



Vistex for Retail: **Holistic Competitive Intelligence**



Competitive Intelligence For Competitive Retailers

Retail smarter: Use competitive intelligence to outsell, outprice and outperform

In the challenging retail arena, teams need more than intuition to succeed. **Competitive intelligence** is your secret weapon, providing the advanced tools and analytics necessary for data-driven decisions. From tracking competing retailers' promotions to optimizing pricing in real-time, it empowers you to stay agile, respond quickly to market shifts, and maximize profitability and market share.



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INTRODUCTION

The smartest retailers begin with competitive intelligence

Competitive intelligence is crucial for optimizing revenue, maximizing conversions and creating a consistent in-store experience. By leveraging data and analytics, you can optimize profits, identify market trends to drive traffic, take advantage of out-of-stock opportunities, understand customer behavior and adapt your strategies accordingly.



Price monitoring and digital shelf analytics: Get real-time insights with apps

Competitive intelligence apps are software tools that help retailers monitor and analyze their competitors. They provide easy access to real-time insights into promotions, assortment, and pricing. Intuitive dashboards, charts, and graphs empower you to quickly identify trends, pinpoint discrepancies, and refine your marketing spend for maximum ROI.



Promotions: Outsmart your competitors

Track your competitors' promotional efforts easily, analyzing their discount patterns, seasonal campaigns and the impact of these promotions on sales. This granular view allows you to develop multi-channel targeted marketing campaigns, avoid wasteful spending and focus on strategies that deliver the best results for your business.

Example: Imagine you're a grocery retailer and observe that a competitor consistently offers 20% off all produce on Wednesday. You could respond with a targeted counter-promotion, such as a limited-time personalized discount on the same category for your loyalty program members to attract traffic and drive sales.

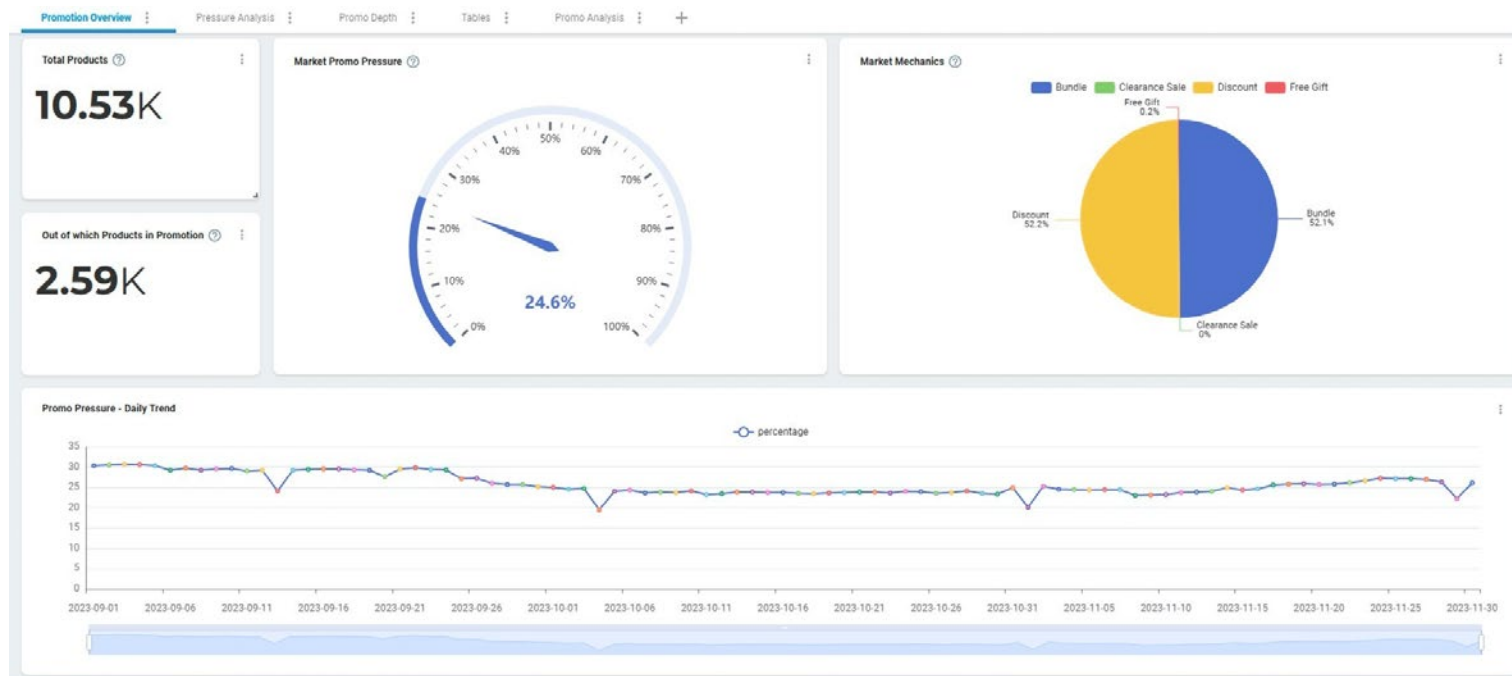


Figure 1: Screenshot of the promotions dashboard within a robust competitive intelligence

