

# Handbook for Small-Budget Experiential Marketing Campaigns

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<p>This paper is a product type thesis, with the product being an experiential marketing handbook intended for small businesses with limited resources and knowhow. Experiential marketing is a fairly new concept with the purpose of creating deep and meaningful experiences for consumers in order to generate lasting and profitable customer relationships, as well as gaining visibility and brand recognition.</p> <p>This thesis is made up of three main parts, which are the theory, the thesis process and the product itself. The theory chapter explains the concept of experiential marketing, it's history, different types of marketing that are relevant to the subject, what the experience economy is and why sensory perception is important in experiential marketing and how it can be used. The chapter on creating the thesis and the handbook explains the process and plan, the purpose and objectives of the handbook and the evaluation. It also explains the risks and limitations of making this thesis that include a strict timeline and limited use of research methods. Lastly there is the actual product, a handbook for small-budget experiential marketing campaigns, which is aimed for small businesses to use as a guide when planning to execute experiential marketing campaigns, stunts or events.</p> <p>Multiple large corporations have executed successful experiential marketing campaigns, usually by using an outsourced experiential marketing agency, but for small businesses with a limited amount of resources like money, staff, knowhow and time that isn't an option. That is why the purpose of the experiential marketing handbook is to gather relevant information, characteristics and framework of experiential marketing and tailoring it with the perspective of small businesses. In addition to typical marketing subjects like ideation, making a marketing plan and measuring success, the handbook covers topics such as how to maximize use of existing resources, how cooperation with larger companies will increase visibility without creating more costs, and how to use social media to boost the campaign.</p> <p>The methods used to create this thesis are a literature research as well as the use of existing knowledge about experiential marketing and the limitations of small businesses the author has gained through her managerial work in a room escape start-up company. The timeframe used for making this thesis was approximately five weeks, because of the author's work requirements. Due to the short timeframe the theoretical part of the thesis is not as thorough and detailed as it could have been with a longer process timeline. Never the less, the author is pleased with the product of the thesis and sees it as a usable and relevant entity.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> Experiential marketing, marketing, small business, marketing plan, handbook	

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## 1 Introduction

It is getting more and more difficult for companies to reach consumers using traditional marketing methods, because it is so easy for people to skip, block and silence ads which do not interest them. To reach the modern consumer, companies have to think outside the traditional marketing box and look at advertising as more of a conversation with the customer than a one way presentation of the product or service in question. Customer relationships are one of the key elements of modern marketing, and an excellent method of creating long lasting customer relationships is through creating memorable and meaningful customer experiences. (Smilansky, 2009).

Lawler seems to agree with this point of view, as he implies that traditional marketing was more about maximizing the amount of consumers that would be exposed to a brand, as experiential marketing is more about enabling the consumers to feel the brand – creating deeper and more authentic customer relationships. He also quotes Max Letterman, author of *Experience the Message: How Experiential Marketing is Changing the Brand World*, who says that experiential marketing, unlike traditional mass media marketing, does not aim to reach millions of consumers, but instead aims to create a deep, meaningful marketing experience for a handful of consumers – which is then boosted and shared to the rest of the world through social media. (Lawler, 2013).

Experiential marketing is not only a tool for large corporations and well-known brands, since according to Letterman it is not a large budget that counts, but the idea behind the campaign itself. The campaigns that are most immersive and customer oriented are the ones that prosper and spread. (Lawler, 2013).

The topic of this thesis is experiential marketing, and more specifically small-budget experiential marketing campaigns. As the importance of experience marketing in the marketing mix is growing, and big brands are even starting to compete with more and more elaborate experience marketing campaigns, small companies with small or non-existing marketing budgets are struggling to keep up with the experience trend. The aim is to create an experiential marketing handbook, which gives small companies the tools and guidance to execute successful experiential marketing campaigns that do not drain them into bankruptcy.

This product based thesis consists of three main parts:

1. The theory, that explains the concept of experience marketing
2. The process, of making the handbook, project plan and evaluation
3. The product itself, the experience marketing handbook

The concept of marketing and most relevant marketing methods are explained to the reader in the theory part of the thesis, as well as experience marketing and its importance and different characteristics. Also the term experience economy is explain, to stress to the reader the importance of experiential marketing in the marketing mix. The chapter on creating the handbook and the process of making this thesis includes a timeline and project plan as well as a description of the purposes of the handbook and a list of possible limitations and risks. The third main part of the thesis is the product itself, the experiential marketing handbook aimed for small businesses to use as a tool for making marketing campaigns, which was put together by combining the findings of a literature research and the personal knowledge and knowhow of the author of the thesis. The following subchapters explain the purpose and objectives of the product type thesis, the used methods and the most relevant key definitions. A short introduction to the content of the handbook is also presented.

