

# **Kinaesthetic Sensations in the System of Cross-Touch Marketing**

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**Abstract.** In the world full of information, traditional channels of communication aimed at decision makers are becoming ineffective. Authors of this article explore forming tactile communications that involves identification of physical objects or phenomena in order to evoke directed impressions and make each of them an “anchor” for calling the required associations which moreover are supposed to be fixed in memory. The results of experimental empirical research in the field of tactile information transmission channels and its perception allowed to correlate associations formed through these channels with consumer values

## **1. Introduction**

Improving the effectiveness of advertising messages transmitted through sound and visual images is unlikely due to the presence of information interference, making it difficult for the recipients to understand their meaning.

With the informational collapse of traditional channels for obtaining information by consumers of commercial offers and decision makers in the economic sphere, the solution should apparently be sought in alternative channels for people to receive information from the external environment, which for the current period of time are practically not used to transmit marketing messages including tactile sensory organs.

Modern practical experience in the application of sensory marketing communications contributed to the formation of a new direction in the literature known as “multi-touch merchandising”, “4D branding”, “cross-touch merchandising”. The essence of the latter is defined by the authors as a set of activities that encourage a person to buy a product by influencing him with sensory stimuli (color and its combinations, light, shape, size, rhythm, melody, sound volume, smell, taste, surface texture, etc.) with programmed emotional response of a client in the client areas of goods.

This approach to the formation of the integrated marketing communication complex provides a step beyond the usual, two-dimensional (visual and auditory, as most used) communication space and plunge into the multidimensional, in which the distant stimuli of the human psyche (stimuli): visual and sound are used simultaneously with tactile: taste and tactile information codes. The information encoded for transmission through tactile sensory organs generates, first of all, the emotional responses of the recipients and is stored in their memory, forming the required type of consumer decision in future.

The formation of distant marketing communications using the visual, sound and olfactory channels for obtaining information from the external environment in the present period of the development of communication is quite clear, appropriate methods have been developed for this. However, it is currently not clear from the point of view of broadcasting marketing information how to use tactile communication channels because of the lack of experience in using them in the practice of info-design. Attraction of attention to sales proposals through such channels of perception as touch and taste opens up new possibilities for the promotion of goods and services. This article presents the results of a study of the influence of tactile communications, in particular, surface textures on customer behavior and consumer response.

Variety of information about the state of the environment a person receives through the senses in the form of sensations. By sensations it is customary to understand the reflection of individual properties of objects and phenomena that directly affect the senses. It is these feelings that are the source of information of people about the world and themselves. On the one hand, sensations are objective, since they always reflect an external stimulus, and on the other hand, sensations are subjective, because they depend on the current state of the nervous system and individual sensory characteristics of a person. When making decisions, people most often rely on information caused by “hot spots” of the psyche that generate emotions, including those caused by tactile sensations.

The development of the advertising industry over several decades has been based solely on the desire to deliver maximum visual satisfaction to a consumer with the help of various visual images. It should be noted that recipients of advertising messages are becoming more scrupulous, they understand that they will not always get what they see in advertising offers. The purpose of sensory messages through marketing communications is to stimulate the senses to perceive informational signals that deliver emotional experience to recipients. With such signals, you can delight recipients with beauty, help them experience satisfaction or, on the contrary, agitate, alert, warn, etc. Using sensory stimuli individually or all at once, communicators create a strong emotional connection with recipients of such informational messages, which ensures success in achieving the goal of communication. Taking into account different characteristics of the target audience, based on the characteristics of the sales proposal or the type of target consumer response, you can simulate the desired model of cross-sensory communication.

## **2. Theory of sensory perception**

Bernd Schmitt and Alex Simonson proposed the concept of identifying sensory experiences and defined the term “marketing aesthetics” as “marketing of sensory perception associated with a company or brand, which strengthens the identity of an organization or brand”. Sensory experiences, in their opinion, attract the sympathies of recipients to the company or a particular brand, because they form consumer decisions. These authors emphasized the goals of sensory marketing communications: differentiation of sales proposition, motivation of consumer decisions and translation of values through sensations of recipients.

To differentiate messages through sensory communication channels, it is necessary to know which stimuli (signals, codes) are capable of ensuring the broadcasting of content (or context) in an optimal way. When motivating a consumer response through such incentives, knowledge of the physiology of the sensation process and its consequences is required.

