Grading the mattress shopping experience:

A retail bedding report card

David Perry
Executive Editor
Retail bedding playbook:
What RSAs are talking about with consumers

1. Warranties are high.
2. Better sleep is low.
3. Memory foam
4. Memory foam
5. Memory foam
About the data

Furniture/Today’s mattress secret shoppers searched the greater Phoenix metro in March, shopping 20 stores: 10 bedding specialists, eight furniture stores and two department stores.

The following qualitative results reflect data gathered by the shoppers, all females between the ages of 30 and 50. Shoppers, Inc., headquartered in Broken Arrow, Okla., recruited the shoppers.

Consumers were shopping for a queen mattress and were open to any construction type, focusing on the mattress that gave them the “best night’s sleep, regardless of cost.”

This exclusive data offers insights into the retail mattress shopping experience and provides a snapshot of product offerings within a major U.S. market.
Phoenix stores shopped

Ashley Furniture HomeStore
Bedmart
Beds America
Del Sol Furniture
JCPenney Home Furnishings Store
Macy's
Mattress 2 Go
Mattress Depot
Mattress Firm
M.D. Pruitt's Furniture
Mor Furniture for Less
Norwood Furniture
Oasis Bedrooms
R & S Mattress
Sack Time
Sleep America
Sleep Number
The Dump
The RoomStore
Thomasville of Scottsdale
As shoppers entered the store, 100% were greeted by a salesperson.

Shopping needs determined by RSAs:
- Product shopping for: 95%
- Size of mattress needed: 95%
- Construction type preferences: 50%
- Sleep issues: 50%
- Affordable price ranges: 30%
- Health issues: 20%

Dave’s grade: C
Features and benefits discussed by RSAs

- Warranty: 95%
- Comfortable: 90%
- Supportive: 90%
- Durability: 84%
- Construction types: 79%
- Better sleep: 20%
- Pain relief: 10%
- Body temperature: 10%
- Brands: 10%
- Prices: 10%
- Overall health benefits: 5%
- Pillow-top feature: 5%

Dave’s grade: F-
85% of RSAs recommended a construction type for getting the best night’s sleep

- Memory foam: 88%
- Air: 6%
- Innerspring: 6%

Memory Foam grade: A+
Innerspring grade: F
# How RSAs describe memory foam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Memory foam mattresses</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Molds to your body/returns to its shape</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made by layering foam</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offers consistent support/will not sag</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is durable/will last twice as long</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleeps hot</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the best-selling type</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How RSAs describe memory foam

“The foam traps heat and makes it too hot for the Arizona climate.”

“These beds offer the best support and are very durable and long-lasting.”

“The advantage is the bed molds to your body.”

“Will last decades.”

“Will not sag and lose support like a regular mattress.”
How RSAs describe **innerspring**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Innerspring mattresses</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contain metal springs for support</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encased coils that work independently are an improvement/work better</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Springs will sag over time/lose support</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How RSAs describe innerspring

“The best ones have coils that move independently and allow for better support.”

“This is the traditional metal spring bed.”

“They sag over time and support becomes inconsistent.”

“I recommend them over memory foam because memory foam sleeps too hot for the Arizona heat.”

“Are made with metal coil springs.”
How RSAs describe latex foam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latex foam mattresses</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Made by pouring latex into a mold</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is durable/will not sag</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleeps cool</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is resistant to bedbugs</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not familiar with</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How RSAs describe latex foam

“Are made by pouring latex into a form and allowing it to set into a solid foam.”

“They sleep cool.”

“Hold their form well over time.”

“Are naturally bedbug resistant.”

“Like memory foam, they don’t have issues with sagging over time.”
How RSAs describe **hybrids**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hybrid mattresses</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Innerspring bed with a layer of memory foam</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a traditional feel, with memory foam performance</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not familiar with</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How RSAs describe hybrids

“Is an innerspring with memory foam on top.”

“People who like the feel of a traditional spring bed like these.”

“Offers good support, but a more traditional feel.”

“Gives a familiar feel.”

“Made by putting a layer of memory foam over encased coils.”
How RSAs describe **air beds**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Air mattresses</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not familiar with</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made with air chambers for each side</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has problem of rigid divider between sides</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is durable</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How RSAs describe **air beds**

“Common complaint is the center of the bed between the chambers is rigid and not comfortable.”

“Uses two air chambers – one on each side.”

“Offers adjustable support.”

“Are durable over time, offering consistent support.”
Add-on accessories?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accessories presented by the RSAs</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mattress protectors/encasements</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustable bases</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pillows</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pillow protectors</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comforters/bedspreads/quilts</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mattress pads</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mattress toppers</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheets</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dave’s grade: D
# The RSA scorecard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completely disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Completely Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Averages</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-threatening</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left me alone/did not hover</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attentive</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educated/knowledgeable</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthy</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A good listener</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outgoing</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connected/related to me</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dave’s grade: B-
95% of RSAs asked for the sale.

75% offered financing options.

70% offered delivery for a fee.

5% offered free delivery.

Dave’s grade: B
Overall store impressions

- Excellent: 45%
- Good: 45%
- Neutral: 10%

Dave’s grade: A
Most appealing/exciting store aspects

- Good selection/variety of product: 65%
- Clean store: 40%
- Easy to shop/store layout: 20%
- Friendly salesperson: 20%
- Knowledgeable salesperson: 15%
- Competitive prices: 10%
- Unique product: 5%
- Was greeted right away: 5%

Dave’s grade: C
Most appealing/exciting store aspects

“Good selection of mattresses and pricing seemed competitive.”

“The fact that the store was well-maintained.”

“I appreciated the friendliness of the salesperson.”

“The store was very clean and the selection of mattresses was impressive.”

“The fact that the salesperson knew the products well.”

“It was easy to shop.”

“The salesperson made me feel comfortable and appreciated during the visit.”
85% would return to buy

- Friendly salesperson: 65%
- Wide/good selection: 65%
- Knowledgeable salesperson: 41%
- Clean store: 12%
- Competitive prices: 12%
- Prompt service: 12%
85% would return to buy

“I would return based on the salesperson. She was very friendly and also knew what she was talking about.”

“I would return based on the selection.”

“The selection in the store was good and the salesperson was easy to interact with.”

“The store was clean and well kept.”

“The pricing seemed competitive.”

“The salesperson was knowledgeable.”
15% of shoppers would not return to buy

“The selection was not as vast as what other stores offered.”

“I was offered no real help or direction. I was left to choose a mattress on my own.”

With the focus on price, I was left without any real idea of what would give me the best sleep.”
Retail bedding playbook

1. Selection/variety are critical.

2. She likes cleanliness.

3. Emphasize add-on accessories to build tickets, add comfort. There is power in pillows.


5. Sell better sleep. This should be our mission statement.
Grading the mattress shopping experience

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Craig McAndrews, Mattress Firm

Gerry Borreggine, Therapedic International