### **1.1 Purpose and objectives of thesis**

The purposes of this thesis are to explain to the reader the concept of experiential marketing and why it is a crucial part of modern marketing, and to produce a handbook for small enterprises on how to make a successful small-budget experiential marketing campaign using the limited resources that they have. Large corporations that make globally successful experiential marketing campaigns have no lack of resources, existing customers or possibilities to outsource their marketing. The objective of the thesis is to collect the main features, framework and objectives of experiential marketing and modify them to fit the structure and resource limitations of small companies. Using the gathered information the aim is to make a simple step-by-step guidebook that is both relevant and useful and can actually be implemented by small companies to make successful experiential marketing campaigns.

### **1.2 A look at the handbook**

The handbook strives to be an entity that can be the sole source of information and guidance for small businesses to use when planning and executing experiential marketing campaigns. It briefly first explains to the user the concept of experiential marketing, its importance and its purpose as well as the concept of sensory perception in the context of

experiential marketing. It includes examples of already existing marketing campaigns by different corporations and explanations of the used methods that give the user a concrete idea of what the endless possibilities of experiential marketing are and to simply inspire the user.

After this, comes the step-by-step guide itself with clear instructions on ideation and determining goals, making a marketing plan and templates to help with planning the process, how to maximize the use of existing resources, how cooperation with other companies can boost visibility without generating extra costs, how to use social media channels to amplify the experiential campaign and how to measure the success of the campaign. The purpose of the handbook is to cover all the needed areas of making a marketing plan and creating meaningful experiences so that it is a simple entity that small enterprises can use instead of having to do extensive research about the concept and its execution.

### **1.3 Methods**

The only research method used to plan and create this product type thesis was a literature research, because of the short timeframe that the author had to write this paper. The author used her existing knowledge about experiential marketing, gained through experience courses and her employment as a manager in a small start-up company, in planning the literature research and finding sources. She found most of her sources about experiential marketing and sensory perception through previously used channels during her experience based courses. The author also has extensive first-hand knowledge about the limitations of small enterprises acquired through her employment at InsideOut Escape Games, a 3.5 year old start-up company, with less than 20 employees and the yearly turnover of 365 000,00€ in 2015. (Finder, 2017). The company provides its clients a variety of different types of room escape based experiences, such as event content, teambuilding services and escape rooms. The author is familiar with the limitations of small businesses, because the company in question continuously struggles with the limitations of small businesses, such as the lack of e.g. time, knowhow and available staff.

The aim of the literature research was to collect insight on experiential marketing, sensory perception, marketing in general and marketing strategies and planning as well as information about small enterprises and their resource situations through reviewing existing literature. The author already had an existing vision of the handbook and its content before the literature research, so most of the sources we're originally chosen to support the exist-

ing structure plan. Never the less during the theoretical research the author had to continuously alter the content of the handbook throughout the process because of the found sources and information. This made the finalized handbook much more relevant, logical and comprehensive.

#### **1.4 Key definitions**

In order for the reader to fully understand what the thesis is about and what it is for, there are three main key definitions to be explained. Firstly, the concept of experiential marketing is explained briefly and the different terms used for it are stated. Secondly, because a huge part of experiential marketing is sensory manipulation, the concept of sensory perception is explained. To clarify the target group of the experiential marketing handbook, the definition for small enterprises is also given.

Experiential marketing explained at its simplest, is marketing a product or service through a customer focused experience. In literature experiential marketing is often also referred to as experiential, experience marketing or sensory marketing – but in this thesis it will always be referred to as experiential marketing, except in direct quotations and source headings. As Smilansky describes the concept in *Experiential Marketing*: “Experiential marketing is the process of identifying and satisfying customer needs and aspirations profitably, engaging them through two-way communications that bring brand personalities to life and adds value to the target audience” (2009).

Sensory perception is the receiving and comprehension of atmospheric information received through the senses. The five human senses are sight, touch, hearing, smell and taste. In the experiential marketing context, it implies the conscious triggering of the human senses through sensory stimuli to manipulate the consumers’ behaviour and judgement of the brand and product or service. The aim is to trigger a deep emotional reaction, through sensory perception, that will in turn deepen the bond between the consumer and the brand and bring the brand personality to life. (Krishna, 2011). The topic of sensory perception will be more thoroughly discussed in the theoretical part of this thesis within the experiential marketing topic.

The target users for the small-budget experiential marketing handbook are small enterprises, which are companies that have up to 50 employees and have a maximum yearly turnover of 10 million euros. Small enterprises made only 5,5% of all enterprises in Finland in 2015. To clarify, the handbook is not targeted at medium enterprises, with 50-249

employees and a yearly maximum turnover of 50 million euros or micro enterprises, which have less than 10 employees and have a yearly maximum turnover of only 2 million. (OECD, 2005) (Yrittäjät, 2017). Small enterprises will be referred to in this thesis as small enterprises, small companies and small businesses.

Small and micro enterprises are size and resource wise quite similar, and small enterprises were chosen as the target users for the handbook for the sole purpose of delimitation. The handbook is for small-budget marketing campaigns, but the small businesses were chosen over the micro enterprises so that it could be assured that the user company would at least have a marketing budget of some size. Micro enterprises made up 93,4% of Finnish companies in 2015 (Yrittäjät, 2017) and because of their size and amount of capital, are only able to use the marketing handbook to some extent.

