



FIND WHERE YOUR CPG BRAND IS LOSING

CASH, MARGIN & RUNWAY

STOP HIDDEN LEAKS.
PROTECT MARGIN.
EXTEND YOUR RUNWAY.



A **FAST, FOUNDER-FIRST** DIAGNOSTIC
SEE WHAT OTHERS MISS.
DO WHAT **DRIVES GROWTH**.

GROWTH
AHEAD

THE 15-MINUTE CPG RUNWAY LEAK FINDER™

7 LEAKS FOUNDERS CAN CLOSE



PROMOTIONS



TIMING



PLACEMENT



DEDUCTIONS



EXECUTION



VISIBILITY
GAP



DECISION
QUALITY

POWERED BY THE RETAIL CLARITY FRAMEWORK™



1

INTERNAL

WHAT
HAPPENED



2

SHOPPER

WHY IT
HAPPENED



3

COMPETITIVE

WHAT
INFLUENCED IT



4

PREDICTIVE

WHAT TO DO
NEXT

CLARITY CREATES CONFIDENCE. CONFIDENCE DRIVES GROWTH.



Retail Solved
STRATEGY THAT SELLS.



QUICK. SIMPLE. ACTIONABLE.
15 MINUTES THAT CAN SAVE
THOUSANDS—OR MORE.

The 15-Minute CPG Runway Leak Finder™

Find the hidden cash, margin, execution, and decision leaks quietly draining your brand's runway.

Your Brand May Be Leaking Runway

Most CPG founders are feeling pressure from every direction.

- Cash flow matters.
- Every dollar counts.
- Costs are rising.
- Margins are tighter.
- Shoppers are more deal-focused.
- Retailers still expect performance.
- Promotions are harder to predict.
- And every mistake costs more than it used to.

Most brands respond by asking:

"Where should we cut?"

But that is not always the right first question.

The better question is:

"Where are we leaking cash?"

Because if you do not know where your brand is leaking cash, margin, execution, and decision quality, you may cut the wrong thing, keep funding the wrong activity, and continue guessing your way through retail.

This guide will help you quickly identify the seven most common leaks quietly draining your runway.

No theory.

No complicated software.

No long audit.

Just 15 minutes of focused clarity.

The Retail Clarity Framework™

Data Tells You What Happened. Retail Clarity Tells You What To Do Next.

Most brands have more data than ever.

- Sales reports
- Dashboards
- Trade software
- Retailer scorecards
- Broker updates
- Distributor reports
- Deduction files

But more data does not always create better decisions.

That is why I use the **Retail Clarity Framework™**:

1. Internal — What happened?

What do your reports, invoices, deductions, shipments, sales, and promotion results show?

2. Shopper — Why did it happen?

What did the shopper understand, miss, value, reject, or choose instead?

3. Competitive — What influenced it?

What were competitors, retailers, private label, pricing, promotions, placement, and category dynamics doing at the same time?

4. Predictive — What should you do next?

What is the smartest next move to protect runway, improve execution, and grow with confidence?

Most brands stop at step one.

They look at the report.

Then they guess.

That is where the leak starts.



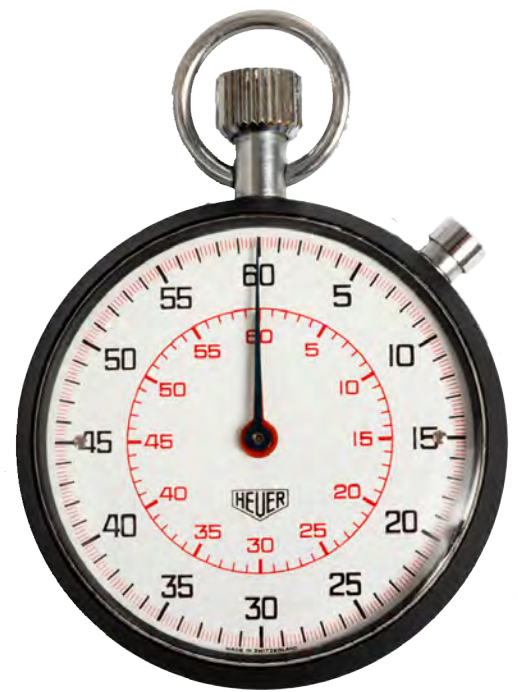
How To Use This Guide

Set A Timer For 15 Minutes

Pull up one recent business issue:

your last promotion

- your last invoice/deductions
- your last retail meeting
- your latest velocity report
- a new item that is not moving
- a retailer where performance is disappointing
- A store (physically or mentally walk it)
- a customer that looks good on sales but weak on profit



Then walk through the seven leaks.

