

Experiential marketing - why it works

 By [Shantel Bassanna](#)

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With ever-changing shopper trends marketers have recognised the need to stay closer to the consumers and connect better with their shoppers in order to keep abreast. A closer look at consumer decisions identified that 68% of shoppers make decisions at shelf. Shoppers are more easily influenced by emotional stimuli in comparison to rationally prescribed messaging.

These insights have led marketers to adopt an experiential approach to marketing which keeps brand activity proactive by tracking the behaviours and perceptions of consumers and adapts easily to relate and accommodate.

But what exactly is experiential marketing and what makes it so much more effective than traditional marketing methods?

Multi-dimensional strategy

Simply put, experiential marketing is a multi-dimensional strategy that integrates sensory and emotional tactics in order to influence the decision making process. Marketers are going beyond the fulfilment of basic needs - they recognise the requisite to excite and enthuse their audience, by creating an engaging experience at every touch point in order to develop a positive connection with the consumer.

As an essential part of the marketing mix, experiential marketing adds a new dimension to relationships between the shopper and the brand. It invites the shopper to interact with the brand by way of trial, and communicate their thoughts and expectations as opposed to simply having them exposed to a message. While traditional buying decisions are driven by predetermined thoughts based on previous experiences, experiential marketing decisions are directly influenced by the senses and the consumer's emotions enticed in real-time or at point of purchase.

Benefits

The benefit of experiential marketing extends beyond the enticement of the consumer; it allows the brand owner or custodian to tap into the psyche of the end user. Consumer's experiences are directly linked to their purchasing decisions, which in turn are directly linked to the success and growth of a brand. With a greater understanding of what they are likely to think or feel, effective experiential marketing allows marketers to adapt their strategy to ensure that the consumer will relate to it today as well as contribute to product innovation in the future.

Experiential marketing campaigns can easily be modified to fit a range of demographics without significantly affecting the budget. While it is possible to vary messaging in traditional mediums such as television or radio, this could be very costly.

As marketers begin to accumulate information gathered from experiential marketing campaigns, they are able to improve their offering, giving them the power to attract growth and influence loyalty. It stands to reason that if you understand what people want you are more likely to deliver!

ABOUT SHANTEL BASSANNA

Shantel Bassanna is the co-founder and Managing Director of XP², a leading experiential marketing company. With a natural flair for operations management, Bassanna's business acumen has grown XP²'s national footprint that sees the company operating out of Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town. She believes in creating brand teams based on client requirements.

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