The experiential marketing handbook aims to take into consideration the limitations of small businesses as well as possible. These limitations include the lack of staff and time, existing customer base, a large marketing budget and the option to outsource the marketing as well as the lack of know-how on execution of experiential marketing. It is targeted at companies that do not have a separate marketing department, but instead has only one person in charge of marketing or multiple persons with marketing as only one of their responsibilities.

## 2 Experiential marketing

In this chapter the concept of experiential marketing will be discussed and explained to the reader. The subchapters explain what marketing actually is and what marketing types overlap with experiential marketing. The concepts of experience economy and sensory perception are described as well as the content of a marketing plan. Firstly, the history of experiential marketing is shortly discussed.

The path to the modern definition of experience marketing started out in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century when companies shifted from product oriented marketing to a more customer-focused method of lifestyle marketing. Companies selling the same products or services had to start differentiating themselves through other methods than lowering prices. The way that was then used for differentiation, was high-quality service; giving the customer an added value without extra costs, such as free shipping. This phenomena ended when all the competitors started offering relatively similar services as added value and it no longer worked as a means of differentiation.

After this, rose the popularity of relationship marketing and loyalty programs that aimed to turn the existing customer base more profitable through two-way communication and customer loyalty benefits. The concept of CRM (customer relationship management) became an important part of the marketing strategy, and that it still is today. The concept of CRM then evolved to the next level, which was customer experience management (CEM) that was about more than just two way communication and loyalty programs, but about reaching and maintaining profitable customer relationships through carefully managed customer experiences throughout the whole relationship. It became crucial for differentiation to create meaningful experiences at every customer touch point. Hence forth, an important partner of CEM immerged - experiential marketing, through which companies do not only reach potential consumers, but are able to create a bond between the consumer and the brand. "Experience is the new currency of the modern marketing landscape, because experiences are life, and people talk about experiences every day" (Smilansky, 2009).

Unlike traditional marketing, experiential marketing attempts to introduce the product or service to the customer by appealing to as many human senses as possible and through this to evoke emotional reactions. With emotional reactions the marketer is able to create an emotional bond between the consumer and the brand - which then generates customer loyalty. The deeper and more meaningful the experience, the deeper connection the consumer will have with the brand and product.

There are no clear guidelines to experiential marketing; the more creative and immersive the experience the better the impact. Experiential marketing can vary from small coffee tasting booths to larger scale guerilla marketing stunts that are live streamed and amplified on five different social media channels. There is also no one clear experiential marketing strategy, as it is more important to consider who the marketing is aimed at and what kind of emotions the company wants to evoke. The core idea of the experiential marketing should bloom from considering what you want to convey through the campaign or event and who do you want to experience it. (ATTACK! MARKETING, 2013).

One of the biggest down sides of experiential marketing is the difficulty of measuring success, and specifically the return on investment (ROI). As the scope of gained visibility can quite easily be followed through different online data collection services and social media tools, the monetary profits are more difficult to measure. This is because there is no immediate purchase with experiential marketing, as the aim is to create strong customer relationships and gain visibility. (Gyton, G. 2016.)

The following subchapters will go deeper into explaining the different aspects that need to be considered when planning an experiential marketing handbook. Marketing in general will also be explained briefly along with different types of marketing that are either similar to experiential marketing or overlap with the experiential marketing concept. As noted above, sensory perception is an important tool in creating experiences, thus every sense and its use is explained separately. The last subchapter discusses the actual making of a marketing plan and what aspects need to be taken into consideration when planning an experiential marketing campaign.

## **2.1 The concept of marketing**

Marketing has been defined in many ways during the years and the definition has evolved a lot from what it was originally, but the core point of marketing always stays the same. According to the American Marketing Association (AMA) "Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large." (2013). The product of this thesis, the experience marketing handbook, concentrates mainly on the creation and communication aspects of marketing, as well as ways of measuring the success of the done communication. The handbook also concentrates more on modern marketing tools rather than traditional ones.

According to Hearst, a blogger on Creative Guerilla Marketing, traditional and modern marketing are not at all against each other, but instead are just two generations of marketing that have the same goal, use roughly the same strategies and also should both be utilized for marketing strategies to have maximum impact. (2013). As traditional marketing channels, like broadcasted commercials and printed advertisements and billboards, tend to be more expensive than modern channels, such as social media sites and simply the physical presence, the latter is more relevant to the small-budget marketing handbook. An important tool for experiential marketing is the use of social media. As only a handful of people get to actually experience the physical part of the marketing, different social media sites and marketing techniques can be used to amplify the effect of the marketing. Not only can the content of the campaign be spread to the physical and digital marketing realms, but also a huge boost to experiential marketing is simply consumers sharing their experiences through word-of-mouth.