The decision-making process, first of all, is work with information available to a person who receives it. The task of communication is to ensure that recipients receive information through the formation of emotions, which later will incline them to a targeted solution. This allows you to shape and adjust consumer behavior.

Emotions of people can be defined as a pronounced, specific affective state, due to very specific reasons. Emotions absorb the attention of a person and prevent him from manifestation of other forms of vital activity. The emergence of the emotional process leads to the formation of new forms of response. Emotional reactions can be violent and sudden, arising almost immediately after the action of the stimulating stimulus (stimulus). This emotional state is called affective. However, emotional

states can also be formed gradually, remaining latent for a long time. In this case, their specific manifestations are not visually observed in the formation of readiness for an emotional reaction. In future, changes in the behavior of people appear. At first, these may be predominantly “concomitant” expressive changes. Subsequently, the process of formation of the emotional state is distributed in the psyche through the transmission of afferent impulses. At the same time, an awareness of the resulting emotional state and the associated changes in behavioral reactions occurs. However, people are able not to feel their emotions for a long time, and at best, they observe their consequences in the form of incomprehensible manifestations of their behavior. Often emotions are not reflected in the consciousness at all, but flow in the unconscious area of the psyche. Moreover, generation of emotions is always ahead of the visual manifestations of external changes.

Emotional states that are strong and organized can have a great influence on the functional actions of mental processes. The consequences of such actions are manifested in various forms: movements, actions, statements. In addition to emotional markers, these types of response can also be targeted in consumer behavior. Thus, using sensory marketing communications it is possible to shape and correct consumer behavior.

### **3. Tactile communication toolkit**

Tactile information obtained through touching with hands is of great importance in evaluating sales offers (information) that differ in terms of physical properties - texture, strength, temperature and weight.

Touch is a sensory organ that perceives nerve impulses through tactile cells located in the skin and mucous membranes that are spread throughout the human body. This body is very important for self-determination of how people feel in the physical sense. Touch is interdependent on feelings and emotional states.

The practice of forming tactile communications involves identification of physical objects or phenomena. It is not always easy to find objects that could be tactilely capable of being associated with the uniqueness of a brand or other information. At the same time, a difference from competitors is needed. In the practice of retail sales of consumer offers, tactile contacts can be made through physical parameters:

- fitting rooms and trade equipment, hangers, etc;
- handles of entrance doors, baskets and carts, handrails of escalators and elevators of supermarkets and shopping centers, etc.

The main task of tactile communications is to evoke directed impressions and make each of them an “anchor” for calling the required associations which moreover are supposed to be fixed in memory. In case of success of such communications, it may be enough for the recipient of such messages to distinguish the promoted offer among others.

Recipients of tactile messages cannot say that they distinguish an offer because it is “pleasant to the touch” or “spacious”. For this reason, this should not be indicated in informational messages.

In the opinion of the recipients, these are just “pleasant little things” that seem “unworthy to mention” to a sensible person. However people appreciate feelings and emotions, which cannot be ignored in communication with them. Even insignificant “trifles”, such as inappropriate client areas or staff uniforms can cause people with extraordinary kinesthetic feelings personal inconvenience when visiting these public places.

For people who are sensitive to kinesthetic channel of receiving messages from the external environment it is equally important to receive pleasant sensations and avoid unpleasant sensations for formation of opinions about a company or its proposals. It was established that the higher an image and price level of sales proposal, the more important is the presence of the first of these aspects however the second should be completely eliminated.

Development of differences in touch for client areas is important, especially in such areas as sale of clothing, fashion goods. In a cheap supermarket it is difficult to avoid a situation where customers squeeze between shelves. In a retail chain of building products it is not necessary to give a brand an

increased pleasantness in order to cause this feeling among customers when they touch attributes of sales area. Therefore formation of brand communications image contact areas without taking into account kinesthetic channel of communication is not reasonable.

The results of experimental empirical research in the field of tactile information transmission channels and its perception allowed us to correlate associations formed through these channels with consumer values.

From the point of emotional impact, materials attract the eye and conquer people's attention by their appearance, which is connected with texture and texture of the material. In this regard, the choice of texture should be made in terms of logic of the translated value and style.

It is important to note that not only the texture itself, but also the mention of it (for example, atlas, glass beads, etc.) can cause these associations, create the corresponding emotional mood (state).

