

RETAIL & COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS · CASE STUDY

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Associate Buyer at **Tata Croma**, Tata Group, with end-to-end ownership of a **\$13.2M** multi-brand portfolio across **400+** store locations.

• Mumbai, India • May 2023 – April 2024 • Buying · Planning · Allocation · Merchandising

Core competencies

Four capability areas across the buying cycle. Tap any to expand

Planning & Forecasting

- Open-to-Buy (OTB) budget control & in-season reforecasting
- Bottom-up SKU / store-level demand forecasting
- Assortment planning — range depth & width by channel
- Seasonal & successor-series planning
- Weeks-of-Supply & stock-to-sales tracking
- Trend tracking for seasonal OTB alignment

Buying & Vendor Management

- Vendor negotiations — margin, terms, launch volumes
- Monthly KAM reviews & long-term buy commitments
- Purchase order placement & requisition management
- ERP article creation & system order management
- Daily logistics & supply coordination
- On-time supply & fill-rate accountability

Allocation & Inventory

- Store-tier allocation by demand signal
- DC-to-store inventory flow & replenishment
- STO execution — inter-store stock transfers
- Replenishment across 400+ store locations
- New store opening — inventory planning & setup
- Demo placement at high-velocity stores

Merchandising & Channel

- SKU rationalisation — +15% assortment productivity
- Weekly sell-through analysis & action plans
- Pricing alignment & markdown governance
- Omnichannel tracking — ecom + stores
- Range productivity & coverage optimisation
- Promotion & new-drop launch readiness

Key numbers at a glance

Twelve months of measurable commercial impact

\$19.3M

Premium category portfolio managed

+27%

Year-over-year category growth

+52%

New product introduction revenue uplift

95%

Open-to-buy forecast accuracy

+4%

Gross margin gain

+15%

Assortment productivity improvement

What I owned & the spotlight win

Six pillars of end-to-end responsibility, plus the launch that proved it

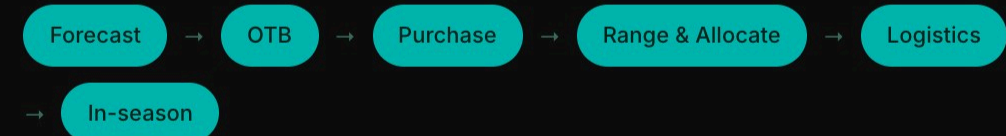
End-to-end ownership

- 01 **Forecasting & sales analysis:** weekly SKU/store-level performance analysis, demand forecasting, successor series planning, trend tracking for seasonal OTB alignment
- 02 **Open-to-buy & PO management:** OTB budget control, purchase requisitions, PO placement with vendors, ERP article creation and system order management
- 03 **Inventory allocation & replenishment:** DC-to-store flow, STO execution, store-tier allocation, demo placement at high-velocity locations, new store planning
- 04 **Vendor & supplier management:** daily logistics coordination; monthly KAM reviews on margin negotiations, launch volumes, buy plans and long-term terms
- 05 **Merchandise planning & assortment:** SKU rationalisation, markdown governance, sell-through optimisation, pricing alignment across a multi-brand portfolio
- 06 **Cross-functional collaboration:** alignment with merchandising, marketing, supply chain, and store ops for launch readiness, promotions and demand generation

SPOTLIGHT WIN · NEW PRODUCT INTRODUCTION · MONTH 2

+52%

revenue uplift vs predecessor series · \$1.2M · 6 SKUs
full end-to-end ownership from day one



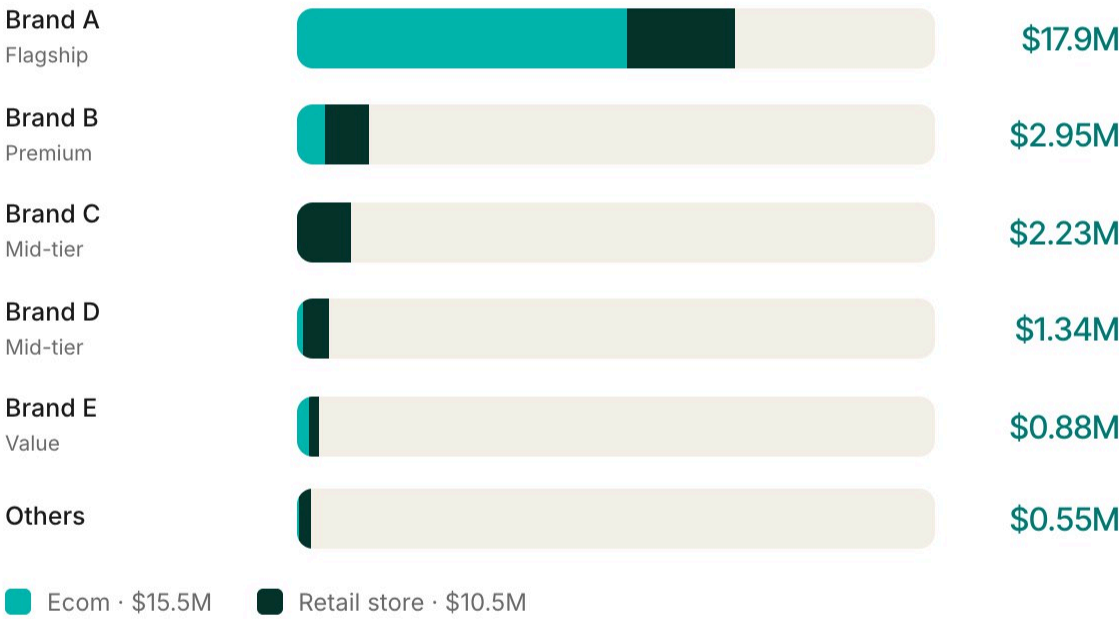
Taken on in **month 2 of joining**, demonstrating **rapid commercial ramp-up**, full buying-cycle ownership, and adaptability under pressure in a high-stakes, multi-location launch environment.