## **2.2 Marketing types within experiential marketing**

As stated before, there are no clear guidelines to experiential marketing, thus it can be part of a different type of marketing strategy or vice versa different types of marketing can be used to implement experiential marketing. Some of the marketing types that are quite similar to experience marketing are sensory, emotional, guerrilla, field and event marketing. Experiential marketing can be a mix of these types, but for example field and event marketing don't necessarily have anything to do with experiential marketing. All of these marketing types and their use in experiential marketing, as well as the use of social media channels are opened up to the reader in the following paragraphs.

The term guerrilla marketing originates from guerrilla warfare, as it is an imaginative and highly unexpected way of marketing. The purpose is to catch the consumers by surprise in a never-before-seen way on a very personal level and to make a lasting impression. As guerrilla marketing is supposed to be very striking and fresh, it is also intended to evoke social media chatter and to create a media hype around the campaign. Guerrilla marketing is perfect for small businesses as it does not require a huge budget, but instead requires creativity, energy and a consumer oriented way of thinking. Guerrilla marketing can be executed on spot with actual customer contact or totally without, as e.g. a provocative billboard that consumers can write on. Guerrilla marketing tactics are often used in experiential marketing because of its eye-catching style. (Creative Guerilla Marketing, 2016).

Sensory and emotional marketing are two types of marketing that are very much linked with each other as well as experiential marketing. The most memorable experiences are those that evoke strong emotions in a consumer and a very important tool in reaching that level of emotion is by sensory stimuli. The motive behind evoking emotional reactions is to create emotional attachments between the consumer and the brand or company and thus producing a long lasting and profitable customer relationship. Gobé explains the term emotional in the marketing context as "...how a brand engages consumers on the level of the senses and emotions; how a brand comes to life for people and forges a deeper, lasting connection" (2001). Sensory stimulants like smells and sounds are great emotional triggers, and in sensory marketing the aim is to create deep connections, by using sensory perception, between the consumer and the brand or product. In today's world of thousands of similar products and millions of daily advertisements, sensory and emotional marketing are highly recommended methods of differentiation. (Gobé, 2001).

According to the Direct Marketing Association field marketing is a brand-building activity, where often out sourced professionals interact with the strictly targeted consumers face-to-face. The purpose of field marketing is not only to connect with the consumers but also to collect valuable market information and measurable results for the company. Some examples of field marketing are promotions, sampling, demonstrations, road shows and of course experiential marketing and events. (William & Mullins, 2008). The type of event marketing which is also field marketing is when a company takes part in an event with e.g. a booth or exhibition, but event marketing can also mean two other things; the company's own marketing event to promote products and services or an online event in the form of a webinar for example. Much like field marketing, the purpose of event marketing is also to build strong relationships with customers using face-to-face promotion. (Kim, 2017).

Like the above mentioned marketing types, social media is also an important part of experiential marketing. Of all traditional and modern marketing channels, social media is the most relevant because it can be used with a minimal budget. There are numerous ways to exploit social media in the experiential marketing context; you can reach potential consumers, create buzz around the campaign and even measure success. Some important aspects of social media use are creating an event on Facebook for the experience marketing campaign to raise awareness and predict the size of the campaign or event, to create a hashtag for the campaign so that you can easily follow how wide the buzz and sharing of the campaign is and to overall spread the campaign from the physical realm to the digital one by competitions and campaigns before, during and after the actual physical marketing experience. (Long, 2017).

### 2.3 The experience economy and the modern consumer

According to Pine and Gilmore, experiences are the fourth economic offering. They are the result of commodities being turned into goods, goods being turned into services and finally services being turned into experiences through personalized consumer engagement. In their book, *The Experience Economy* (1999), the evolution is simply explained through the economic evolution of coffee. Coffee beans are fungible commodities purchased at a very cheap bulk price. When those coffee beans are ground and bagged they become tangible goods that are sold for a higher price at grocery stores and other resellers. After the ground coffee has been poured into a cup and given to you by a barista, it becomes an intangible service and the price goes even higher, but still not very high. Finally, when the process of making the coffee and bringing it to the customer is personalized and it engages the consumer, it becomes a memorable experience, that consumers are ready to pay good money for.

Pine and Gilmore claim that the original founder of the fourth economic offering was Walt Disney, when he founded the Disney World in 1955 and turned cartoon entertainment into a world of personal engagement. Disney World was not just an amusement park, but it was a theme park that offered memorable Disney experiences. The progress to the modern experience economy didn't just come from the innovative mind of Disney, but also from the sum of technological advancements, the rising of affluence in people and the increasing competitiveness within industries. The experience economy is also the result of natural economic evolution; the process from commodities to goods to services to experiences.

The need for experiences to be economic offerings resonates from the need of self-growth that humans continually feel. Experiences change, develop and improve us – they make us who we are and act as we do. The need for individual growth has always existed, but it has only recently spread from the noneconomic activities to the world of commerce and become a way of marketing and business management. Consumers are not satisfied with only gaining *memories* from their experiences, but they want to be *affected* by the experience and this is achieved through customized consumer experiences. (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). The best tool for producing personalized memorable consumer experiences is by utilizing sensory perception, which is explained in detail in the next subchapter.

