where loaves and specialty rolls are found, as well as heavily discounted items that are close to expiration. Lidl does not have middle table displays; however, they do have a stand in the middle, similar to Tesco, that displays discounted items that are close to expiration.

POS, Service - OOS

After selecting, customers need to purchase their bakery products at the front checkout along with the rest of their groceries, similar to Lidl. In Tesco, there is always at least one bakery employee available to assist customers and recommend products at all times. This individual assures that spaces are always filled with products, which are baked fresh every morning. This is in contrast to Lidl as they only have staff in the bakery in the mornings when they are baking. After this, there is no one at the bakery to assist customers.

Performance

Overperformance areas in Tesco include offering specialty items (such as beetroot bread) and others that are very difficult to find at competing stores, including Lidl. They also offer weekly specials of select products outside of their regular offerings that can be purchased for a limited time. Underperformance includes a bread cutting machine, like Lidl's, for customers to cut their bread to their width preference.

Evaluation of Lidl's Baked Bread Category

Role & Range

Based on observed/interviewed shopper perceptions, Lidl's bakery serves more of a 'routine' role rather than a 'preferred routine' like Tesco. Lidl's bakery is limited in terms of variety, offering a small selection of various white, multigrain, and fibre breads. Lidl shoppers prefer their prices over Tesco's and are attracted by promotions (In-Depth Interview 1, 2019).

Location & Layout

Lidl's bakery is conveniently located next to the front entrance of the store, next to other grocery categories.

POS, Service - OOS

Most customers purchasing bread loaves take advantage of the store's bread slicing machine, however many customers observed had difficulties using it. (Shopper Observations, 2019). Bakery employees are only available in the morning when the bread is baked. (In-Depth Interview 2, 2019). This means that there is little customer support in the category during the majority of the day. Observed shoppers often resorted to assisting others to use the machine (Shopper Observations, 2019). Like Tesco, there is no POS system at the bakery counter. OOS baskets are re-stocked with any excess items available, regardless of whether or not they belong in that segment.

Performance

Overperformance includes the availability of the bread cutting machine. Areas of underperformance include: a lack of bakery employee availability, lack of nutritional information visibility, and low specialty product variety.

Shopper Perception of Category

The shoppers that were interviewed had positive perceptions of Lidl's baked bread category. The freshness of the category is an influential factor amongst all age groups that were interviewed

(In-Depth Interview 1, 2019). The shoppers pointed out that Lidl provides a good variety of baked bread, however some would like to see more specialty, ‘exotic’ bread; while others felt indifferent as they always purchase the same type of product or are reluctant to try new things (In-Depth Interview 1, 2019). Refer to Figure 4.1 in the Appendix for the key findings that were gathered from the interview to learn more about the shopper’s perceptions of the category.

Key Insights

1. **Health:** Through primary and secondary research, there was a clear trend for health that directly relates to the baked bread category. Staying on top of the healthy lifestyle trend is essential to attract more customers, through the use of premium and healthy bread products (Bord Bia, 2019).
2. **Quality & Freshness:** Consumers look for quality and freshness first before any other factors when deciding on what bread type to purchase. Price was the least significant purchasing factor (In-Depth Interview 1, 2019).

Key Implications

1. **Category Organization:** Lidl should separate all subcategories side by side rather than mixed together. Keeping this section of the store more appealing and organized for customers. Proper labelling will guide the customers to preferred products.
2. **New Products:** As interviewed shoppers suggested, providing new, specialty breads would be beneficial. Providing bread products from different countries such as ciabatta from Italy or brioche bun from France would be encouraged. They could have a “Try This” shelf that offers new products to entice customers to try products before they buy.
3. **Display of Product Descriptions:** Lidl should display ingredient and nutritional information more visibly. More descriptions should be placed on the product labels. Logos can be assigned to identify options that are healthier, allergy-free, gluten-free, etc. in colour, so customers can easily identify the products they are looking for. More posters should be displayed throughout this category. Having nutritional information readily available would be attractive to adhere to the current health trend discussed throughout the report from primary and secondary research conducted.

4. **Staff:** Lidl should have a staff member in the bakery at all times to answer questions, ensure the appearance of the category is maintained, and promote/educate customers on products and the bread cutting machine.
5. **Cleanliness:** Add more tongs to shelves so more people use them. When customers use their hands, germs and bacteria is easily transferred.