Frameworks built from scratch

SAP + Advanced Excel, the trackers that drove weekly decisions

Category & channel performance

Week of 22–28 May 2023 · Premium smartphones · total value \$M by channel split



Ecom leads on volume (55%) but store drives value balance; the flagship dominates ecom value at 87%. The weekly tracker drove channel-specific ranging, replenishment priorities and OTB reallocation.

▼ Hide data table

BRAND	ECOM		RETAIL STORE	
	VOL	VAL \$M	VOL	VAL \$M
Brand A	21,579	\$13.5M	5,895	\$4.4M
Brand B	5,939	\$1.16M	6,491	\$1.79M
Brand C	165	\$0.03M	4,804	\$2.19M
Brand D	1,458	\$0.24M	4,406	\$1.09M
Brand E	4,742	\$0.51M	2,399	\$0.37M
Others	496	\$0.08M	3,576	\$0.47M
Grand total	34,379	\$15.5M	27,571	\$10.5M

fx Hide the Excel logic

% of total

=B5 / SUM(B\$5:B\$16) * 100

RETAIL STORE

volume per brand

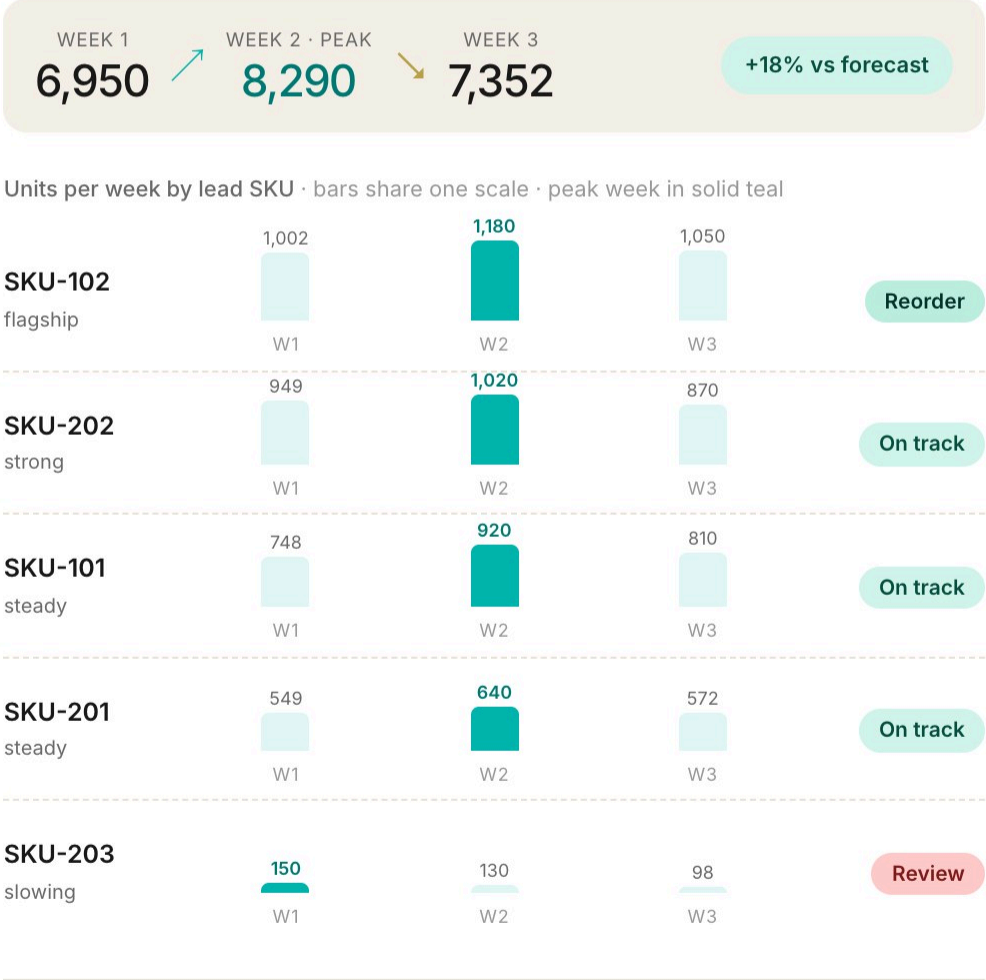
=SUMIFS(RawData!C:C, RawData!A:A, \$A5, RawData!B:B, "Retail store")

% of total

=F5 / SUM(F\$5:F\$16) * 100

New launch: weekly sell-through

10 SKUs across 2 series · units sold per week, with live reorder status



Reorders triggered on high-velocity variants once Week 2 demand spiked. **Review** flagged on declining SKU-203 for markdown or store reallocation, while Series 2 outperformed forecast by +18% overall.