## 2.4 Sensory perception

Sensory perception is a key element of successful experiential marketing, because by engaging the customers through their senses we can better affect their behaviour as well as implement a lasting impression in their memory and in best case, cause actual self-growth within the consumer. By manipulating how the customers perceive our products or services through smell, taste, touch, sight and hearing, we can influence their emotional reactions, memories of the experience and through this, their purchase habits and choice making. (Krishna, 2010).

Sensory perception has to be considered carefully when implemented to experiential marketing. All sense triggers have to be in unison so that together they can create a coherent experience. All used sensory triggers have to come from the company's core values and they should all convey the same message. If the different sensory stimuli are in collision with each other, the conveyed message is mixed and is less likely to make a permanent impression in the consumers' memory. (Hulten, Broweus & Van Dijk, 2009).

As a simple example, if McDonald's executed an experience marketing campaign by having a make-your-own-burger stand at a busy public place, they should use yellow and red as colours as well as the large yellow M sign so that consumers would straight away recognize the brand by using only sight. Their theme tune could be made into a song that the consumers would hear while making their burgers. The burger ingredients would create the familiar smell of McDonald's as well as the taste, and finally the touch sense would of course be triggered by the consumers actually getting to touch the ingredients and make their own burger as well as eat the finished product. In this example, all the senses are aroused in a way that strictly conveys a clear McDonald's message and there is no room for error for the customers to think of any other brand.

On the other hand, it is easy for a large well-known brand like McDonald's to execute something similar because the colours and logo, theme tune, smell and taste are so recognizable. Thus small less well-known companies have to be very precise in what they want to convey to the consumer to be able to maximize the brand recognition and to create the best possible sensory experience. (Hulten & al., 2009).

When thinking about an experiential marketing campaign or event, all senses can be influenced and evoked to an extent totally depending on the way of marketing. If you have a

closed space where you execute your campaign, you can quite easily modify aspects concerning all senses, but e.g. in the middle of the street or at a shopping mall, your options are obviously restricted. If it isn't possible to consider all senses, the ones that can be influenced should be considered carefully. In the following subchapters the influence and use of all five senses is explained separately, starting with the sense of sight.

### 2.4.1 Sight

Sight is the sense humans most trust and through it get their first impressions. You can quite easily affect what the consumers see, whether it is a closed or open space you are in. The other four senses amplify what the sight sense is experiencing, thus it is important to first design the strategy for sight and start building from there. To create the desired experience landscape for the campaign, whether it is an event, popup booth or a marketing stunt at the company's location you can quite easily manipulate what the consumers see. It is important to consider all aspects of the physical experience from staff clothing and the marketed product to the event venue design or colour of the campaign booth. The different sense expressions (illustrated in Figure. 1) that trigger the sight are design, packaging and style, colour, light and theme as well as graphics, exterior and interior. These attributes determine the consumer's visual experience of the brand, product or service and the service landscape. (Hulten & al., 2009).

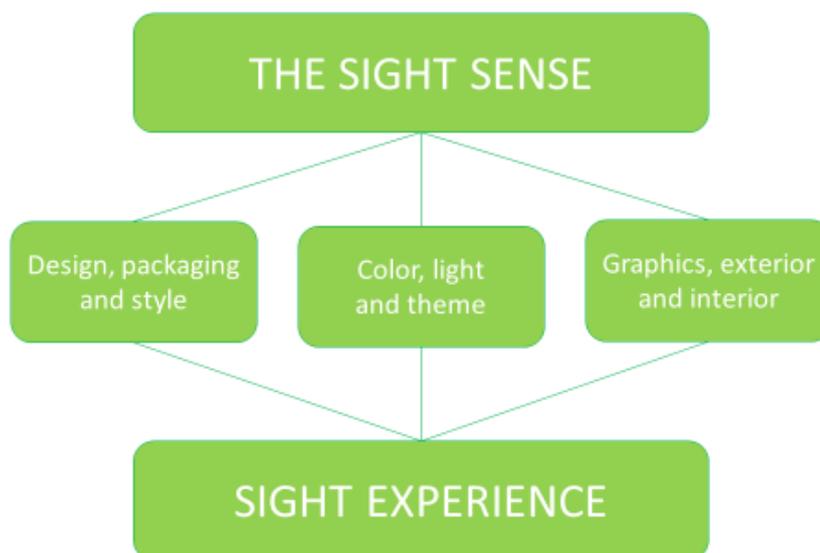


Figure 1 Sense expressions and the sight experience (Hulten & al., 2009).

In addition to the visual stimuli of the experience itself, the visual look of a brand is very important as well. When using digital and other marketing channels the content on these

channels should in a clear and memorable way convey to the consumer what the brand is all about and create brand recognition. As the use of social media is one of the amplification methods for experiential marketing campaigns, and the sight and hearing senses are the only senses that can be effected, it's important to carefully consider the content that is given to the consumers through it, were it a live video of the physical campaign or a strand of photos leading up to it. (Hulten & al., 2009).

