

Are the Big Box Home Improvement Stores Getting Their Fair Share?

Big box Home Improvement stores dominate Outdoor Power Equipment (OPE) markets, but TraQline finds major shares in OPE repair parts for these retailers to claim

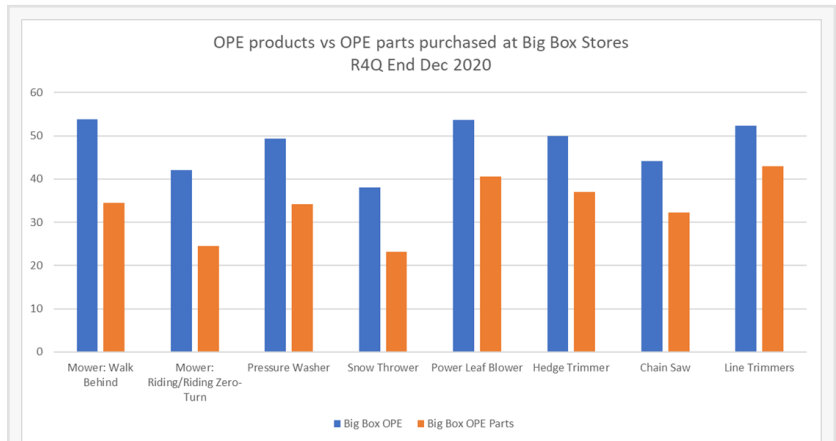
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New TraQline data has shown that [big box](#) home improvement (HI) retailers are lagging with [outdoor power equipment](#) (OPE) parts sales. After recognizing a major gap in the data on the purchase behavior associated with repair and maintenance parts for OPE, the Stevenson Company utilized TraQline's ongoing monthly survey to gather more information. The big question the research team wanted to answer using the available data was whether or not big box HI stores were

actually getting their fair share of OPE parts purchases. Maintenance and repair part (MRP) purchase data showed HI stores with some of the lowest market shares in the niche.

Consumers are still making their way to the larger retailers like Lowe's, Menard's, and Home Depot for OPE purchases. After all, these stores do tend to have a large footprint and high regional accessibility. The HI chains dominate the OPE market collectively with 50 percent of the OPE product unit shares. With independent dealers dropping to 20 percent since 2004 and once-giant OPE retailer Sears continuing to lower inventory and numbers of stores, Big Box HI stores have naturally picked up market dominance.

Even though the majority of large and small HI retailers sell both OPE and OPE repair parts, the unit shares for parts at Big Box HI are far lower than with actual equipment. Even though these stores are easily taking a 50 percent unit share on OPE, they are only seeing about a 34 percent unit share with OPE parts purchases. Even more interesting, the disparity between OPE and OPE parts can vary depending on the type of equipment. For example, Big Box retailers saw a 54



Disparity between OPE and OPE part purchases show largest gaps between Walk-Behind Mowers and Riding Mowers



TraQline Logo



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David Garcia

percent market share of walk-behind or push mowers, whereas they only won a 34 percent share of OPE repair parts for those mowers. With riding mowers, it is 42 percent versus 25 percent. Gaps are even noticeable with smaller OPE products like leaf blowers and line trimmers, albeit slightly slimmer.

What's to blame for such a large gap? TraQline indicates that shoppers just aren't regarding big box retailers as the destination for the parts they need. At Home Depot, for example, shoppers are about 60 percent more likely to head to the store for outdoor power equipment than they

are for parts. Instead, more shoppers are heading to independent or smaller stores or just buying parts they need online. The top three competitors for OPE repair parts happen to be Wal-Mart, Amazon, and independent equipment dealers.

David Garcia, Director of National Accounts for TraQline commented on this trend: "When shopping online for repair parts, data indicates that consumers gravitate elsewhere due to a perception of better prices and selection as compared to Big Box HI's online storefronts."

Simply put, consumers are not seeing the retailers as destinations to buy parts for OPE, even online. While 25 percent of repair parts are bought online, only 9 percent of parts sales for big box HI stores happen via the internet.

In the end, those big box HI stores have a massive share to claim, and opportunity is present. When shoppers do go to a big box HI retailer for parts, close rates for the sale are about 5 to 10 percent higher. Consumers want to buy parts from these stores; data shows they buy at these stores when given the opportunity primarily because of convenience. Enhanced advertising efforts and building up both in-store and online inventory could bring about a major shift and a larger share of the OPE parts market. To read the full article containing this research, visit [this link](#) on the TraQline website.

TraQline, created by the Stevenson Company, is a top resource for insightful market share data in North America. The unique technology and methodology behind TraQline involves looking beyond internal sales data to gain further understanding of the market based on consumer behavior and voice.

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