If you hesitate...

If you are unsure...

If the answer is "it depends"...

If your team would answer differently...

That is your leak.

You don't have a spend problem.


You have a visibility problem

You're not overspending.

 You're leaking money

And you don't know where.

The problem isn't what you're spending.

 It's what you can't see

And the fastest way to fix it...

 Is to find the leaks

The 15-Minute CPG Runway Leak Finder™

LEAK #1 — PROMOTIONS

Question:

Did your promotion create demand, or did it just subsidize sales?

👉 Look at your last promotion

Ask:

- Did this attract **new shoppers**?
- Did it increase **basket size**?
- Did it drive **repeat purchases**?

QUICK ACTION:

Pull last promo results and ask:

👉 “What changed after the promotion ended?”

If sales drop immediately:

👉 You didn’t create demand

👉 You subsidized it

Learn How To Fix This Leak:

- Podcast: [314 Where Your Trade Spend Is Quietly Bleeding Cash](#)
- Podcast: [271 Why Trade Spend Fails \(And How to Fix It\)](#)
- Guide: [Trade Marketing Optimization Checklist](#)
- Workshop: Get the details and signup on my homepage: [RetailSolved.com](#)

LEAK #2 — TIMING

Question:

Did your timing help you win, or did it bury your promotion in retail noise?

👉 Look at when you promoted

Ask:

- Who else was promoting?

- Was there a category reset?
- Were competitor promotions deeper, louder, or better placed?
- Did your timing support the shopper's need state?

✔ **QUICK ACTION:**

Before your next promotion:

- 👉 Write down 3 competitors
- 👉 Check if they're promoting the same week

If yes:

- 👉 Shift timing OR adjust strategy

Learn How To Fix This Leak:

- **Podcast:** [269 Extend Your Runway & Boost Retail Sales](#)
- **Podcast:** [272 Why Most CPG Brands Scale Fast—and Lose Money](#)
- **Guide:** [The Essential Promotion Blueprint](#)

🟡 **LEAK #3 — PLACEMENT**

Question:

Visit a store and try to find your product like a new shopper.

- 👉 Think like a first-time shopper

Ask:

- Can they find your product in **5 seconds - in every store?**
- Is it where they expect it?
- Is it in the right category?
- Is it well merchandised?
- Is it easy to see?
- Does the shelf placement support the way shoppers make decisions?

✔ **QUICK ACTION:**

Next store visit:

- 👉 Try to find your product like a new shopper

If it takes longer than 5 seconds:

- 👉 You're losing sales

Learn How To Fix This Leak:

- Podcast: [302 Help Retailers Win: The Key Trends Category Leaders Know](#)
- Podcast: [284 Why Great Brands Still Lose Sales at the Shelf](#)
- Guide: [Merchandising Checklist To Grow Sales And Shopper Loyalty](#)

🟢 LEAK #4 — DEDUCTIONS

Question:

Pick one recent deduction and verify whether it is valid.

👉 Look at your last deductions

Ask:

- Is our paperwork complete and accurate with every event detail?
- Do we validate every deduction?
- Do we track recurring issues?
- Do we dispute invalid claims?

✅ QUICK ACTION:

Pick ONE recent deduction:

👉 Verify if it's valid

If you're unsure:

👉 You're losing cash after the sale

Most deductions are preventable. The best strategy is preventing the deduction before it disrupts cash flow or reconciliation becomes an expense.

Learn How To Fix This Leak:

- Podcast: [305 The Deduction Prevention System That Cuts Losses by 70%](#)
- Podcast: [184 Stop Deduction Leaks & Boost Trade ROI](#)
- Guide: [Effective Deduction Management](#)
- Workshop: Get the details and signup on my homepage: [RetailSolved.com](#)

🟦 LEAK #5 — EXECUTION

Question:

Did the strategy actually reach the shopper?

👉 Look at what should happen vs what actually happens

Ask:

- Are displays built correctly?
- Is inventory consistently available?
- Were shelves kept full?
- Are shelf tags accurate?
- Were there any out-of-stocks - even for a moment?
- Were shipments aligned with promotional timing?
- Did stores execute the plan consistently?