#### 2.4.2 Touch

The touch sense is an enforcer of the sight, and is also one of the easiest to manipulate. Through the sense of touch consumers can evaluate the material and surface of a product, the temperature and weight as well as the form and steadiness (illustrated in Figure 2). When marketing services instead of products, touch is not as relevant as for example sight and hearing, but it should still be taken into account. Consumers get different conceptions of your brand quality and personality through different textures. (Hulten & al., 2009).

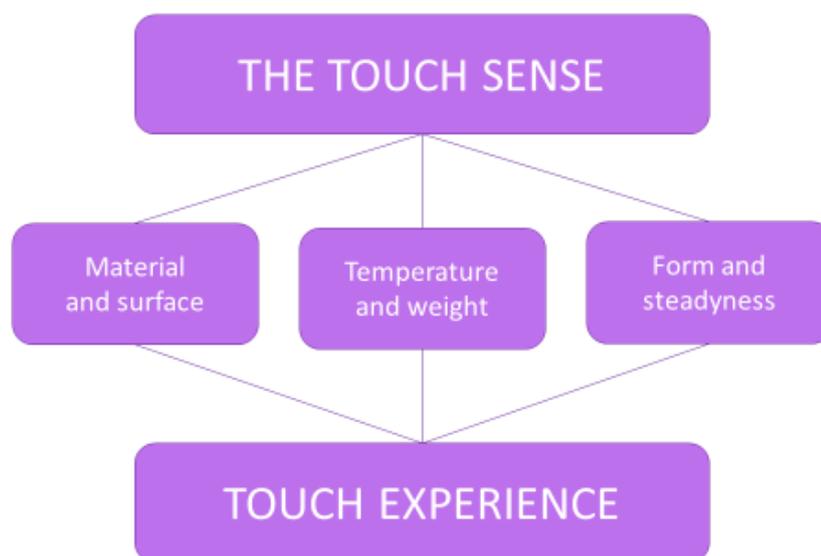


Figure 2 Sense expression and the touch experience (Hulten & al., 2009).

For instance, if a company is marketing travel services at a travel fair, where the booth has a table and chairs for a discussion area and also coffee and candy are served, these are all points where the consumer would use their touch sense. If the chairs and tables are made of wood and have soft fabric covering, the texture will make the consumer feel warm and homey. On the other hand if they are made of unnatural materials like metals or plastic, which are perceived as hard and cold materials, it can make the consumers feel

stiff and unwelcome. Also the wrapping of the candy has an effect on the consumers. Good quality candy with a good quality wrapper will give the image of high end service, as cheap candy with bad quality see-through wrapping can give the image of cheapness and worse quality. Same goes for the coffee cups and temperature of the coffee. The materials used in all aspects of the marketing, were it the packaging of the product or materials used on the service landscaping, should always go hand in hand with the brand and the image of the company. (Hulten & al., 2009).

### 2.4.3 Sound

Different sound expressions are an important tool of creating the wanted brand image. The different types of sound expressions used in sensory marketing, are jingle, voice and music, atmosphere, theme and advertency as well as the sound brand and signature sound (illustrated in Figure 3). The most relevant when thinking about small businesses and experiential marketing campaigns are the voice, music and atmosphere. Large corporations like McDonald's have the resources to actually buy the rights to an actual sound, which in this case is their globally known theme jingle. Small businesses with less known brand images, don't have the resources to go to such a level, but they can easily make use of and manipulate the sound experience through music and voice.

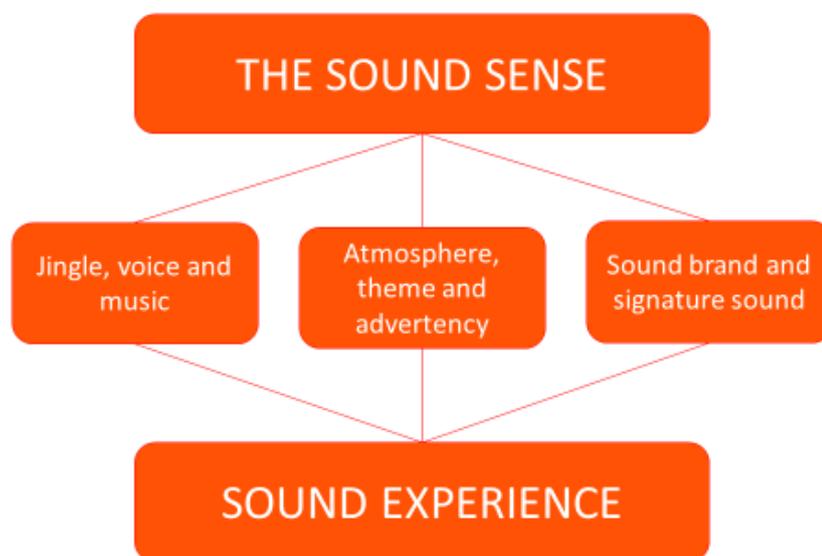


Figure 3 Sense expression and the sound experience (Hulten & al., 2009).

