

Experiential Approaches: Relevant & Mainstream

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Every once in a while I think that we need to look at some rather traditional and standard approaches to marketing decisions - stuff that has merit and has worked - and examine how experiential advertising efforts intersect with contemporary business practice. And, as the "experiential" work moves from "alternative" to "mainstream" - and expected -the data base available grows. The relationship of the measured experience and delivery at brand touchpoints to the constructs of premium vs. price-based , estimates of market share and other marketing considerations will become more important as part of the experiential proposal. Erik (if-it's-Tuesday-I-must-be-in-New-Delhi) Hauser and I want us all to look smart as this evolution rolls forward.

So, as we try to establish guidelines and best practices to help promote both the effectiveness and acceptance of experiential advertising what can we adapt from marketing theory that helps bring these two disciplines together. (Whoops - Is experiential advertising a discipline - a topic for another day I suspect.) I suggest that a good starting place is to look at those categories that are dominated by a leader - e.g., beer, athletic shoes, hybrid cars - and what we would suggest for those in second - or third, or fourth - place.

Leaders maintain their position by steadfast innovation - year after year, season after season. The next in line need innovation plus precise targeting. For those that are persuadable (a term I will always attribute to Jack Supple) relevance of the offer and its presentation are the moves that encourage not only trial, but also cause a re-shuffling of the considered set. And, the offer and presentation are the stuff of experiential advertising. The promise experiential advertising mavens can make to their potential customers must be clearly slotted in that direction and speak to the likelihood of increasing relative market share - and of providing irrefutable evidence of engagement.