✅ QUICK ACTION:

Call or visit 2 stores:

👉 Check:

- Placement
- Inventory
- Execution
- Signage
- Shipments vs. Sales

If inconsistent:

👉 Your strategy isn't reaching shoppers

Learn How To Fix This Leak:

- **Podcast:** [316 CPG Brands Are Doing This Wrong | Retail Strategy](#)
- **Podcast:** [308 Your CPG Brand's Biggest Retail Problem](#)
- **Guide:** [Retail Scorecard - Maximize Retail Execution](#)

🟪 LEAK #6 — VISIBILITY GAP

Question:

Are you making decisions with clarity — or just reacting to data?

👉 This is the biggest one

Ask:

- What purchases are we missing?
- What shopper behavior are we missing?
- Where are shoppers getting confused?
- What's happening around us?
- What competitive activity influenced the result?
- What happened in store that the report does not explain?

✅ **QUICK ACTION:**

Write this down:

👉 "What do we NOT know about our performance?"

That's your biggest opportunity

Learn How To Fix This Leak:

- **Podcast:** [307 Cash Flow, Profit & Focus for CPG Founders With Nate Littlewood, Future Ready CFO](#)
- **Podcast:** [318 Your biggest retail mistake \(it's not what you think\) With Hank Watt, Nature's Wild Berry](#)
- **Guide:** [The Essential New Item Checklist - The Recipe For Success](#)
- **Workshop:** Get the details and signup on my homepage: [RetailSolved.com](#)

● **LEAK #7 — DECISION QUALITY**

Question:

Are your decisions reactive or proactive?

Are they rushed or are they strategic?

👉 How are you making decisions?

Ask:

- Are we relying only on reports?
- Do we understand shopper behavior?
- Do we consider category dynamics?
- Do we consider competitors?

- Do we look at the entire category?
- Do we look at competitive retailers?

✓ **QUICK ACTION:**

Before your next decision:

👉 Ask:

“Why did this actually happen?”

If you don't know:

👉 You're guessing

Learn How To Fix This Leak:

- **Podcast:** [319 Everything feels harder right now - Why Your Strategy Isn't Working Anymore](#)
- **Podcast:** [313 Why Community Is the Shortcut to CPG Growth With Kristine Carey, Naturally Colorado](#)
- **Guide:** [30 Days to Extend Your CPG Runway Challenge Workbook](#)

“Before you raise more money, find the money already leaking inside your business.”

LET'S RECAP

Most brands think:

👉 “We're spending too much”

But the truth is:

👉 You're leaking money in:

1. Promotions
2. Timing
3. Placement
4. Deductions
5. Execution

6. Visibility
7. Decision-making

HERE'S THE TRANSFORMATION

When you fix these:

- Promotions drive real growth
- Products are easy to find
- Trade spend becomes efficient
- Cash flow improves
- Sales become predictable
- Forecasts become accurate
- You gain control
- Retailers want to grow your brand

HERE'S THE CALL TO ACTION

This audit shows you **where** the leaks are.

In the free workshop:

- 👉 I'll show you how to fix the top three leaks draining your runway
- 👉 How to prioritize them
- 👉 And how to turn this into a repeatable system

Found A Possible Leak? Learn What To Fix First.

The Leak Finder helps you identify where your brand may be losing cash, margin, execution, or decision quality.

Want The Bigger Retail Clarity Resource Library?

This free guide is one piece of a larger Retail Solved system built to help entrepreneurial CPG founders protect runway, improve execution, make better retail decisions, and compete with larger brands.

Over the years, founders have asked me hundreds of questions through the Bulletproof Your CPG Brand podcast, LinkedIn articles, webinars, workshops, and private strategy conversations.

I created the Retail Clarity Founder Toolkit™ to answer many of those questions in one place.

Inside, you will find practical guides, checklists, calculators, and retail strategy resources covering topics like:

- trade marketing
- deductions
- retail math
- broker and distributor execution
- promotion ROI
- merchandising
- scorecards and KPIs
- category strategy
- sales storytelling
- runway protection
- retail execution

Several of these resources are only available inside the founder bundle.

If this free guide helped you see one part of your business more clearly, the bundle can help you keep building the rest of the system.

