

# Shelf Tags Can Give You Superpowers

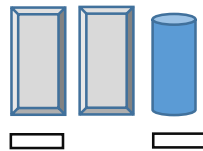
If you already have superpowers, you do not need to read this.

A recent conversation with a front-end manager went like this. Me: “You have a number of items without shelf tags. It must be a challenge to know what sold and what to reorder.” Manager: “Oh, don’t worry, I know this store real well, been here for many years...if something sells, I know it!” Me: “Wow, you must have superpowers! There are hundreds of items on the shelves and you can tell when one is missing!” Manager: “Yup.” Me: “Then why are there so many holes (missing items on the shelf)? Are they items you haven’t ordered or are they items your wholesaler is out of?” Manager, pausing: “Wholesaler is out of them.”

Take a few minutes today and go back to the basics. **Every item that can be found in the front of your store must have a shelf tag.** The shelf tag serves two very important purposes. One is as a place marker so that an item can be found in the same location every time a customer looks for the product. Shelf tags give items a home. The other function of a shelf tag is to make it easier to reorder the product. A shelf tag will display the product name and reorder number; in some instances, the tag will have a barcode to quickly scan the order information directly into the wholesaler’s order system. Even stores using automatic replenishment systems need shelf tags to control product placement.

## Helpful Tips:

- Inspect each department one at a time; start with the Cough, Cold & Allergy department. Order shelf tags for all items missing tags and to replace shopworn tags. A quick way to order tags for the complete section is to order a set of planogram shelf tags. Simply contact your wholesaler and provide the planogram number and ask for a new set of shelf labels (some wholesalers will let you do this online or with a special code placed in an ordering telzon). Ordering a new set of shelf tags is a great way to update your category and bring a clean, new look to your shelves.
- You will have to handwrite shelf tags or use a labeling program for items that your wholesaler does not provide shelf tags for and for items purchased directly from a manufacturer.
- Places where you will typically find missing shelf tags are items displayed on peg hooks and bulky items found in the subcategories of the DME department.
- When merchandising a doubled-faced item (meaning two identical items placed side by side instead of behind each other), place the shelf tag in front of the first item on the left, like this:



Shelf tags give superpowers to all employees, even the rookies!

-- Gabe Trahan, NCPA Senior Director of Store Operations and Marketing  
NCPA’s Front-End Overhaul