

SENSORY MARKETING OR SENSES IN A SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS

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Summary

Starting from the five senses with which a person is endowed - hearing, sight, smell, taste and touch, as well as the customer's desire to personally check what he or she is buying, a new way of induced influence has developed – and that is sensory marketing. It deals of course with the senses, more specifically it develops services and technologies through which the potential customer is attracted, "enchanted" in an inspirational environment. Offerers can not be the same. If the products are similar, then the difference is made by the ambiance.

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1. General Considerations

For many products, the customer's first contact is with its package. In addition to the functionality requirements (it maintains the properties, it protects during transport, it is easily open), the package must take the description of a product that can not be touched or seen. But because it has proved to be insufficient, the package is most of the times removed to leave room for the discovery of the products, for their exploration.

Thus, starting from the five senses with which a person is endowed - hearing, sight, smell, taste and touch, as well as the customer's desire to personally check what he or she is buying, a new way of induced influence has developed – and that is sensory marketing. It deals of course with the senses, more specifically it develops services and technologies through which the potential customer is attracted, "enchanted" in an inspirational environment. Offerers can not be the same. If the products are similar, then the difference is made by the ambiance.

The father of sensory marketing or neuromarketing is Martin Lindstrom - Danish brands designer and brand consultant for Disney, Mars, Pepsi, American Express, Mercedes-Benz, McDonald's, Microsoft. He developed an unorthodox way of doing what any company says it wants to do: to understand the deepest desires of its customers and turn them into innovative products, brands or retail experiences. In 2015, in *Thinkers50* he was ranked 18, among the most influential management thinkers in the world (www.martinlindstrom.com).

Martin Lindstrom's idea was not only to use the visual perception of the brand, but to also connect to it all five human senses. He has conducted studies on the effects that the tools of sensory marketing have on the buyer: these show that a pleasant sound can increase the desire to purchase goods by 65%. Taste accelerates the growth of the readiness to purchase by 23%, a pleasant smell by 40%. A product which is soft at touch has 26% more chances to be bought, and one pleasant to the eye has 46%. Summing up, Lindstrom has obtained the following result: the cumulated effect of all senses should increase the customer's willingness to purchase by 200%. The reality gives good results, even if what the mentioned specialist states is not always confirmed. It is important to plan the marketing strategy using the principles of sensory commercialization in advance. Everything must reflect the brand's values.

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Sensory marketing can be named "a shopping experience" or the stimulating of the consumer's senses at the point of sale, in order to enhance the customers' experience (www.strategic.ro). Environmental factors cause certain reactions to the clients: psychological, emotional, cognitive, motivational, behavioral.

Based on these responses, customers choose: to spend more time in the place, to buy something, often after a sensory stimulus, to decide to return, to socialize with staff, to look through the shelves and products, to analyze each one of them, to cheer up, to hum etc.

The reactions can also be reversed: the perfume could not be tolerated (too strong, too stifling, too floral etc.), the music could be too loud, the songs could not be part of the customer's preferences, drowsiness could be installed, and the solution to exit such situations is leaving the place.

These aids do not replace quality services and products. No matter the greatness of the effort to get a customer to spend more time on that place, to buy, to return and to recommend to his friends, he will not do so if he is disappointed with the quality of the products and services or if he is not satisfied with the staff's performance. Sensory marketing does not directly focus on sales, but mostly on the emotional relationship between the consumer and the product.

Also, it is not independent of other elements of the business, but it must be effectively integrated into the overall marketing and management strategy, into the policy and tactics for communication with consumers.

We can not certainly affirm which of the senses is more exploited, more approached.

Some people believe that the sense of smell is the most ingrained into memory, relying on the fragrant experiences that are imprinted in memory (<http://ruminref.eu>). But differences arise with the type of business they support. The used sensory marketing tools are the sounds, the colors, the textures, the flavours, the tastes and their impact on consumers when it produces an reflex association: a certain song, a scent or a sensation immediately evokes memories of a brand (www.casinoinside.ro).