Appendix

Figure 1: Lidl Category Photos



Figure 2: Decision Tree From Report 3

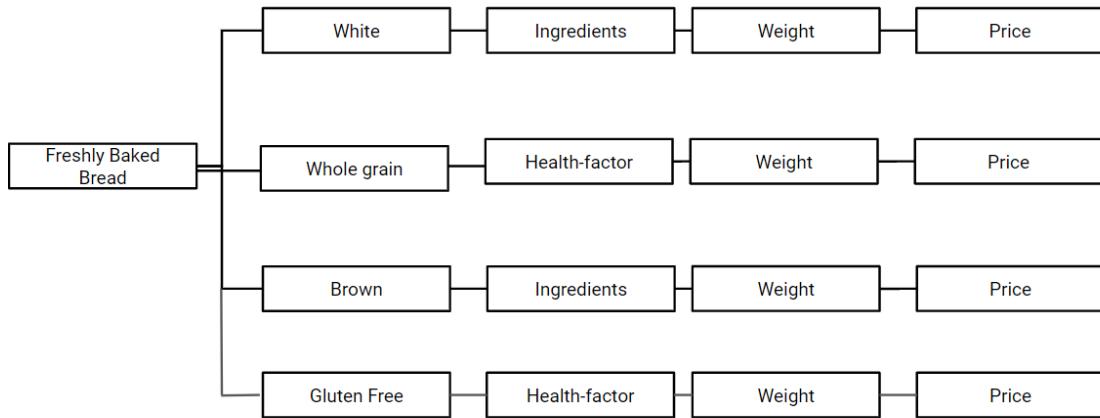
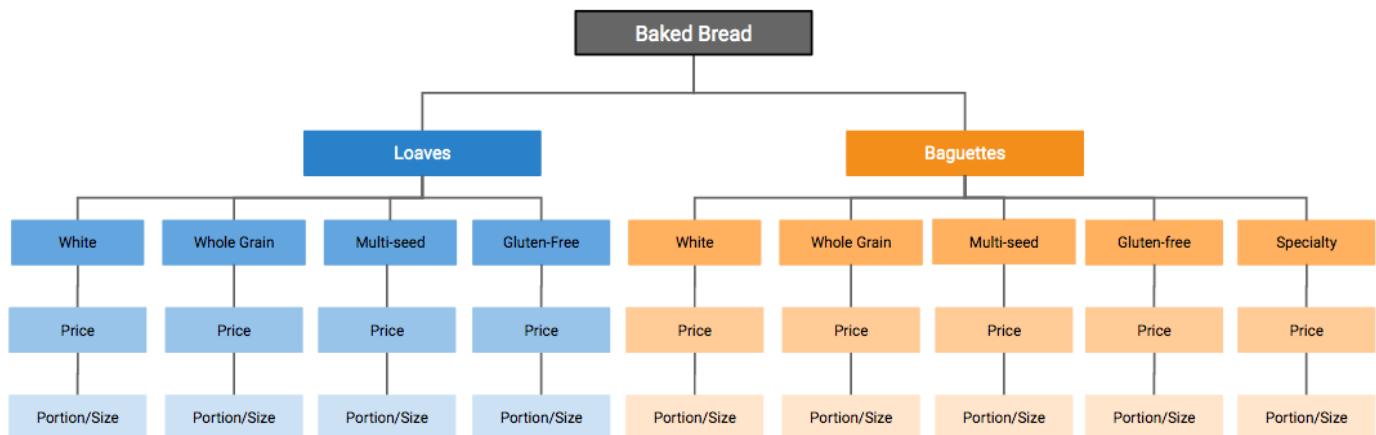


Figure 3: Current Decision Tree



The current decision tree consists of the main baked bread products being offered at Lidl and how consumers are making decisions when purchasing, as per the current shelf configuration. The first decision that the customer has to make is the type of bread they want: brown, white, gluten-free, whole grain etc. Refer to Figure 4.1 for the qualitative data collected from in-depth interviews with customers. Then, customers decide how healthy the products are and what ingredients are in those products so they can fit the proper dietary needs desired. Because of the rise in health awareness and dietary requirements, there is an increased interest in wider bread assortments and gluten-free varieties (Hospitality Ireland, 2019). The health aspect influences consumers greatly as 79% of consumers think that companies should reduce the salt content within baked goods (Bord Bia, 2019). The next step is determining which portion size or weight the customers want depending on occasion, consumption and household size. Lastly, the customer must make a decision based on the price of the product they desire to buy. See Figure 3 in the Appendix for the current decision tree created after an in-depth interview with the store

manager, Thomas. Refer to Figure 4.2 in the Appendix for the in-depth interview questions and a summary of the answers obtained.