Different kinds of voices produce different kinds of reactions and experiences for consumers. An emotional and friendly voice can produce a positive brand experience and a welcome feeling, as for example digitalized voices can feel cold and make the consumers feel

uncomfortable. In an experiential marketing campaign, it must be well thought through what the company wants the potential customers to feel; what kind of voice is used when doing face-to-face communication and what type of voice is used on the marketing video to explain what is happening. Voice is also the source of delivered rational messages, so all actual face-to-face and digital communication about the sold product or service done out loud are a part of this sense expression.

The other relevant sound sense tool for small businesses is the use of music and how it can produce different experiences and reactions. Choosing the right type of music for the right target audience and sticking to the brand image when making musical decisions is essential. Music is the most effective of the sense expressions in creating long-lasting memories and it can be easily used to enhance the brand identity and image. Companies can create a sense of belonging to their target audience through music and also influence consumers' to make both conscious and unconscious purchase decision. The difference between slow quiet background music and dominant fast tempo foreground music is also relevant. According to a study by the Journal of Consumer Marketing men prefer foreground music, as women prefer background music. Background music made the test venue feel more hospitable, sophisticated and exclusive to women as foreground music made men feel that the venue was better and more spacious. (Hulten & al., 2009).

Music is seen as more influential as voice or jingle, because when the right music is plaid for the right audience, it can make the consumers feel comfortable and want to stay longer, make them spend more money and actually recommend the company to family and friends. Music and voice can be used quite easily to create the desired sound experience, whether it be at a pop up booth in the city centre or on a social media marketing video. (Hulten & al., 2009).

#### **2.4.4 Smell**

Scent on the other hand can be a bit more difficult to influence, although it is the sense that is most linked to emotions rather than facts out of all the five senses – and is thus an important factor when manipulating consumers' behaviour. What scents one likes and dislikes are often based on emotional associations; positive and negative memories. Thus one often can remember specific events and experiences in their past through the scent of smell. (Krishna, 2010). To create meaningful and long lasting memories, companies can influence the different scent expressions to create a perfect smell experience and lasting bond between the consumer and the brand. The different sense expressions are product,

congruency, intensity and sex, atmosphere, theme and advertency along with the scent brand and scent signature (illustrated in Figure 4). (Hulten & al., 2009).



Figure 4 Sense expression and the smell experience (Hulten & al., 2009).

When designing smell experiences, aspects like congruency, intensity and the gender of the target market has to be taken into consideration. The smell of a certain product or the overall atmosphere has to be congruent with the brand image, in other words the connection has to be easily made. For instance it wouldn't be congruent for a hardware store to use the scent of apples, but it would be congruent for a popup Christmas store to have the smell of gingerbread. Also the intensity of the used scent has to be considered, so is the smell distinct or subtle. The subtle smell of freshly picked flowers in the service landscape can be just as influential as the delicious scent of greasy burgers in a fast food restaurant. The mood of the experiencer influences whether the reaction to the smell experience is positive or negative, as well as their sex. If the target audience is male dominant, the scents used in the experience should all be masculine and vice versa for females. As an example, the smell of vanilla in a women's clothing store can make consumers stay longer and spend more money and the smell of leather can do the same for men at a men's clothing store.

The right scent can enhance the perceived quality of the product or service, if implemented correctly and in unison with the brand image. Through the sense of smell, an inviting atmosphere can be created, but it should not be forced because an unsuitable scent for the wrong target group can induce a negative smell experience which in turn has a

negative impact on the perceived brand image and quality. Small businesses can use suitable scents to make the experiential marketing campaign more inviting and memorable, but to make a long term impact, the smell experience has to be implemented using more long term strategical methods. (Hulten & al., 2009)

#### 2.4.5 Taste

The perceived taste of a product is much influenced by the other senses, of which the sense of smell contributes to the most. The taste has to be in synergy, symbiosis and interplay with the other senses to produce the best taste experience. As an example, if a bar of chocolate is very hard and tough to bite and it smells unpleasant, the perceived taste will be bad. In addition to these sense expressions, the name, presentation and setting of a product will also effect the perceived quality. An intriguing name for instance has a positive effect on the taste experience unlike a boring and factual name. The different taste sense expressions are shown in Figure 5.

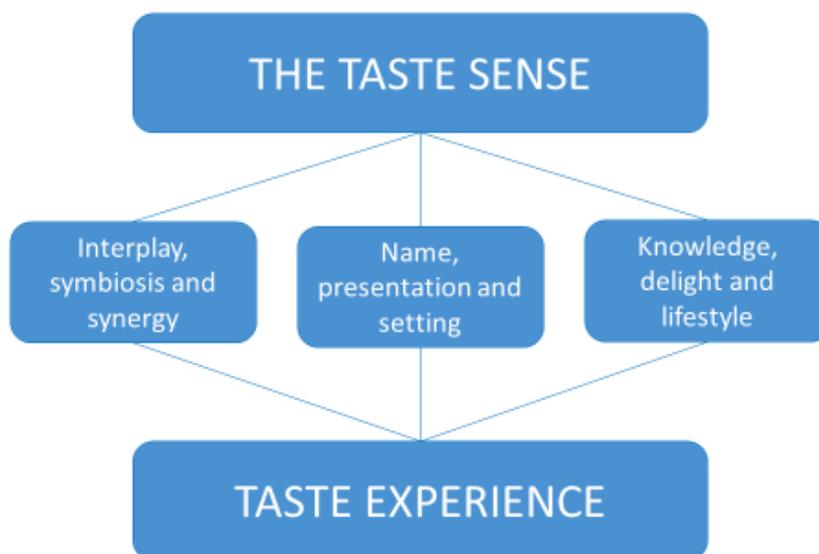


Figure 5 Sense expression and the taste experience (Hulten & al., 2009).

