



UNIVERSITY OUTREACH STUDENT PROGRAM



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PLMA 2018 University Outreach Student Program

Did you know that private label is a \$150 billion business and that more than one of every five items sold in supermarkets across the country is a store brand? The growth of store brands over the past decade has been powerful. Tens of billions of incremental sales have flowed into all U.S. retail channels and altered the competitive balance in the marketplace. All signs point to that continuing into the future.

Personnel and management requirements of the industry are growing, too. Career opportunities with manufacturers and retailers abound. Can store brands be your first step upon graduation?

To help you find out, PLMA annually offers an exciting opportunity to learn and experience the fundamentals of the store brand business, with an immersive weekend of university level classes, special events, store tours and real-time participation with sellers and buyers on a trade show floor.



Saturday to Tuesday, November 10-13, 2018

At the Hyatt Regency O'Hare & Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, Chicago

Held in conjunction with the PLMA Annual Private Label Trade Show

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If someone told you how big the store brands industry is, would you believe them?



Store brands. It's a multi-billion dollar business you've probably never heard of. Yet, odds are you not only know the products but buy and use them regularly. Most American consumers do.

Store brands are not an intentional secret. It's a business that's been too busy expanding to shout about itself. Powered by steady year over year growth that is projected to continue through 2019, it's also an industry with burgeoning career opportunities and outstanding employers. Among them are manufacturing companies large and small, and retailers from coast to coast and around the world who are doubling down on store brands as a key strategy for success in a highly competitive marketplace.

You also know the key players in the space, they include supermarkets, drug chains and mass merchandisers, as well as club stores, dollar stores, convenience stores, specialty food chains and deep discount operators. Other retail channels, from health and beauty to sporting goods, from office supplies and home improvement and housewares to pet care and even toys, are also experiencing a surge in store brand development and expansion. When it comes to choosing products that help meet their home and family's needs and offer value at the same time, consumers are turning to store brands available in chains besides their food, drug and discount store.

The process works the same in all channels. The chain oversees the supply of products on which it puts its own corporate name or brand. It then positions the products to compete head to head on its own shelves against the familiar national brands. To be successful, the secret sauce is a keen eye on store brand product quality and innovation, and shopper response. The desired outcome is a win-win for both consumers and retailers in terms of greater savings and sales.

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Can store brands be a smart career move for you?

Is store brands the first step for your career? PLMA can help you decide by providing you with an immersive experience in the store brands business this November 10 to 13, in Chicago, with our 2018 University Outreach Student Program, to be conducted in conjunction with our annual private label Trade Show.

The Program will consist of a day and a half of university level classes on the store brands and retailing industries followed by two days in the buying and selling trenches – one day each with a participating exhibitor company as well as a retail buyer. The Show annually features more than 2,800 exhibit booths and attracts some 6,000 visitors representing leading retailers and wholesalers from across the country looking to source the latest items in hundreds of food and non-food product categories. PLMA has 1,200 member companies in the U.S. and another 2,800 internationally.

The Show itself is part of the education you will receive. It puts an emphasis on new and innovative store brand products, both on the vast exhibit floor and at special product-oriented presentations, such as the Idea Supermarket, New Product Expo, and Salute to Excellence, all of which are eagerly anticipated by the industry every year.



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Program-at-a-glance

PLMA's University Outreach is designed to give you insight into retailing in general and to the store brands business in particular.

Formal classes include an overview of retailing and store brands development both in the U.S. and internationally, the role of store brands manufacturers and of the chains who sell them, store brand product development, e-commerce, consumer behavior, and career opportunities in retailing and store brands.

All coursework is led by university professors and practicing professionals drawn from retailing and allied industries. Interactive participation is emphasized. There is also a directed tour of several nearby stores that feature superlative private label programs.

The mentorship phase connects each student with a manufacturer representative whose firm is exhibiting at the 2018 PLMA Trade Show. That experience is complemented by each student spending a half day accompanying a participating retail buyer while walking the Show floor.



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Program schedule

University Outreach is a four-day program. Orientation and formal classes start on Saturday, Nov. 10. Classes and store tours continue on Sunday, Nov. 11. The program then moves directly to the Trade Show floor for Monday, Nov. 12 and Tuesday, Nov. 13 where students gain first person experience with executives and companies involved in the buying and selling dynamic.

Classes are held at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare, the headquarters hotel for the Show. The trade show is held at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, which is adjacent to the Hyatt Regency O'Hare. The show floor is officially open at 9 AM on Monday and Tuesday and closes at 4 PM on Tuesday.

Both facilities are only about 15 minutes by car or shuttle van from Chicago's O'Hare International Airport.



