

# A Study on Usage of Sensory Marketing on Emotional Branding of Services

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### ABSTRACT

In this era of competition, distinction between the brands of the companies that strive in the marketto develop alink between the consumer and the product brand at the emotional and sensual ground, marketers must aim at developing stronger, deeper and long-lasting brand connection for the consumers. Emotion is a crucial variable which influences the selection process of the customer, followed by his satisfaction level and therefore hisloyalty toward a particular service brand.

Satisfying the customer has become an old concept. Customers must be attracted by influencing their five senses and therefore creating a loyal customer base.Where lot of research is conducted to guide and improve the marketers of tangible products for branding their products, in-depth studies on branding is lacking in the area of services. This makes it necessary to fill the gap by undertaking more research in this area in order to develop the global economy. This paper attempts to provide an insight on incorporating innovative branding strategies in a services sector.

This paper makes an attempt to analyze and study theemotional branding of services and its importance in the present scenario of the service industry. Also discusses the function of senses and its relation with the marketing to pull more customers and retain the existing customers. This paper also makes an attempt to study the emotional branding strategies in the service sector.

In conclusion, it is found that enough researches have been conducted on the area of sensory marketing and branding strategies of the tangible products but there is much more to be investigated in the area of service sector.

**KEYWORDS**: Emotional branding, sensory marketing, loyalty, service sector.

# I. INTRODUCTION

Marketing helps to build a robust relationship with its customers and branding is an important element which helps to communicate the characteristics of the product/company to the marketplace. (David V Bello, 1995). For service industries, the brand will serve as a reducer of risk and even beyond that because it is difficult to judge the productbefore purchasing it and also after purchasing it. Today marketers adopt emotional branding strategies to connect with their customers.

(Morrison & Crane. 2007) Manv researches have also stated that modern consumers don'tmerely buy the products and the services, they also buy the pleasant and emotional experiences attached withit, along with the product. This is specificallyvalid for the services or intangible products.An emotional branding experience necessitates acoordinated effort from the organization to not only satisfy the customer but also to give them the best consumption experience. Designing an effective and an emotional branding experience will result in brand differentiation which will lead to customer loyalty and will further lead to an increase in the salesof the service brand.

A powerful service brand can beformed by managing the emotional brand experience of the customers efficiently. (Morrison & Crane, 2007) Emotional branding iswinning the consumer through their senses by linking them to their emotionsand constructing a deep, eternal and positiveemotional association towards the brand that surpasses the material satisfaction. It includes delivering a complete experience for emotional satisfactionto develop a strong bond and trust among the consumers, in thebrand.

Today there are numerous strategies adopted by the marketers to appeal their customers. One popular method is sensory marketing. It is a way of appealing all five senses of the audience. It



focuses on developing contents or features that uses the senses of sight, sound, touch, smell and taste. Sensory Marketing is defined as Marketing that includes the senses of the consumers to impact their behavior.(Krishna, 2012)From managerial outlook, sensory marketing tool is helpful to generatesubliminalsparks that illustrate theopinion of the consumers about the features or quality of the product(Krishnan & Hartline, 2001).

(Dr. Vijayakanthan. S, 2020)It is very difficult to choose and evaluate the service purchases because of its nature.(Zeithaml, 1981)Consumers who purchase the physical products may use single or a blend of the following criteria to assess thedecision of purchase which includes the label, color, package, feel, brand name, price etc.The price and the environment surrounding the service ismeasured as the important quality indicationsassessable to the consumers.

(Krishnan & Hartline, 2001)Nevertheless, in spite its importance, brand equity in the area of services is less explored. This deficiency of research is a crucial problemprovided the fact that at present, services include a major portion of Gross National Product and employment rate in the country.

### II. OBJECTIVES

- To identify the dimensions of sensory marketing and the effects of these dimensions on the consumers.
- To examine theemotional branding of services.
- To analyze the role of sensory marketing in emotional branding of services.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study undergoes a qualitative literature review to identify and understand the use of sensory marketing in emotional branding of the services. This study reviews relevant articles which are selected based on certain themes to explore the untouched areas of service marketing.

### IV. SENSORY MARKETING

(Bhatia et al., 2021)Sensory marketing comprises of marketing stimuli, such as unique packaging, attractive advertisement, creative store atmospherics and so on, to activate the senses and have an effecton consumers. All the senses are interlinked. For example, the taste gets influenced with the sense of sight, touch and smell.(Lindstrom, 2010) According to Lindstorm, a brand which uses multiple senses are likely to be more successful than those who use only one or two senses.

(Prof Mukta Srivastava, 2012)The stimuli generated from our senses reach the brain through the nervous system. These stimuli are detected by our brain and itevaluates them and finallyprovides interpretation which will be subject to the previous experience and opinions. Based on these interpretations, an individual will develop feelings and emotions which will help him in taking his purchase or consumption decision of a certain product.(Malefyt, 2015)Anthropological surveys of the senses tell us how specifically the concepts are based on ones' culture and practices. Sensory experience outlines the routine communications and highlight what is eloquent in life.(Lindstrom, 2010)Lindstrom stipulated that usage of all five senses will have a total sensory experience which will help in remembering the brand at least two times more, if not three times.