Depending on goals of tactile communications and the manifestation by recipients of directed emotions (states), the requirements for texture of materials used for customer contacts are formed.

Characteristics of the target client audience assume to take into account such factors as: gender, age, cultural factors, lifestyle of recipients, etc. It is known that men and women touch objects and people with different periodicity. Until the age of thirty, men use tactile contact than women more often. After fifty years, women have a higher periodicity of touch. People of high social status more often touch objects and other people.

In order to provide methodical support for tactile communications in contact areas to correct consumer behavior, it is necessary to know lifestyle of the recipients to influence them efficiently with imposed sensations. To experimentally confirm the effect of using tactile sensations as a channel of marketing communications we conducted experimental studies.

There is a differentiation in the degree and nature of the influence on consumer value of the material texture type. The following textures were selected: uneven, rough, embossed, even, smooth, soft. The result of the assessment of influence degree of the specified textures was the retail cost of the sales offer assigned by the recipients. Grape wines were selected as the object of the sales offer. According to the conditions of the experiment, all sales offers used the same wine, poured into the same glass bottles, covered with different texture fabrics.

Method of experiment was used in the form of Hall-test in the work. This method refers to qualitative methods of marketing research and is based on the use of individual assessment. Representatives of TCA were chosen to participate in the experiment - adults who drink wine (men - 15% and women - 85%) who do not professionally understand them and who are guided by personal emotions caused by aesthetic properties of good packaging in the sales area. Wines in 6 bottles were covered in various fabric textures: fleece, satin, guipure, knitwear, varnish. As a control sample, a single, unshielded, classical, impersonal glass euro-bottle was used. During the experiment, participants were asked to indicate what emotions arise when touching each sample and what is the estimate price for very specific bottle of wine. The fact that all wine samples were identical was not reported to the participants. The results of this experiment showed that the perceived value increases from 44.7% to 446.4%, depending on the texture of the package. Sample №1 - a classic glass bottle of wine of 0.75 l. This texture had the lowest perceived value (427.5 rubles), while the real value of a bottle of tasting wine is 173 rubles. This sample "did not cause a mood" in 31% of respondents, 38% of the respondents regarded wine as "cold", 23% - "cheap" and 23% - as "normal". The classic packaging of a bottle does not cause deep emotions among customers, associations and as a result does not increase the value of the sales offer.

Sample №2 - a bottle of the same wine in same volume, covered with a guipure case. Most volunteers associate this texture with "triumph", "youth party", it creates "playful mood". Thus, the texture of guipure increases the value by 44.7% and is suitable for young audience.

Sample №3 turned out to be the most valuable - a bottle of the same wine, covered in an atlas. Most volunteers associate this texture with romantic setting: "candles", "roses", "silk sheets", "intimate atmosphere". Respondents are willing to pay more for such wine (2335.8 rubles per bottle). This is facilitated by associative emotions associated with seductiveness, attractiveness, eroticism.

Sample number 4 - a bottle of the same wine, hidden in a leather case. This texture is associated, according to the participants, with “business meetings”, “banquet”, “buffet table”, which is valuable for respectable people and has an estimated value of 1734 rubles.

Sample №5 - a bottle of the same wine, closed in a knitted case. This texture, according to the volunteers, is suitable for “noisy company” (23%), has a “mild taste” and fits “shish kebab”. This wine is chosen by people who appreciate tradition. The perceived value of this bottle is 1407.7 rubles.

Sample №6 - a bottle of the same wine, covered in fleece. Coming into contact with this package, participants talk about important role of family - emotions associated with solving problems of personal life. For this kind of customer value, volunteers are willing to pay 2162 rubles. 23% of the participants, coming into contact with the soft fleece texture of the case, speak of the “velvety taste” of the wine under investigation, i.e. project velvety texture of the cover on the wine itself.

When drinking wine, people expect to get exciting emotions, plunge into the world of fantasy, fairy tales, and be on a romantic date. By shifting focus to emotional experiences consumer value of the goods is increased several times at minimum customer communication costs

Provided data prove the formulated hypothesis and confirm that with the help of directional tactile sensations you can increase perceived value of sales proposition in customers mind. It is advisable to continue this direction of multisensory communications for methodical design of tactile communications procedures.

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