2. The sense of smell

The smell, as most of us know, is essential in sensory marketing. Sales may record significant increases if it is well used and stimulated. The range of flavours is diverse and can be easily adapted to different types of locations after their activity and characteristics. This technique is developed in Mall stores: Yves Rocher, The Body Shop, Sephora, Douglas, etc., where perfumes are being sold, then in those stores where clothes are displayed, especially for women, where floral flavours, either intense or gentle, prevail, as it is decided in marketing meetings, in the stores where we find furniture and the smell of wood, of nature is predominant, in bakeries where there are bread or freshly baked cake aromas etc.

The method has been taken over in other areas as well. In the waiting rooms "Business Class" of British Airways Airline it smells like a perfume reminiscing of the freshly cut grass and the sea breeze. It creates comfort to the passenger, the message is: "Relax, remember these enjoyable moments and travel some other time with us again" (<http://ideideafaceri.manager.ro>).

In coffee shops the smell of coffee is breathtaking, from restaurants the alluring smell of freshly cooked meals, of fries pierces.

The Avon brochures contain scented pills that usually show the new products etc.

On this topic, there are some interesting studies: the one from the United States became notorious. It brought together a thousand women, asking them to choose one of the presented four pairs of socks. Although the four pairs were identical, 90% of women chose the one that had been discreetly impregnated with a scent-based on male hormones.

There are positive and negative flavours. Through experiments, it has been demonstrated that the flavours of lavender, chamomile and sandalwood affect the activity of the brain faster than any tranquilizer. Rose, mint and cloves can stimulate cells stronger than strong coffee ... On the other hand, the smell of a fish shop makes you quickly decide on what you want to buy. This is aroma-marketing or, in other words, this is how essences become essential in a business!

3. The sense of touch

Another sense, the tactile sense or touch in common language, has an impact on the decision of buying a product. Women tend to pay particular importance for fabrics or knitted products because when they touch them, they can imagine how the clothes would be when they wear, wash or crumple them, what skin sensation it will offer etc. However, more and more men choose clothes that have a velvet soft touch.

Some experts have come to the conclusion that putting together the sweaters and shirts on large tables which allows their study in detail will give the customer a positive mood, because of the created comfort and the complete control over products, without the intermediation of the seller, fact which will convince the customer to buy. Therefore, many online clothing stores are not successful. Even though a larger number of vendors – supervisors becomes necessary, this strategy works.

People's ability to perceive the effect of the environmental factors through the skin receptors, the musculoskeletal system and through some of the organs (lips, tongue etc.) is a physical security instinct.

Paco Underhill, retail sales specialist, believes that „we live in a society with a lack of tactility and shopping is one of the few opportunities to come into direct contact with the material world.” Underhill argues that brochure based sales or online sales will never be a serious threat to traditional retail stores (<http://ruminref.eu>).

4. Sense of hearing

Relying on the idea that good music sells everything and relying on studies that have concluded that sales will increase by 10% in locations where it is broadcasted (<https://www.martinlindstrom.com>), the client's sense of hearing becomes a target.

If a location has several spaces, for example, a restaurant, then through this system the ambience is diversified; a relaxing song can be heard in the courtyard or on the terrace, jazz or dance in the bar area and in the parlours the background and the served cuisine are taken into account. If the music is very loud and noisy, the buyer goes out faster and viceversa.

A clear connotation of songs which would distract the customers and make them analyze the text is not recommended. Some songs may cause negative associations, bad memories, or they are simply not pleasing the customers. For this reason, it is better not to use well-known songs. Classical music is not appropriate because many people do not understand it and do not like it, although it is recognized as a good treatment. Music depends on the buyers' age, the time and the day that is broadcasted. Recently, it has been scientifically proven that every sound is retained in the psychological and subconscious decisions and affects everyone's actions. The sound effects contribute to sensitizing the buyer and his mood, for example, the sound of waves in the area where fish is sold.

It is recommended to quit listening to radio or watching television, but there are many places where they are still preferred. Such places are the waiting rooms of medical offices, railway stations, where tension, fear, expectation can be easier if one listens to news, music, commercials, telenovelas. These represent a combination of effects on two simultaneous senses: hearing and sight.