### 4.a - Hearing

(Anıl Değermen Erenkol, 2015)Hearing sense has highest influence on the preference of restaurants by the consumers. Hearing is followed by taste, touch, sight and smell when it comes to the hierarchy of choosing preferences of restaurants by the consumers. The soft music in the restaurants create encouraging feelings which leads to increase in sales by creating a comfortableatmosphere. Consumers are also likely to spendmore time and money at the restaurant. On the other hand, music with loud and fast beatswill make the people to spend less time in restaurant and leave early. (Krishna, the 2012)Appealingsoundmade by the music heard in restaurants or retail stores or the hypermarkets has the capacity of influencingthe mood of the consumers, the time they were supposed to spend in the location, and actual spent by them.

### 4.b - Visual

(Anil Değermen Erenkol, 2015)Atmosphere in the restaurant includes its unique color, wonderful decoration, simple and neat layout of furniture, combination of decorative items etc. Visual characteristicsis observed as thepowerful sense of consumers and ittriggers and results in the sense of impressions about the environment as well as the brand recognition and forcing the customers to choose or reject a product.(Biswas, 2017)To obtain physiological data inputs, few marketers now useeye tracking devices to capture the information from customers without their knowledge regarding what isenticing their eyeballs, which photos, videos, advertisements or displays catch their attention etc.

### .c - Smell

(Herz, 2004)Memories captured by scent/smell were measured as more emotionally connected than those aroused by the remainingsenses. Researchers have discovered that pleasing scents can boostappraisals



of products as well as the stores and can result in meaningful connections with memories and also improve the assessment of the product.

### 4.d – Touch

In case of certain products like clothes, electronic goods etc., consumers tend to buy those which they are allowed to touch and feel. Touching will give that information which cannot be derived through mere observation, such as smoothness or roughness of the product or material, its weight etc., which have a huge impact on the perception and the purchase decision of the consumers.(Quanxiong Zhou, 2011)The denim fabrics which are rough in texture are considered as masculine and on the contrary light and soft textured fabrics are considered as feminine. Touching is an important factor which also helps the consumers in judging the qualityof certain products.

#### 4.e- Taste

Taste sensation differ between different individuals and also between different cultures. Taste is closely related or affected by smell and visual stimuli. Generally, there are five kinds of tastes which are sweet, sour, salty, umami and bitter. Umami was the taste discovered by the Japanese researchers which means savory or deliciousness which refers to the taste derived from Monosodium Glutamate or it is the taste of the pure protein (Ikeda, 2002)

#### V. EMOTIONAL BRANDING OF SERVICES

(Sammut-Bonnici, 2015)A brand is a blend of physical and intangible characteristicsenvisioned to createa mindful and a uniqueidentity, to shape aname or status of a product or a service. The tendency in branding strategy is to infuse brand recognitionby making use of all the functions of the firm related to the customer and to further enlarge their brand experience.(Akgün et al., 2013)Emotions are defined as the state of mental readiness which arise either due to evaluation of some events or due to one's own thoughts or feelings.Emotional branding is a strategy which brings together the heart, thought and feelings of a consumer with regard to a brand by placing that brand as an integral part of his/her lives.A neuromarketing research study shows that a stimulus issensed by the brain that is managed by theneomammalia brain as perceptionsand are administered in the limbic system which will further create an understanding of the stimulus. Rationally, the consumers' understanding about a brand will be highly positive

for a good stimulus experienced.Desmet(2012) According to Desmet, people can experience minimum of 25 diverse positive emotions in their interactions with the products like pride, delight, hope to love, etc.These differ from each other in terms of feelings, expressions and the situations that induce their behavior and opinions.

Emotional branding is the involvement of consumers in a profound, eternal and a greatemotional attachment with the brandin addition to the satisfaction level of customers, and results in a relationship based on special trust for having a supreme emotional experience (Morrison & Crane, 2007). (Fournier, 1998) Fournier shows in her research that consumers have several associations with different brands. They feel that such association will add value and reason to their existence, and these additional values may be functional or emotional or both by nature.(Dr. Vijayakanthan. S, 2020), In contrary to the traditional branding approach, emotional branding concentrates on brand meanings that correlate with consumers' lives and encourage their desire, memories and understandings. (Thompson, 2006)). (Hampf & Lindberg-Repo, n.d.)Another term connected to brand today is CSR. CSR became a hot topic for the companies due to the focus on company's reputation and its brand equity. Two separate concepts were merged into one, namely branding and CSR. CSR is a complex concept since it is unique to all lines of businesses and all kind of companies (Kitchin, 2003)

(Krishnan & Hartline, 2001)(Davis, 2007) Service may vary drastically even if it is purchased from the same seller due to its intangible and qualitative nature. Therefore, a brand name and brand equity may significantly upsurge the efficacy and result in service purchase decisionby helping inmeasuring the service quality prior to purchase and consumption.Additionally. (Sundar G Bharadwaj, 1993)state that "When the buyers find it hard to gauge the competencies of the service provider and also to weighthe value and superiority of the service provided, the reputation of the brand will serve as an important mediator for quality and other buying standards that cannot be measured.(Krishnan & Hartline, 2001),The brand equity as defined by Farquhar is the ``additional value awarded by the brand to any product" (H, 1989).



