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# SENSES AND MARKETING

# INTRODUCTION

Human is by nature a multisensory creature. All the information the human brain processes through its five senses – sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. Some of our senses are more developed than others, but basically they are all average in their own way. In nature, on the other hand, each creature has a certain sense (or a combination of two senses) significantly more developed than others and its functioning is tightened almost to perfection, while other of its senses are stunted or even non-functional.

# INTRODUCTION

For example, a mole has absolutely amazing olfactory and tactile abilities, but completely lacks sight. This is due to its narrow specialization, ensuring its survival underground. Human, as the most developed and intelligent creature on earth, uses all his senses for survival, allowing great variability in performing various activities.

# INTRODUCTION

Generally, the most important sense of all for us is sight. It is also our most developed sense and about two-thirds of our sensory receptors are in our eyes. However, the work with visual perceptions can be quite limiting. A purely visual approach to communication has many limitations and obstacles.

# SIGHT

Sight is and certainly will be (maybe forever) the most important human sense. This does not mean, however, that we should forget the other senses. The visual stimulus had tremendous effectiveness at the time of the advent of advertising, but over time this efficiency has declined sharply.

# SIGHT

This phenomenon can be partly explained by two well-known facts about functioning of the old brain. The old brain likes simplicity and seeks contrasts. When we look around, we see a sprawling flood of TV commercials, billboards, posters, citylights, banners and many other ad platforms that are more or less similar in shape and message. All these advertising messages together form a complicated yet homogeneous environment. Our brain automatically filters them and their real impact on the customer is minimal.

# SIGHT

Fortunately, there are ways to differentiate and get lost attention. The first way is to create a truly original and contrasting advertising message that comes out of the line, breaks down the monotony of the advertising message and truly catches the eye of customer. The second option is to combine the visual stimulus with another sensory stimulus. After all, people have five senses. Our advertising can look good and smell good or look good and make an interesting sound. It is proven that stimulation of several senses at once multiplies the effect that is achieved through stimulation of just one sense.

# SIGHT

An interesting and relatively well-known example of addressing a customer with several senses at once is placing the perfume sample directly in the magazine in which the advertisement is placed. In this case, not only printed message is enhanced, but the customer also has the opportunity to test the product directly through our message.



# SMELL

The sense of smell together with taste is our least developed and least needed sense. However, this does not in any way imply that it is not relevant for marketing. From an evolutionary point of view, it is a much older sense than sight and it also plays a role in human life much earlier. In early childhood, our sensory organs are fully functional from a functional point of view, but their practical and effective use comes only after some time passes.

# SMELL

The peak of our olfactory abilities occurs between five and ten years of age, while our visual and auditory abilities culminate between fifteen and thirty years of age. More importantly, our olfactory center is located next to the limbic system, which is responsible for our emotions and memories. This creates a very strong connection between scents, emotions and memory. This finding opens new horizons for marketing.

# SMELL

In childhood and less then in adulthood, by smell we associate certain scents with certain emotional states. For example, few people can deny that the scent of fresh baked buns makes a person feel comfortable, like being at home. We have a lot of such equations in our head and it is only up to a particular company to be able to associate its product with a certain smell and emotion or create a completely new equation.

# SMELL

Fragrance marketing, as is work with scents within marketing called, has also its other side. The fact that the pastry should smell after pastry and roses after roses is clear. It is important that the scent must be coherent with the subject. In one experiment conducted by Dr. Calvert in London, it was found that if the visual and olfactory sensations are consistent, that is, coffee smells like coffee, the part of the brain responsible for pleasant feelings is stimulated.

# SMELL

However, if these sensations are inconsistent, e.g. the coffee smells like smoked salmon, another part of the brain responsible for disgust is stimulated. It is not that there is something wrong with the scent of smoked salmon itself, but coffee should not smell like that, and the brain knows it. In other words, if we choose the wrong scent, our other promotional efforts will be negatively affected by it.

# SMELL

This knowledge can be useful for example when we decide where to place our products in stores. We should be careful that our product is not placed where the customer comes into contact with any type of specific scent that is inconsistent to our product – fish, perfumes, meat, washing powders etc. In such cases, it could naturally create an undesirable effect.

# TASTE

The taste is strongly connected with the smell. They work together and have a very similar role in our lives. However, it is much harder to work with taste than with smell. We can spray the scent around the shop as we want, and everyone will have to smell the scent, even unconsciously. In addition, we can combine any product with scent – clothing, books, cars, but taste is strictly connected to food and drinks.

# TASTE

Despite the fact that flavors are used exclusively in the food industry, they should not be forgotten anyway, because flavors are an essential part of human perception of the world and the food sector also forms a large part of the market. Selection of the suitability of taste is subject to thorough research by imaging methods, and detailed information on the methods and outcomes of such selection is not publicly available. However, some partial knowledge is available.