▼ Hide data table

SKU / VARIANT	WK 1	WK 2	WK 3	STATUS
SKU-101 · A	748	920	810	On track
SKU-101 · B	742	905	796	On track
SKU-102 · A	1,002	1,180	1,050	Reorder
SKU-102 · B	992	1,140	1,020	Reorder
SKU-202 · B	949	1,020	870	On track
SKU-203 · A	150	130	98	Review
Launch total	6,950	8,290	7,352	\$2.67M

fx Hide the Excel logic & reorder playbook

Weekly units per SKU · *VLOOKUP from the raw sales file*

=VLOOKUP(\$A2, '[RawSales.xlsx]Sales'!\$A:\$E, 3, FALSE)

Total units across the launch weeks

=SUM(VLOOKUP(\$A2, '[RawSales.xlsx]Sales'!\$A:\$E, {3,4,5}, FALS

REORDER & WEEKS-OF-STOCK (WOS) PLAYBOOK

Flagship · Strong

WOS held at **4–5 weeks** of stock, protecting availability on the top sellers and reordering early against demand.

Steady

WOS held at **3 weeks** of stock, keeping leaner cover on dependable movers so capital stays efficient.

Slowing

Don't auto-reorder. Review the ranged stores, surface the **high-performing** ones, and run market & competitor analysis. Factor in performing markets and stores **requesting to be ranged**, then buy strictly to actual requirement & demand.

Buffer-driven reorder: a buffer is defined at every location — each store and warehouse — and **adjusts dynamically** with sales / consumption, while accounting for on-hand availability and shortages. The reorder triggers off that live buffer rather than a static minimum.

Complex problems solved

Situations navigated end to end. Expand any to read the full S-A-R

01

A vendor system discrepancy resolved with zero commercial loss

Vendor & PO reconciliation



Situation

THE CHALLENGE

Purchase orders placed in our ERP appeared with different quantities and references in the vendor's system. The vendor disputed the discrepancy and was unwilling to acknowledge the error.

Action

WHAT I DID

Cross-referenced both systems order-by-order. Cancelled genuinely redundant POs, then redirected uncancellable stock to stores with the strongest historical demand signals and sell-through data to support it.

Result

THE OUTCOME

Zero inventory write-off. No commercial loss. Vendor relationship fully preserved; redirected stock cleared via active coordination with store and department managers.

02

A 200-SKU flagship launch executed in a one-week window

New article creation · NPI



Situation

THE CHALLENGE

Article creation for a major flagship brand with a hard new-launch deadline across as many as **200 SKUs**. For confidentiality, the brand could only reveal details **one week before launch**, leaving just one week to run the entire process.

Action

WHAT I DID

Built a **step-by-step process** to create the new articles in system smoothly, improving efficiency and cutting time. Aligned every point of contact for the brand and briefed DC and store managers. **Demo-piece articles were created first** so they could be inwards and sent to stores ahead of launch.

Result

THE OUTCOME

All 200 SKU articles created in system for inwards at the DC and dispatch to stores by allocation. **Demos reached stores ahead of time**, fully ready for launch day.

Role readiness

One role, four career tracks of proven capability



Buyer / Assistant Buyer

- ✓ OTB planning & seasonal buy management
- ✓ Assortment curation across multi-brand portfolio
- ✓ Vendor negotiations: margin, terms, launch volumes
- ✓ End-to-end NPI / new drop execution
- ✓ In-season trading & strategic rebuys



Planner / Planning Analyst

- ✓ Demand forecasting: bottom-up, SKU-level
- ✓ Seasonal & annual sales plan development
- ✓ OTB budget management at **95% accuracy**
- ✓ WOS, stock-to-sales & sell-through tracking
- ✓ Gross margin & markdown plan governance



Allocator / Allocation Analyst

- ✓ Store-tier allocation by demand signals
- ✓ DC-to-store inventory flow management
- ✓ STO execution: inter-store stock transfers
- ✓ Replenishment across **400+ locations**
- ✓ New store opening: inventory planning & setup



Merchandiser / Merchant

- ✓ SKU rationalisation, **+15% productivity**
- ✓ Range depth & width optimisation by channel
- ✓ Pricing strategy & markdown governance
- ✓ Weekly sell-through analysis & action plans
- ✓ Omnichannel performance tracking: ecom + stores

