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MARKETING

5 tips to boost Sensory Marketing



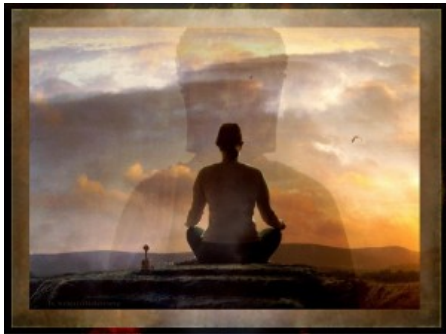
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Sensory Marketing

On her new book, *Customer Sense: How the 5 Senses Influence Buying Behavior*, Aradhna Krishna claims that companies can significantly enrich the appeal of products by making slight changes that prompt subconscious responses.

She defines sensory marketing as subconscious triggers that affect how people make purchase and consumption decisions. Advertisers state that a perfume is sexy and feminine and even invite actress Rachel Weisz to pose embracing a gigantic flask containing the fragrance. But shoppers want to smell it before purchasing it, right? The product itself is giving the message through sensory means. A more persuasive and subconscious message, for sure.

Why is sensory marketing even more relevant in the digital era?

It may sound contradictory, if people spend more time online and their shopping habits towards online and mobile purchases, why bother with stimulating the senses?

People now gather online with friends, tour museums virtually and play sports in their li but they simultaneously feel disconnected from the tactile, "in the flesh" world.

JWT carried out a survey of 1,016 adults in the U.S. and U.K. last November. They found that the constantly connected Millennials tend to feel this way. The results verified that "more than 7 in 10 say they increasingly crave experiences that stimulate their senses, and more than half feel increasingly disconnected from the physical world. Accordingly, they are placing greater importance on experiences: 81 percent say they value experiences over material items, and 72 percent would rather spend their money on an experience."

After reading Aradhna Krishna's insights, we suggest 5 tips that may help boost sensory marketing:

1- Be systematic to create loyalty

Some brands try to dive into the trend going overboard: they want a strong smell, distinctive music, the whole lot at once. These may leave consumers dizzy or confused, especially with brands that change their aspect and sensory appeal several times in a short period of time.

Other brands create a long-term plan where every detail is taken into account and supervised like Singapore Airlines. Since 1972, the iconic image of the "Singapore Girl" has appeared in advertisements in almost all media forms and promotions across the world. Iconic is key: a wax figure of the Singapore Girl was created and shown at Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum in London in 1994.

Singapore Airlines very early on created a signature smell as well. This smell is still used in the plane and in their lounges. While it is not strong in concentration, one can smell it subliminally, connoting luxury and comfort. The patented scent was also created for the cabin crew to wear and infused into the hot towels given out by the Girls. It is now perceived by travellers as distinctly Asian

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and feminine, and reminds them of smooth comfortable journeys, reflecting the effectiveness of this sensory branding strategy.

The company surely understands that the systematic use of its trademark visual and aromatic symbols contributes to creating loyalty and making their customers feel welcomed. Imagine what would happen if the Girls (who even use similar pitches when talking) would suddenly be replaced? Would your journey feel incomplete in some way?

2- Turn your store into a destination

Going back to the digital vs real retail experience, you need to buy a stuffed giraffe for your nephew. You can go to Amazon and shop for price and even arrange to be delivered directly at his house in less than five minutes, or you can take your nephew into a multisensory experience.

London's luxury department store Harrods has refurbished its toy area for the first time in over 20 years. Its new Toy Kingdom consists of six separate 'worlds' across 26,000 square feet. Harrods invested millions of pounds on the renovation in a bid to make the retail experience as interactive as possible for customers. Featuring the world's first generative retail soundscapes running through six individual multi-sensory 'worlds' it creates a fully immersive shopping experience.

"It is a shame when toy departments just become a place to sell a retail product," Lead designer of the project, Matt Smith said. "We didn't want to lose that magic, which is why we wanted it to be so much more than a toy shop."

Harrods aims to transform the purchase of your stuffed giraffe into a delightful shared outing for you and your nephew and make the store a destination, a "retail theatre".

"Harrods is London's third most visited destination for tourists and we wanted to create a landmark family shopping experience that really was unforgettable for our visitors," commented David Miller, Director of Harrods Home. "It was important for us not to just build a conventional retail department but to create multi-sensory environments that surprise, entertain and encourage shoppers to interact and play."

3- Names and words evoke the senses as well

Aradhna Krishna states that another sensorial way to increase product appeal is by emphasizing the existing sensorial aspect of that item. A clear example is the iPod Touch. Solely by naming it the "Touch", it made the consumer much more involved with the product and in a way proclaimed ownership of that sense, the sense of "touch".

It would not have worked out the same way if Apple had used some alphanumeric name—let's say, RXD2. "Just calling it the Touch really made people much more engaged with the product—they wanted to touch it, to interact with it, and felt closer to it. Their advertising too was a play on Touch and emphasized it. So it was very beautifully done to engage the consumer," she explains.

4- Stand out

Mill chocolate bars are usually, well bars! But you can make this same product more appealing to the senses by transforming it into the Hershey's Kiss.

In 1907, a company began producing a flat-bottomed, conical milk chocolate candy that Mr. Hershey decided to name HERSHEY'S KISSES Chocolates with its distinctive wrapping with the familiar "plume" at the top that represents it is a genuine Hershey's Kiss. The plume is also trademarked!

The Hershey's Kiss is extremely sensorial: the shape feels very good in the mouth and when you unfold it, you're unfolding the flag. It's also like unwrapping a present.

5. Into the streets

A Dunkin' Donuts campaign has reinvented traditional radio advertising using unique technology and the smell of coffee in South Korea. The "Flavor Radio" campaign released coffee aroma via sound recognition technology.

Each time the Dunkin' Donuts radio jingle was played on Seoul buses, a light coffee scent was sprayed using atomizers. The aroma was supposed to remind the passengers of the experience of the Dunkin' Donuts brand. It worked. In fact, over than 350,000 people experienced the ad during the campaign, leading to number of visitors to the Dunkin' Donuts stores increasing by 16 percent and sales going up 29 percent.

There are plenty of examples of in-store sensory marketing campaigns, but in this case the experience has been taken out of the store into the streets.

These insights show how marketers can cut through advertising clutter with carefully formulated sensory hints responding to the enthusiasm customers seem to be seeking once they abandon the comfort of their virtual lives and venture into the real world searching for more amped-up tastes, aromas and experiences.

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