Assortment: Optimize your product mix

Having the correct assortment width and depth is essential for customer loyalty. The right competitive intelligence tool lets you analyze category offerings and identify market gaps where customer demand is underserved. This allows you to be strategic when determining your offering.

Example: One of your vendors shares market research data that states the vegan snacks industry is accelerating. Additionally, a heatmap visualization reveals a gap in vegan snack options among other retailers. This "white space" allows you to quickly add a selection of vegan chips and vegan protein bars, catering to this growing segment and boosting customer satisfaction.

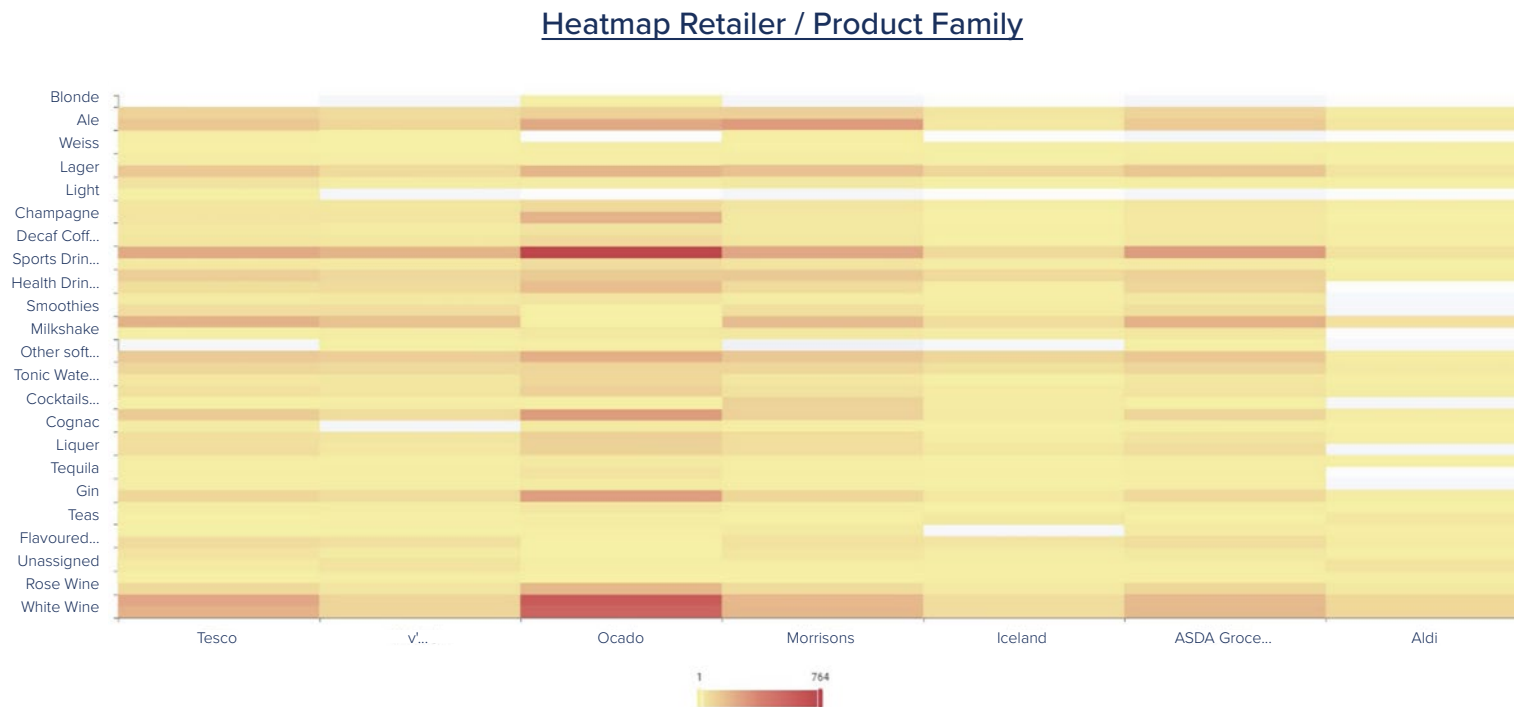


Figure 2: Screenshot of a "White Spaces Analysis"