Figure 4.1: Primary Research - In-Depth Interview 1, with Customers

Date & Time: November 4th around noon and November 5th in the evening

Venue: Lidl, Carlow

Duration: 3-5 minutes each

Respondents: Lidl customers, anonymous

Interviewer: Sama Allahkaram

Methodology: The research team went to Lidl and identified customers to interview. Those that browsed and selected items from the bakery were chosen. The team attempted to choose customers from various demographic groups, specifically age and gender. There were seven customers that turned down the interview request. Six customers agreed to participate. The customers had to give verbal consent to participate in the interviews and were ensured to remain anonymous. Only one member of the group conducted the interviews to avoid pressure on the customers and also to ensure the same process was taken with each customer. The interviews had an informal, conversation flow, while also ensuring all seven interview questions were asked and answered.

Description of Interviewees:

- 2 students: one living with family, one living on their own, both loyal to the bakery
- 2 males: both senior and living within close proximity of Lidl
- 1 middle-aged female: mother, busy lifestyle
- 1 female: senior, lives a few neighbourhoods down from Lidl

Interview Questions:

1. What is your favorite fresh-baked bread item that you buy most often?
2. Out of the following list, which is first and second most important factor you look for in your fresh bread products? Type, variety, health, quality, weight, price
3. What occasions do you purchase bread for?
4. What do you like about Lidl's baked bread category?
5. What problems do you have with this category?
6. How do you compare Lidl's bakery to competing stores?
7. What would you like to see added to Lidl's bakery (services, products, features)?

Data Chart:

Date	Interviewee	Demo	Q1	Q2a	Q2b	Q3	Q4
November 5	A	Senior male	Whole wheat	Health	Taste	Rarely, maybe twice a month, mostly for breakfast	Freshness
November 5	B	Senior male	Baguettes	Quality	Price	Lunch	Because they have a bakery and "no where else has it" - was unaware Tesco had one
November 5	C	Independent student, frequent shopper, lives close	Rolls	Quality	Type	Breakfast	Freshness
November 4	D	Student living with parents	Brown baguettes	Health	Quality	Breakfast	The smell and variety they offer
November 4	E	Senior female	Demi-baguettes	Health	Quality	Breakfast	Freshness
November 4	F	Middle aged female	Loaves	Health	Quality	Lunch	Has a big family so number of different loaves is important

Interviewee	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7
A	Freshness	Wants to find health info easier	Proximity to home & prices are better	More healthy options & gluten-free
B	Because they have a bakery and "no where else has it" - was unaware Tesco had one	None	Better location. Hates Tesco's busyness, especially the parking. Also thinks Tesco is too expensive	No because "more services = more costs for store = higher priced items
C	Freshness	None, always gets the same thing, doesn't compare	Never buys from Tesco. Considers Tesco's bakery quality to be poor. Proximity of Lidl is great for him. Likes the convenience aspect	Waffles
D	The smell and variety they offer	Not really a big problem but the only thing they could think of was lack of staff in the bakery	Considers Lidl an "elite, proper bakery" and others can't compare	More "exotic" breads. Ones from different countries. Likes to try new things.
E	Freshness	Running out of the product they wanted. No staff	More variety at Lidl. Price is better than competitors	Newer breads, not considered "typical" (specialty) - more variety in specialty
F	Has a big family so number of different loaves is important	Always seems to be helping someone with the cutting machine. Doesn't like to see people touch the bread with their hands.	The smell is amazing. It is what leads them straight to the bakery, even when she didn't think she needed anything. The specialty bread is good too but wants to see more	More tongs so people don't use their hands. Maybe some signs for this and better instructions for the machine.

Key Findings:

- Almost 70% of the customers interviewed said health was either the most important or second most important factor that influences their purchase behaviour towards baked bread. Health is an influential factor for all age groups.
- Over 80% of the customers interviewed said the quality of bread is either the first or second most important factor that influences their decision to purchase.
- The freshness of the bread and the smell of the bakery was very attractive for most of the customers. The freshness is an influential factor amongst all age groups.
- Interviewee F made a very significant point about the lack of tongs in the category. As a mother, the lack of cleanliness is incorporated into the health factor for her.
- Half of the customers interviewed want to see new products.
- Although the price is not important to all the customers interviewed, almost all customers said the low prices offered at Lidl overall is what keeps them returning to the store.
- More than half of the customers interviewed said they usually consume bread for breakfast, while the remainder mainly have it for lunch.