# TASTE

One of the most popular and perhaps the most popular flavor in the world is vanilla flavor. Almost everything in the world that can have some „added“ flavor has a vanilla version. In supermarkets we can find vanilla ice cream, vanilla milk, vanilla wafers and even vanilla vodka. But why vanilla? The flavor of vanilla is contained in flavor of mothers milk, which is the first food we „eat“ in our lives. This flavor is encoded deep within our brain as a staple food and this is the reason why is vanilla so successful flavor in the food industry.

# HEARING

Hearing is second most important sense for us, and still the potential of audio stimuli is only partially used. Perhaps the only marketing industry that somehow systematically and in long-term works with sound stimuli is presentation skills. The producers of commercials and jingles are mostly concerned with choosing the right words and sentences. It is not that appropriate words are unimportant, but several researches have shown that a much more important component of audio communication is the sound reproduction itself.

# HEARING

One of the researches proving this phenomenon was conducted by Professor Albert Mehrabian of the University of California, Los Angeles. The results of his research and the distribution of importance of the individual components of the audio message are these:

- 84,4% – Audio itself
- 15,6% – Words

# HEARING

Research shows that the way we say something is more than five times more important than the content of the message itself. This phenomenon is again linked to the old brain. The old brain knows no words, they are the result of our need for a higher form of communication at a rational level. In fact, we are much better at responding to the emotional components of the message, that is, to the voice. The voice as such is composed of six elements that can be described and which influence the listener's perception of our message. These are height/depth, tone, tempo, rhythm, emphasis and pauses.

# HEARING

In general, more convincing and trustworthy voice is deeper and the speech itself should be about 20 percent faster than normal. It is not advisable to interrupt the message with a murmur, but pauses themselves are important to give the audience a chance to remember the content. It is also essential to put emphasis on the most important words and, last but not least, we must not forget about the feeling we want to arouse in the audience. The specific feeling in the listener is evoked through the tone of the voice and creates an atmosphere of joy, sadness, tension or other emotional state as needed.

# HEARING

When working with audio stimuli, we must not forget one more important thing. There is a tangible difference in perception between men and women. Women are much more sensitive to audio stimuli than men. It is a sophisticated consequence of evolution. When a child is born, it is unable to speak, it is only “yelling”. To recognise if it is hungry, something hurts it etc., women developed ability to recognize the tiny difference in its voice.

# HEARING

This ability has evolved over the ages and has remained to this day. For a man, the „yelling“ of a child will always be „yelling“, as he has been walking in the woods for days, hunting for mammoths and not having the opportunity to learn the subtle nuances in its voice. But what does this mean for marketing? Women are very sensitive to artificial scripts, and if the testimony is not real, they will subconsciously overlook it and discard it as a lie.

# TOUCH

Touch has several primacies. It is our oldest sense and is conveyed to us by the largest organ of our body, the skin. Moreover, touch is most closely connected with our „mission number one“, with reproduction. If our products are pleasant to touch and handle, we will gain a huge competitive advantage over those who have neglected this aspect of human perception of the world.



# TOUCH

By touch we can perceive four basic sensations – temperature, pain, pressure and tension. All these four sensations strongly affect the way we perceive the product. Touch is something like a hygienic factor within Herzberg's theory of motivation. With some exceptions, we never buy something just because it is pleasant to touch, but we are able to reject almost everything if it is not. It is a pity when a customer responds to a well-managed promotion, comes to the store with the ultimate intention to buy our product, but finally does not buy because the product was not comfortable, was helded poorly or simply was not pleasant to touch.

# TOUCH

People will not buy sweater that bites. People will not buy chips that have the consistency of mud. People will not buy toaster that can burn them? Products like this people will not buy, no matter what their design, image and features are. Touch is a sense that is as specific as taste and has its limitations, but it should not be neglected as it can easily damage potential success of otherwise great product.

# THE SENSES IN PRACTICE

The market is becoming more and more competitive every day. Systematic work with all human senses will enable us to create a competitive advantage that will have a significant and long-term impact on the product's success. It is definitely not an easy way, but it is effective and meaningful. A major obstacle to this effort is, of course, the continuing growth of the internet and online sales.

# THE SENSES IN PRACTICE

It is more than clear that many sensory marketing opportunities on the internet are not feasible. Ultimately, however, the internet is not the only medium for communication and contact with customers. It turns out that people simply need to see the products with their own eyes, touch them, listen to them, smell them and taste them. Let's give our customers a chance to feel our products and services with all their senses.

# QUESTIONS?

# SOURCES

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