Explore the Retail Clarity Founder Toolkit™:

RetailSolved.com/RetailToolkit

Your Next Step

You just completed this guide.

Now the goal is not to collect more information.

The goal is to decide what to fix first.

Step 1 — Run The Free 15-Minute CPG Runway Leak Finder™

If you have not already done it, start here.

Use the Leak Finder to identify where your brand may be leaking:

- cash
- margin

- execution
- visibility
- decision quality
- runway

Download The Free Leak Finder: RetailSolved.com/leakfinder

No email required.

Download instantly.

Review it in 15 minutes.

Step 2 – If You Find A Leak, Decide What To Fix First

The Leak Finder helps you see where the issue may be hiding.

The next step is deciding what to fix first.

The CPG Cash Leak Triage™ helps you think through:

- which leak may be costing you the most
- why it may be happening
- what influenced it
- what to stop funding
- what to fix first
- how to make better retail decisions with limited resources

This is a focused Retail Clarity session designed to help you identify your top likely leaks and clarify practical next steps.

Built from real-world retail, trade, and deduction experience — not theory.

Learn more: RetailSolved.com/CashLeakTriage

Step 3 - If Your Data Shows What Happened But Not What To Do Next

Most CPG brands have reports.

They have sales data.

They have distributor reports.

They have broker updates.

They have retailer portals.

They may even have syndicated data.

But more data does not always create more clarity.

If your reports show what happened, but your team still struggles to decide what to fix, where to focus, which gaps matter most, or how to turn the information into action, you may need a custom Retail Clarity Decision Tool™.

I build shopper-first Excel dashboards, white space tools, scorecards, and presentation-ready reporting systems that help CPG teams turn messy retail, sales, distribution, promotion, deduction, and category data into clearer growth decisions.

Use this if you need help with:

- retail sales dashboards
- white space and distribution gap tools
- promotion ROI trackers
- deduction trackers
- broker or sales team scorecards
- executive sales updates
- retailer-ready category review outputs
- shopper-first category opportunity tools

Most dashboards show what happened.

The right decision tool helps you see what to do next.

Learn more: [**RetailSolved.com/DecisionTools**](https://RetailSolved.com/DecisionTools)

See examples of a couple if reports on the page.

No pressure. Send me what you are trying to understand, and I'll let you know whether a custom tool makes sense.

Step 4 - Keep Learning

If you want practical founder-first retail strategy each week, start here:

Listen To Bulletproof Your CPG Brand: RetailSolved.com/podcast

Start With Episode 269: RetailSolved.com/session269

Connect With Me On LinkedIn: [Daniel Lohman, CPSA](#)

If this guide helped you see something differently, please share it with another founder who needs it.

The stronger mission-driven brands become, the stronger this industry becomes.

A rising tide lifts all boats.



Recommended Retail Solved resources:

- **15-Minute CPG Runway Leak Finder™** — start here to identify where your brand may be losing cash, margin, execution, visibility, and decision quality. RetailSolved.com/leakfinder
- **CPG Cash Leak Triage™** — Bring your Leak Finder result and get help deciding what to fix first. RetailSolved.com/CashLeakTriage
- **The Free 30 Days to Extend Your CPG Runway Challenge** — The Foundational Step-By Step System to Grow, Scale, and Bulletproof Your CPG Brand.
- **Free Promotion ROI Calculator** — quantify whether your promotions are creating real demand or simply subsidizing sales.
- **Bulletproof Your CPG Brand Podcast** - More than 300 episodes of practical retail strategy from founders, CEOs, and industry experts.
- **Retail Clarity Decision Tools™** — Shopper-first Excel dashboards, white space tools, scorecards, and presentation-ready reporting systems that help CPG teams turn messy retail, sales, distribution, promotion, deduction, and category data into clearer growth decisions. RetailSolved.com/DecisionTools
- **Scorecards & KPI System** — build a repeatable rhythm for measuring what matters.

- **Retail Clarity Profit System™** — For brands ready to build the operating backbone needed to grow with more clarity, discipline, and confidence.
- **Retail Execution Accountability System™**— Improve broker, distributor, operational, and shelf-level execution.
- **Retail Operating System™** — For brands ready to build the operating backbone needed to grow with more clarity, discipline, and confidence. Visit the Brand School tab to explore additional founder-first resources: RetailSolved.com/BrandSchool