Figure 4.2: Primary Research - In-Depth Interview 2 with Manager

Date: November 6, 2019

Time: 6pm-6:15pm

Venue: Phone interview

Name of respondent: Thomas

Their Role / Fob: Floor Manager, Lidl in Carlow

Moderator: Jake Elliott

Research Questions Asked:

1. What are the bakery hours (employees, when do they make bread)?
2. Marketing strategy/sales goals of the bakery?
3. What type of customers do you attract in this category, and Lidl as a whole, what occasions do they shop for?
4. Who are your direct competitors, how do you think you compare/contrast with them?
5. How do you think you can improve in this category, and what would you like to see from this project?
6. Have you ever received feedback from customers?

Results:

- The bakery is open during regular store hours, Monday through Saturday 08:00-22:00, and Sunday 09:00-21:00. There are 1-2 bakery employees on shift at a time, who bake all products in the morning. They leave when products are finished baking.

- Goals are to provide customers with their daily bread needs at low prices. They provide a selection of loaves, rolls, and baguettes that frequently go on promotion to attract top-up shoppers.
- Most of the customers are seniors and some young families that live in Carlow town. They tend to purchase loaves and rolls on sale for daily needs such as breakfast and lunch. They also attract top-up shoppers who explore sales and promotions at all of the surrounding stores.
- Lidl competes with smaller discount stores such as Iceland across the street, and Aldi. Thomas believes that for a discount retailer, they still try to offer better selections than those competitors. Iceland and Lidl in particular do not have as many cheaper, fresher foods such as our bread and meat.
- Nothing in particular, interested in what the research team will come up with.
- The bakery customers tend to be loyal to Lidl's quality and price value.

Figure 4.3: Primary Research - Shopper Observations

Date: November 4, 2019

Time: 12:30pm

Venue: Lidl, Carlow

Observers: Jake Elliott & Sriramanan Kalirajah

Methodology: Two members of the research team completed the observations, each standing on opposite ends of the category section. The researcher's observations were done in a formal, structured method. There was a checklist that was followed when writing down observations. The researchers noted the demographic of the shopper being observed, the total time spent in the bakery, the type and quantity of items purchased, their purchase behaviour, and if the shopper benefited from a promotion.

Shopper	Demographic	Time Spent	Quantity Purchased	Purchase Behaviour	Impact of Promotion
A	Middle aged woman	3 min	1 white loaf	Looking between loaves and baguettes	Purchased a cookie on promotion after picking bread
B	Senior male	10 min	1 all grain loaf	Having difficulties using loaf cutting machine, asked us for assistance	n/a
C	Male millennial	4 min	1 white loaf Scones	Went straight to products, knew what he wanted.	n/a

D	Young mother	1 min	1 whole grain loaf	Looked between whole grain and multigrain before quickly deciding	n/a
E	Middle aged male	2 min	1 pizza bread & 3 white rolls	Looked around for a minute before choosing	n/a
F	Student	5 min	1 multigrain loaf & pretzel	Didn't seem like she knew what she wanted. Compared the multigrain and whole grain options. Didn't know how to use the bread slicer. Took 3 people to get it to work.	n/a
G	Senior female	7 min	1 white loaf and a bag of white mini baguettes	Walked around and looked at a couple of different sized loaves and baguettes to choose from. Then proceeded to use the bread slicing machine and had some trouble. Received help from another customer in line.	Was attracted to a promotion for 5 mini baguettes for 1 EU
H	Middle-aged women	5 min	1 pumpkin loaf	Seemed like she knew exactly what she wanted to buy but spent more time in the category helping other customers use bread slicing machine.	n/a
I	Young mom	2 min	3 demi baguette	Knew exactly what she wanted from category once she saw the promotion.	Was attracted to a promotion for 3 demi baguettes for 1 EU
J	Senior female	4 min	3 demi baguette	Looked through baked goods on promotion then decided on demi baguettes	Was attracted to a promotion for 3 demi baguettes for 1 EU
K	Mom with 2 young children	3 min	1 multigrain loaf	Was looking at most multi grain and multi seed bread option.	n/a
L	Middle aged women	2 min	1 cob of high fiber multi seed loaf	Looking at healthy bread options like multigrain, brown and multi seed.	n/a
M	Senior male	3 min	1 multigrain loaf	Quickly grabbed loaf he preferred seemed like he knew exactly what type he wanted and proceeded to slice his loaf and leave the category.	n/a
N	Senior female	1 min	4 cheese rolls	Quick grab and go out the category.	n/a