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Preliminary curriculum for the 2018 Program

- Looking for a Career
- Store Brands Today
- The Role of Store Brand Manufacturers
- The Role of Retailers
- Product Development
- Consumer Behavior
- E-Commerce
- Small Group Projects & Exercises
- Store Tours
- Mentorship with Show Exhibitors & Retail Buyers





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Career opportunities in retailing



Career and employment opportunities in store brands are linked to the dimensions and expansion of the industry. A good place to start is with the number of stores and chains that sell store brands, or private label, products.

Major retailers, including Walmart, Amazon, Albertsons, Jet, Target, Costco, Kroger, Safeway, Publix, Wegmans, Giant, Stop & Shop, Food Lion, Hannaford, Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, Walgreens, CVS, Dollar General, and Family Dollar, among many others, all offer comprehensive and sophisticated store brands programs as do many regional and local chains. Supplying these retailers are manufacturers who produce the products based on retailer specification.

The scope of the American grocery industry is vast. Store brands alone during 2017 accounted for more than \$150 billion in sales in all retail channels; total sales of all brands of consumer packaged goods were about \$750 billion.

There are some 38,000 supermarkets in the U.S. who do more than \$2 million annually in sales. They have about 3.4 million employees. There are 25,000 chain drug stores. The leading mass merchandisers with strong store brand programs operate more than 8,000 stores, and the top dollar store chains have almost 50,000 stores. In addition, there are specialty food chains and deep discounters.

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Career opportunities in manufacturing

The other half of the essential store brands partnership are companies that manufacture and supply the products. They fall into five general classifications:

- Large national brand manufacturers that utilize their expertise and excess plant capacity to supply store brands.
- Small, high quality manufacturers that specialize in particular product lines and concentrate on producing store brands almost exclusively. Often these companies are owned by corporations that also produce national brands.
- Major retailers and wholesalers that run their own manufacturing facilities and provide store brands for themselves and, in a few cases, for other retail chains as well.
- Regional brand manufacturers that produce private label products for specific demographic markets.
- Large, nationwide manufacturers of store brands across a range of food and non-food product categories that supply a multiplicity of retail chains and channels in the U.S. and internationally.

As store brands grow, both retailers and manufacturers know they must keep pace and expand their work force for today and tomorrow. With growth projections for store brands climbing, employment opportunities in all sectors of these corporations, from sales and marketing to operations, human resources, information technology and finance, will continue to expand. Working in store brands may be a more complex and challenging career than one in other fields, but we believe that's what makes it so worthwhile.

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Application & selection procedure

Places in the 2018 class will be highly competitive. Space in the program is limited to approximately 60 highly-qualified and motivated students from colleges and universities throughout the country who are interested in exploring a career in the store brands industry.

PLMA covers the expenses, including transportation to and from Chicago and on-site hotel accommodations during the program.

Students are identified as candidates by their university or department. They then complete an application form to be reviewed by PLMA, which makes the final decision on admission. While experience in retailing is not required, it can be helpful. Related prior classwork will also be considered.

For more information on the 2018 University Outreach Student Program, contact your university advisor.



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Student comments on the Program

Following are comments from some students who participated in the 2017 Program:

"I learned more in four days than I have in 10 weeks in some of my classes. From the information sessions and store tours to sitting in on retailer's conversations and walking the floor, each and every encounter made me more knowledgeable about the industry. The PLMA experience is one that I will never forget."

"The workshops, exhibitor assignment, networking, and student interactions provided me with such an amazing opportunity to learn more about the industry and grow as a young professional. This event gave me a hands-on education of the value of the private label industry."

"I have spent the last year of my college experience searching for people who are willing to invest in me as a student, and this PLMA trip was an answer to my prayers. I was so impressed with how well everything flowed the entire weekend, and I didn't want to leave when the Program was over."

"The program was such a rewarding learning experience. In a few short days, I acquired a wealth of information regarding this fast-moving and exciting industry. In addition to sitting in on meetings and learning the behind the scenes process of getting store brand products on store shelves, I was able to experience growth professionally and personally. I thoroughly enjoyed accompanying my exhibitor and retailer. They were such a great team of people who were positive, helpful, and so insightful throughout the show."

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And, comments from an advisor of a participating college:

"The students were so impressed and wowed by all they were exposed to over the four days. It really opened up their world and validated their career goals. They also got a chance to step out of their lives and connect with students and professionals from across the country which was very enriching. The chance to shadow supplier and retailer professionals was also incredibly powerful. We were all appreciative of the special courses, professional association meetings and opportunity to see Chicago."



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