Ignite Your Sales with Sensory Branding

Product Positioning and Branding

Sell, sell, sell! That’s the end goal of your marketing efforts. But getting your product into the customer’s cart is seldom a direct line from locating the product to purchasing it. That's where promotion enters the marketing equation. The objective of promotion is to move customers through the following phases: Unawareness > Awareness > Beliefs > Attitude > Purchasing Intentions > Purchase.

Getting the first sale is great, but capturing repeat customers is the more profitable goal. Repeat customers don’t require additional marketing resources. Your marketing goal then is to establish your “brand” with customers. Branding is the use of a name, term, symbol or design to give a product a unique identity in the marketplace. If your product comes to mind when customers think about purchasing that type of product, it’s branded with them. Branding is owning a space in the customer’s mind.

Sensory Branding

“Tell me and I forget. Show me and I might remember. Involve me and I will understand” Benjamin Franklin

Most small specialty food entrepreneurs or direct farm markets don’t have mega marketing budgets to establish their brands. However, if you’re marketing a food product, you have the distinct advantage of drawing on any of the five sensory cues to help brand your product. Capitalizing on the sensory aspects of your products Helps accelerate the purchasing decision process for customers.

Sight: Eighty-three percent of all information people receive is visual. This means you have to pay extra-close
attention to your product’s appearance and labeling. It has to be distinctive and help reinforce your positioning. Think of any national brand of pizza as a good example of “sight” branding.

**Smell:** Consider utilizing your food product’s natural smells. Cut open an onion at market, put basil out in your farm stand, or open a jar of your spice mix and let potential customers have a sniff. Fry up some bacon at the market just to attract a crowd. Fresh brewed coffee is a great example “smell” branding.

**Sound:** Audible branding can be more challenging to have coming from the product, but not impossible. The snap of fresh carrots or the crunch of crisp apples can provide auditory branding traits. Sometimes the trait is a jingle or tune. What comes to mind first when you think of a Good Humor Ice Cream truck? The distinctive tune that plays as the truck enters a neighborhood. Rice Krispies cereal has a classic auditory brand - “Snap, Crackle, Pop.”

**Touch:** Pay close attention to this trait in your product design. Produce needs to be solid and clean, package seals secure and clean. The texture and design of baked goods should be both eye appealing and fresh to the touch. The Pillsbury Dough Boy is a good example of the “touch” sensory trait.

**Taste:** Product sampling and tastings is the best way to engage customers with your product. Unfortunately, it is often impractical or not permitted at markets or retail venues. Be knowledgeable of the different types of flavors: salty, sweet, sour, savory, and bitter. Use these types of descriptor words in your marketing materials. The potato chip aisle is packed with a variety of flavored chip with distinctive descriptions yet all basically still just potato chips.

Sensory branding can help customers better relate to your product and help secure your brand with them. Your products’ sensory attributes become touch points with customer and their purchasing experience becomes more personal and memorable. Great buying experiences translates into more repeat sales and better profits.