

Taste as a Channel of Personal Communication

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Abstract. Modern business tries to find out new ways of communication with customer because of fallen efficiency of all traditional form of communications. Authors of this article cover the question of influence the emergence of human emotions in a targeted way due to the influence his sense organs using taste as a new communication platform.

1. Introduction

Currently companies face the necessity to revise all of their sales promotion concepts. There are a number of reasons: the global economic crisis, the growing level of competition, the development of the consumer. It has become difficult for companies to sell their products and force customers to make a choice in their favor. In previous years companies worked in growing markets and selling was not difficult, but now the situation has changed radically. In order to be identified among hundreds of similar products, companies need to create not just a brand, but a whole image, a set of emotions and impressions that a product can convey to a consumer: now we have to sell not products, but emotions, holiday, history and the legend of consumption with the appropriate atmosphere. A consumer himself must want to plunge into a situation of consumption. And for this research and implementation of innovative mechanisms and methods of influence in the sales process are necessary.

And in order to accomplish it, traditional channels of interaction and communication to which sellers are so used are no longer enough. The main source of information about the external environment is still visual images: 90% of all received information, the second most important channel is sound 8% of all perceived information. Another 2% falls on the remaining three feelings of a person: touch, smell and taste. Effectiveness of use of these 2% of information is the success of the company in full interaction with the client. The image of the product cannot be complex and complete without them, it will be impossible to create a complete five-dimensional information space around the product and brand.

But is it possible to influence the emergence of human emotions in a targeted way due to the influence his sense organs? What techniques should be used and what is the mechanics of these processes? To answer these questions, it is necessary to investigate not only the social behavior of a person, but also his psychological and physiological characteristics. It is necessary to find out the emotional messages transmitted through the senses, in particular through various taste sensations.

2. Taste as a communication channel

The aim of this work is to optimize efforts in the field of trade by taking into account the taste channel for obtaining information about the sales offer in client areas and introduction of innovative mechanics into the trade sphere.

Within the scope of work of Kemerovo scientific school "Multisensory marketing communications in client areas" on the possibilities of influencing a person's behavior due to the influence on his senses, a working hypothesis was that if one uses the taste buds of a person as a channel of marketing communications, it is possible to correct his consumer preferences, as well as his sense of the value of the trade offer. When a consumer is affected by different types of taste sensations, his consumer behavior will change and certain taste sensations can lead to both a positive influence on the purchase decision and a negative one.

Accordingly if study this effect, a seller can further influence the purchase decisions, made by a client with a profit for himself.

The result will be an increase in degree of consumer involvement in the process of making a targeted choice, as well as an increase in customer value and perceived value of the product.

This hypothesis was put forward as an empirical assumption, which later was subject to experimental verification.

For the purity of the experiment, one group of people was a control one, its participants familiarized themselves with the services offered in a neutral setting without any effects. The remaining four groups were exposed to four basic tastes: sweet, sour, salty and bitter.

For the group "Sweet taste" chocolates were offered as snacks; for the group "Sour taste" - sour, chewing marshmallow; for the "Salty Taste" group - salted, roasted peanuts; for the group "Bitter taste" - bitter almonds.

Each group was also given booklets describing each of the four pre-selected services. During the familiarization with the services the participants were offered to try snacks. After becoming familiar with the services, participants continued to try snacks and each of them was asked questions.

Based on the results of the analysis of data obtained in the form of an answer to the question about the greatest relevance of the service for the respondent, it is possible to make conclusions about the correctness of the assumptions regarding the correlation of the tastes and services studied, as well as partial confirmation of the hypothesis put forward.

Summarizing the data on the effect of sweet taste on the creation of emotions in consumers, we can draw the following conclusions: in 23% of people the sweet taste caused negative emotions; 51% have positive, of which 13% showed emotions in an extreme degree and only 5% had a sweet taste that did not change the emotional background.

Sour taste less actively excites an extreme degree of interest - the corresponding emotions manifest themselves in 7% of the participants; negative emotions were caused by sour in 14% of the respondents; 12% of people experienced neutral emotions under the influence of this taste.

The influence of bitter taste is fundamentally different from the others: for example, only 1% of the participants were extremely excited by bitter taste; positive emotions appeared in 34%; negative emotions appeared in 16% of people; but unlike the other three tastes, 27% of people experienced neutral, calm emotional state the bitter taste.

Salty taste causes various emotions ranging from the extreme negative manifestation of interest (3% of respondents) to extremely positive expression of interest (9% of people), in general 19% of the participants felt negative emotions; 48% had positive; and 9% of people experienced neutral emotional attitude under the influence of salty taste.

The conducted studies allow us to conclude that the goal of the work has been achieved: ways to optimize efforts in the field of trade have been identified by taking into account the taste channel for obtaining information about the sales proposal. Tasks to be solved are directly related to the functionality and competence of a marketing specialist in the field of trade, the necessary studies have been carried out, the data obtained have been analyzed and prospects for the development of taste communication have been proposed.

The hypothesis was confirmed that, if we involve the taste buds of a person as a channel of marketing communications, it is possible to adjust his consumer preferences, as well as his sense of the value of the sales proposal.

3. Results

Based on the research, it can be concluded that taste is the most important information channel for a person, and therefore we can significantly diversify communication with a client and create the images we need and influence emotions. It is obvious that taste associations and taste manipulation of emotions is a completely unexplored phenomenon and there is still to be a lot of research and experiments to develop a full-fledged, working methodology that would allow companies to identify and position themselves in the market more successfully.

Also obvious is the fact that a company that succeeds in establishing innovative customer exposure to taste communications on a client will have a powerful competitive advantage, which will certainly strengthen its position and significantly increase the loyalty of its customers and create favorable conditions for attracting new customers.

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