## VI. SENSORY MARKETING IN EMOTIONAL BRANDING OF SERVICES

S.No.	Services	Contribution	Reference
1	Retail service	A retail outlet which takes into account all the five senses for marketing becomes a lively store, and therefore it is an asset to the retailer and to the customers as well.	(Kumar, 2013)(Prof Mukta Srivastava, 2012)
2	Hospitality sector	A Customer is attracted to the brand frequently when it is based on sensory marketing experience.	(Kumar, 2013)
3	Oral & Hygiene Products	Brand logo is considered as the most imperative visual stimuli in the advertisements of the products. Product traits and its packaging must include audio- visual promotion which will build a multi-sensory experience which will result in an eternal impact on the subliminal cognizance of the consumer.	(Khandelwal et al., n.d.)
4	KFC Fast Food Restaurant Chain	The use of all the five senses in marketing is fundamental for a company to stimulate customer's emotions and to distinguish itself from its competitors.	(Roopchund Randhir et al., 2016)
5	Hotels	Inservice industries, it is imperative to balancetheexpectations and the perception of the customer, any gap between the two can prove to be a nightmare for the service providers.	(Singh et al., 2020)
6	Organic Food Producers	The importance of sensory features is different at two different times. Appearance(Visual stimuli) plays a key role when a consumer approaches to purchase it at the supermarket, and taste is important when he consumes it at home.	(Asioli et al., n.d.)
7	Electronic products	Shoppers positively respond to the store atmospherics, layout and design. Shopper approach behaviour has proved to have a positive correlation with the touch behaviour, signifying that if a shopper approaches to a product, then he is also likely to touch it.	(Hultén, 2013)
8	Coffee Shops	It is proved that any of the sensory cues cannot deliver the outcomes as per the expectations. Instead, an ideal combination of appeals should be originated first for perfect business outcomes and it has to undergo pre-tests to determine the best matching blends of sensory cues.	(Dodamgoda & Amarasinghe, n.d.)

(Riza & Wijayanti, 2018)Conceptually, there is astimulatingassociation between the sensory marketing, the brand experience, and the customer loyalty -naming it as a triangle sensory marketing. Managers can focus on sensory marketing strategy to kindlethe experience of the brandthat can build a strong customer loyalty.(Krishnan & Hartline, 2001) By developing a pleasing and unforgettablemoments with the products and services, loyalty and enhanced sales can be achieved. The customer will frequently visit the restaurant if he also experiences a sensational taste. Cheapest way of promoting a fastfood restaurant is creating a sensorial environment which will make the customer memorize the name and its products and services for many years. (Singla & Gupta, 2019)Specifically, brand loyalty and its association are the two important principles which should always be combined in Emotional Branding strategy since they play an important role in understanding trustworthiness and scepticism.(Ibn-e-Hassan, 2016)Sensory marketing is a precious tool in deriving competitive advantage in creating brand differentiation and achievingcustomer loyalty. It is also a best way to reduce the additional expenses spent on promotion and therefore results in higher profit.



### VII. SUGGESTIONS ANDCONCLUSION

Sensory marketing is a marketing tool where the sensations and the perceptions in the field of marketing are understood and accordingly the marketers can connect with their customers through necessary innovations in their marketing strategies and building an emotional attachment with them. This will result in tremendous success to both the parties - the customers and the marketers. The emotional branding of the services will give an opportunity to the firm to differentiate itself from the other service providers in the industry. According to the conducted analysis, it is found that the atmosphere has a direct influence on the behavior of the consumers when it comes to service sector and it connects to them emotionally to build a long-term relationship. First the suitable sensory stimulations must be selected by the service marketers and it has to be combined and used as per the needs and trends of the consumer behavior in order to have a better impact on their experiences.

One of the most treasured resources a business has, is its reputation. And this resource can be maintained by giving a better experience to the consumers in addition to providing quality services which is possible only by marketing to their senses. A happy and a satisfied customer will remain loyal to the brand which offers him this experience and he will also make frequent purchases from the same brand.

This paper has analyzed and studied the application of sensory marketing for both tangible products and intangible products. And it is found that the usage of sensory marketing as a means to build an emotional link with its consumers is much lacking in the service sector. The companies that can estimate the future trends much before others do, are likely to be more successful in the market. The hope for marketers is to combine all five senses to win over the consumers.

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