Music Master is a program used by diverse retail companies, HoReCa, health and wellness for which one pays a monthly subscription between 60 and 90 euro. The music which is chosen for the compilation must fit the background, the store's concept and the range of products. This must be in harmony with the general style of the company, it must be associated with the brand and it must not repeat itself at short intervals of time.

At present, businessmen from the USA and from Western Europe use these services with the same frequency of the phone subscription. In the USA, the company Muzak is the market leader on this type of service. In Romania, due to the fact that most of the music is illegally downloaded on the internet and the broadcasting is made after the musical preferences of each employer or of an employee, there is just one company with such an activity: Mood Media® Romania, founded in 2000. It is a branch of Mood Media Group, the market leader in Europe, which is present in more than 40 countries of the world. The mother company develops this type of promotion for more than half a century, from the 50s, being the first in Europe to have broadcasted music in a supermarket in France (www.moodmedia.ro). Mood Media uses a musical, visual and olfactory mix in order to stimulate the growth of clients' traffic, the growth of sales and the promotion at sale points because the services which are mainly offered are the audio ones, respectively ambiance music, the recording and broadcasting of audio spots, instore radio (music and the broadcasting of audio messages).

5. Sight

Sight is valued through video contents which are advertised on screens placed in sale points. The images can be promoting, informing or entertaining, there can be sports games with a great stake, matches of national or local teams or other audience TV shows.

Moreover, the lights should not be forgotten. When a location is seen from the street, it is not chosen for its smell or music, these cannot be seen, but the lights, both the exterior and the interior ones...yes, these catch one's attention.

Colour creates a special atmosphere which promotes comfort. According to the results obtained along numerous psychological experiments, scientists have come to the conclusion that through colour a certain influence on human perception about body weight, the room temperature, the distance at which the objects are being carried out. Colour affects the psycho-intellectual status of the person, it has either a calming effect or not. Studies show that 80% of the light and colour is absorbed by the nervous system and only 20% by sight. The colours have a different symbolism from a culture to another. However, we all recognize them this way: white – cold and pure colour; black – conflictual colour, with a feeling of loneliness and isolation from the exterior world; grey – neutral colour which creates a sense of stability, it encourages people to be modest and restrained; red – it generates emotion, restlessness, a desire to do something; pink – sexuality, love, spiritual joy, sensitivity; brown – symbol for the animal inside the man; green – hope; blue – loyalty. And so on! Of course, colours are used in efficient compatible combinations in the hitch-hike. Even the season has an influence upon the choice of the colours, winter, autumn, spring and summer being so different from each other!

6. Taste

The taste impact as a perception channel is more limited because the individuality is very accentuated. What does sweet, salty, bitter and sour mean for each person? It is something uncertain, it cannot have an effect upon a person from the distance, just like all the other senses do. Of course there is a series of unexplored opportunities in this direction too, which can be used in an advantageous manner. In order to enhance the chances to sell for some categories of alimentary products, degustation take place nearby the presentation

shelves. Leerdammer, Danone, Delaco, Nestle, Bucuria, wine brands etc. are just a few of them. For the gustative perception, we can also think of a toothpaste. It has smell, taste and a certain texture. For medicines, which very seldom have a pleasant taste, this becomes increasingly important for children because it is hard to convince them to swallow a bitter pill or potion. Tobacco has been combined with mint for a pleasant taste which offers the mouth a refreshing sensation.

7. Conclusions

Through neurobranding, the consumer is given a special feeling. The magic of sounds, colours and flavours proves its power. Using them separately or together, the marketers create a powerful emotional relation between the product and the customer, which assures the success of the brand. When elaborating the marketing strategies or the promotion campaigns it is important to create feelings for the target audience. This is why they "cling" to perceptions, sensations and feelings which are generated with the help of physical sensors.

The challenge is to obtain a complete positive effect, developing in a simultaneous manner all the consumers' contact points with the brand. Moreover, each and every of these contact points must perceive something unique, something which is not simple at all. There is no certainty that success through sensorial branding is guaranteed, that you can become better than your competitors. Skeptics consider all of these to be a manipulation (www.descopera.ro), an attack upon every consumer, without him to have too many chances to oppose.

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