Pricing: Beyond price matching

Pricing strategy goes beyond being able to match a competitor's price in real time; it's about strategically managing your pricing to maximize profitability while staying competitive. For example, imagine you're a retailer who consistently prices your breakfast cereal category 5% below a key competitor's. Suppose a competitor raises their breakfast cereal prices and your competitive intelligence app alerts you to this change. In that case, you're now empowered to adjust your pricing upward while maintaining that crucial price gap. This allows you to boost your topline and profit without sacrificing your competitive positioning.



Clever solutions for accurate and adaptive product matching

A key challenge for competitive intelligence apps is accurately matching products across multiple D2C sites, marketplaces and other online retail channels. To do this, they leverage various techniques—from simple GTIN matching to sophisticated AI-driven multimodal approaches—ensuring precise identification of identical and comparable products. This flexibility allows retailers like you to confidently depend on the accuracy of the data provided.





GTIN matching

GTIN (Global Trade Item Number) matching provides a quick and reliable way to identify identical products. Using unique product codes like GTIN, EAN, or UPC, you can precisely match items across retailers or platforms based on these identifiers. This approach enables fast, one-to-one price comparisons and is ideal for cases where product identifiers are consistent, such as electronics or packaged goods

Advanced AI-powered text and image pairing

When GTINs are unavailable or unreliable, AI-driven text and image-matching techniques become essential. By leveraging natural language processing (NLP) and computer vision, retailers can analyze product descriptions, specifications, and images to identify matches across inconsistent data sources.

Multimodal matching: combining text and image data

Multimodal matching enhances accuracy by combining text and image information, making it particularly effective for complex cases where a single data type falls short. You can analyze textual attributes, such as flavor, alongside image recognition of a product's shape and label. This approach ensures exact matching for visually distinguishable items, even when descriptive details vary or packaging and branding undergo slight changes, providing a comprehensive tool for product analysis.



Like-for-like matching for similar product comparisons

Like-for-like matching goes beyond identifying identical products by grouping items based on attributes such as size, functionality or other key characteristics, enabling deeper comparisons across brands and product lines. This approach is particularly valuable when packaging or branding differs, allowing you to benchmark pricing and promotions against comparable offerings without requiring exact matches. By facilitating meaningful analysis of similar but non-identical items, like-for-like matching provides critical insights for competitive positioning and strategic decision-making.

Smart refinement: Manual product mapping for tailored precision

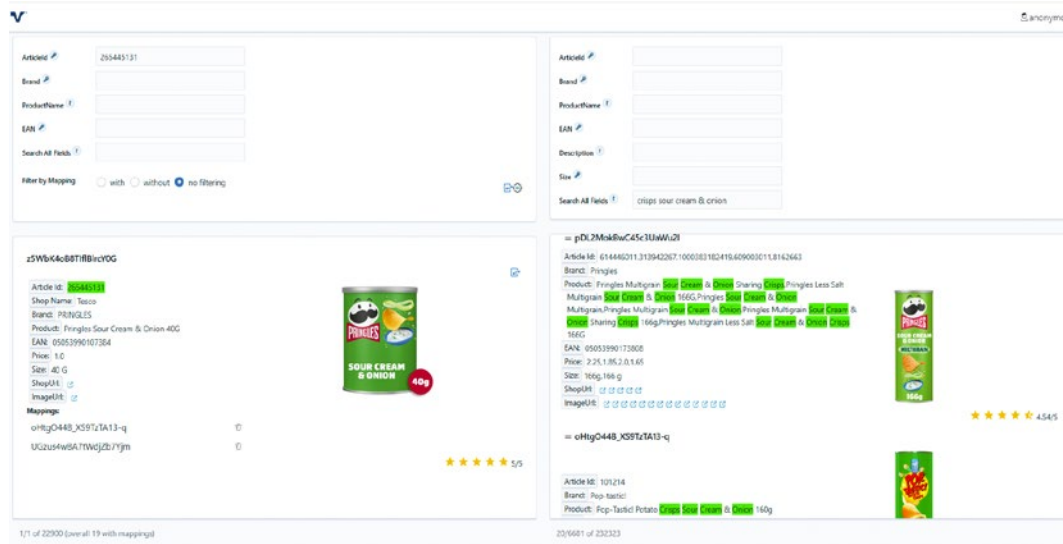
While AI-driven matching automates insights, manual product mapping empowers users to refine and personalize results. By reviewing AI-generated matches and adjusting, retailers can enhance accuracy and ensure a more relevant analysis.