O	Senior Male	1 min	1 country loaf	Quick grab and go out the category.	n/a
P	Father with child	4 min	6 mini loaves	Child in stroller helped pick bread with father.	Was attracted to a promotion for 3 mini loaves for 1 EU
Q	Senior female	2 min	2 demi baguettes	Mentioned how she liked the bakery in Lidl and how she found it to be the best fresh bread in the current area.	Was attracted to a promotion for 2 demi baguettes for 1 EU
R	Senior female	1 min	1 multigrain loaf	Was looking at the healthy bread option looking at soda bread and multigrain bread.	n/a
S	Senior male	1 min	1 seed roll		n/a

Key Findings:

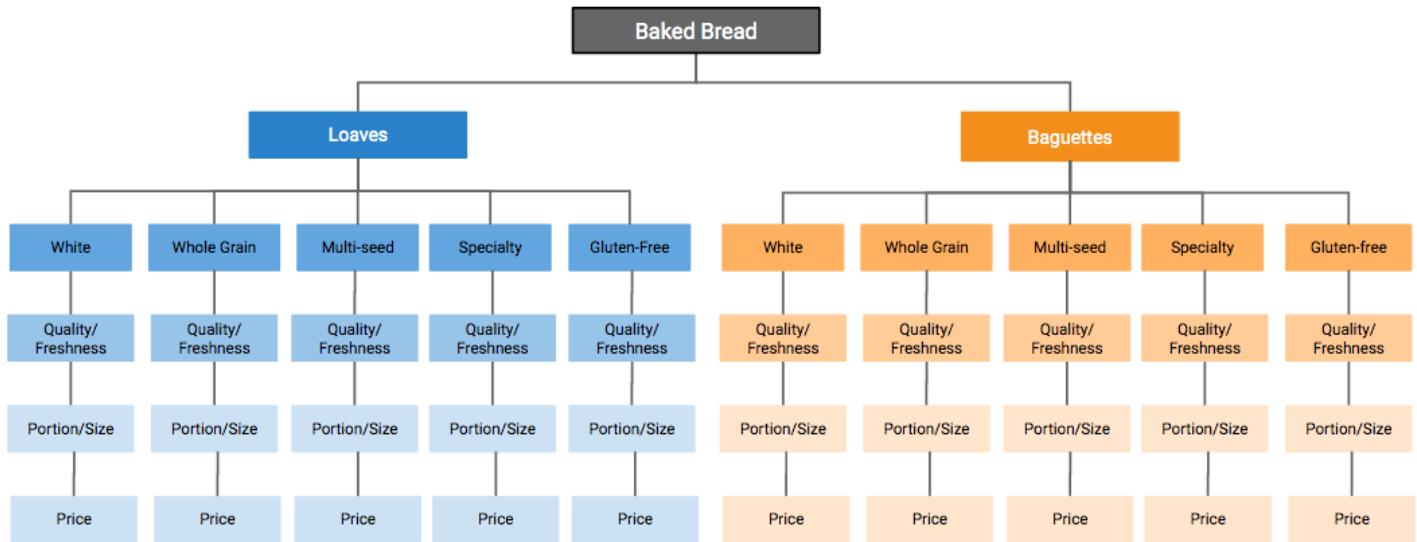
1. Senior shoppers were the most prevalent age demographic observed, while females were the most prevalent gender observed.
2. Loaves were the most popular format of bread purchased
3. , with rolls second.
4. White and multigrain bread were tied for the most popular flavour of bread purchased, but neither held a significant preference over others.
5. Shoppers who purchased white bread spent about the same amount of time (on average) in the category as multigrain/all grain shoppers, approximately 4 minutes on average.
6. Shoppers who purchased non-white bread (multigrain, high fibre, etc.) spent more time looking at different bread products before making final purchase decision
7. Many shoppers had difficulty using the slicing machine, required help from other shoppers in the category, contributing to more time spent in the category
8. Almost every shopper that purchased demi-baguettes and mini loaves completed the corresponding “2 for 1” or “3 for 1” promotion

Figure 5: Ingredients and Nutritional Information Lists



These lists can be found at the beginning of the bakery section, posted on the wall on the far left.

Figure 6: New Decision Tree



The new proposed decision tree was created after qualitative research was collected. The decision tree remains the same at the first level. Consumers choose between loaves and baguettes, which includes rolls. The second decision they make is the type of bread they want. Specialty was added to loaves to be consistent with the baguette offerings. The type of bread serves different health expectations and preferences based on diet. This is most important to those who are more health-conscious or have allergies. The next decision consumers make is based on quality and freshness. Followed by portion number and size, which is based on household size and occasions purchased for. Finally, price, which is the last decision the customer makes when purchasing from the baked bread category.

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