Attribute clustering customizes like-for-like matches

In addition to validating AI-generated matches, users can leverage product mapping to define like-for-like relationships by clustering products according to specific attributes, such as flavor, size or packaging type, allowing for a more refined comparison between similar items. This feature ensures that nuanced variations, such as organic versus conventional or regular versus family-size packaging, are accurately captured in the like-for-like analysis.

Example: Imagine you're a retailer analyzing snack products. You can cluster items by flavor (e.g., "cheddar" vs. "sour cream") and define these clusters as comparable, even if the products are from different brands or vary in size. This tailored clustering enables you to make better-informed assortment decisions by understanding competitive offerings more granularly.



The screenshot displays a web-based interface for product mapping. It features several panels:

- Search Panel (Top Left):** Includes fields for Article ID (25445131), Brand, Product Name, EAN, and Search All Fields. A 'Filter by Mapping' section has radio buttons for 'with', 'without', and 'no filtering'.
- Product Details Panel (Bottom Left):** Shows details for 'SOUR CREAM & ONION 40g' by Pringles. Fields include Article ID, Shop Name (Tesco), Brand (PRINGLES), Product, EAN, Price (1.6), Size (40g), Shop URL, and Image URL. A 'Mapping' section shows two mappings with status indicators.
- Product Details Panel (Bottom Right):** Shows details for 'Pop-Tastic Potatoes 140g'. Fields include Article ID, Brand (Pop-tastic), and Product.
- Search Panel (Top Right):** Includes fields for Article ID, Brand, Product Name, EAN, Description, and Size. The 'Search All Fields' field contains the text 'crisps sour cream & onion'.

Product mapping accurately represents complex product relationships by supporting manual validation and customization through attribute-based clustering. This capability allows you to optimize your analysis of identical and similar products across brands, enhancing the overall effectiveness of your competitive intelligence platform.

Figure 3: Screenshot of attribute clustering in a competitive intelligence tool

CONCLUSION

The smarter approach to competitive intelligence

A comprehensive competitive intelligence platform offers a decisive competitive advantage by equipping retailers with actionable insights to analyze consumer demand trends, optimize promotions dynamically and adjust pricing strategies in real-time. This enables them to maximize sales, enhance customer retention and stay ahead of market shifts.

This tool transforms data into strategic opportunities by addressing key retail challenges such as dynamic pricing, promotional effectiveness and consumer behavior analysis. By leveraging these insights, you can make informed decisions, refine pricing and promotional strategies and unlock new growth potential.



When selecting a competitive intelligence solution, prioritize seamless data integration and real-time analytics to ensure greater visibility, empower smarter decision-making and enhance overall business performance.



How technology can make a difference

Manual data collection is inefficient and delays market responses, particularly in fast-moving retail environments where pricing and promotional shifts happen daily. A responsive retail competitive intelligence solution streamlines this process by automatically collecting daily market-wide pricing data, providing retailers with clear insights into competitor pricing strategies, seasonal demand fluctuations, and regional pricing trends. This enables retailers to adjust their prices swiftly, optimize markdowns and maintain a competitive edge across physical stores and e-commerce platforms. Automating data gathering allows retailers to understand competitive actions and market trends in real time. A responsive solution automates data collection, providing clear insights into competitor pricing and allowing swift adjustments to pricing strategies.



How VantageView adds value

VantageView™ by Vistex is a scalable Market Analysis Platform that combines the power of Vistex Analytics with external Big Data. It structures and links terabytes of global market data about products, places, prices, and promotions so you can better position your products in all distribution channels.

About the author

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Hanna Koepcke has over 20 years of experience in information technology, including 12 years specializing in ecommerce solutions. As a co-founder and former CTO of Webdata Solutions GmbH, she has a strong background in data integration, entity resolution and AI-driven market analysis.

About Vistex

Vistex solutions help businesses take control of their mission-critical processes. With a multitude of programs covering pricing, trade, royalties and incentives, it can be complicated to see where all the money is flowing, let alone how much difference it makes to the topline and the bottomline. With Vistex, business stakeholders can see the numbers, see what really works, and see what to do next – so they can make sure every dollar spent or earned is really driving growth, and not just additional costs. The world's leading enterprises across a spectrum of industries rely on Vistex every day to propel their businesses.

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