Taste is said to be the weakest of human senses, and when the food or beverage industry is not in question it is also the hardest sense to utilize in experiential marketing in a coherent way. Using the taste sense in marketing is quite logical at e.g. restaurants, grocery stores and food fairs, but utilizing it to market new winter tires at a car part store can be challenging and unnecessary. Applying the new winter tires as an example, one might serve hamburgers at the marketing event, because hamburgers can be seen as road side

fast food and connected with driving, or one might serve something Christmas themed because the tires marketed are for the winter time. Whatever it is that is marketed, there must be an easy connectivity between the product and the taste experience. (Hulten & al., 2009).

The ultimate goal of sensory marketing is creating a holistic sensory experience that stimulates all the five human senses, but in the context of small-budget experiential marketing, the goal is to utilize as many senses as possible in a holistic and unified way to maximize the effectiveness and produce positive emotional reactions. When sensory stimuli is utilized tactically and in unison with the brand identity and values, the outcome can be very profitable. In addition to the content and script of an immersive and memorably consumer experience, as important is the structure of the marketing campaign and the planning of the process. This part of creating an experiential marketing campaign is introduced in the following subchapterchapter.

## **2.5 Marketing plan content of the handbook**

An experiential marketing campaign is only one part of the larger scale marketing plan and strategy of a company, and it would act as the “place” and “promotion” sections of the 4 P’s –marketing mix, the other two P’s standing for “product” and “price”. (The Marketing Mix, 2017). The experiential marketing handbook does not cover the product or price sections, because these factors depend totally on the handbook’s user and the industry they are in. As stated before, there is no clear framework for experiential marketing. This is why the author of the thesis has transformed the known 4 P’s –marketing mix into a more suitable version for experiential marketing campaigns.

According to Burk Wood (2011) a marketing plan should include the following sections:

1. Research and analysis of current situation
2. Understanding markets and customers
3. Planning segmentation, targeting and positioning
4. Planning direction, objectives and marketing support
5. Developing marketing strategies and programs
6. Plan metrics and implementation control

The product of this thesis, the experiential marketing handbook, includes a custom made marketing mix, a process template and an action plan. These three tools are customized based on the 4 P’s and Burk Wood’s description of marketing plan content. The marketing plan guide in the handbook simplifies Burk Wood’s content, because the handbook is only meant to be used for short marketing campaigns and not a full on long-lasting marketing

strategy. Burk Wood's marketing plan content is customized in the experiential marketing handbook as follows:

1. Research and analysis of current situation
2. Understanding markets and customers

The steps 1 and 2 are customized in the handbook as "ideation and determining own goals", which covers target group analysis, defining the brand image, values and message, as well as ideation of the actual experiential marketing idea. The first half of the handbook, which explains to the reader what experiential marketing actually is and how it can be used, falls into this category as well, because it includes pre-marketing research.

3. Planning segmentation, targeting and positioning
4. Planning direction, objectives and marketing support

Steps 3 and 4 are covered in the handbook by the three templates mentioned above. The marketing mix assists the handbook user to define *what* is marketed, to *whom* and *why*, as well as what the experiential marketing "wow" –factor is. It also asks the user *where* and *how* they are going to do the marketing, replacing the "promotion" and "place" on the original 4P's marketing mix. The process template shows the handbook user what actions generally need to be taken before, during and after the marketing campaign and the action plan describes the whole marketing campaign process from ideation to the execution of the physical experience to the measurement of success. The handbook explains to the reader the ways of social media utilization, which covers part of the positioning step. The handbook also explains the benefits of cooperation with other companies and the need for utilizing existing resources instead of requiring new ones. These sections are connected with Burk Wood's marketing support –step. The detailed marketing mix, process template and action plan can be found in Appendices as Appendix 1.

5. Developing marketing strategies and programs
6. Planning metrics and implementation control

The last two steps of Burk Wood's content list are mentioned in the handbook's customized marketing mix as "So..." to imply the question "So... how did you succeed?". This part of the marketing mix covers both, the evaluation of the marketing process and development for future campaigns, as well as the measurement of success of the marketing campaign. The measurement of the success of experiential marketing is not easy, because there is no immediate data or profit, thus the handbook concentrates on ways to measure the gained visibility rather than monetary profit. The following image describes

the customization of the different steps of Burk Wood's marketing plan content into the context of the experiential marketing campaign plan.

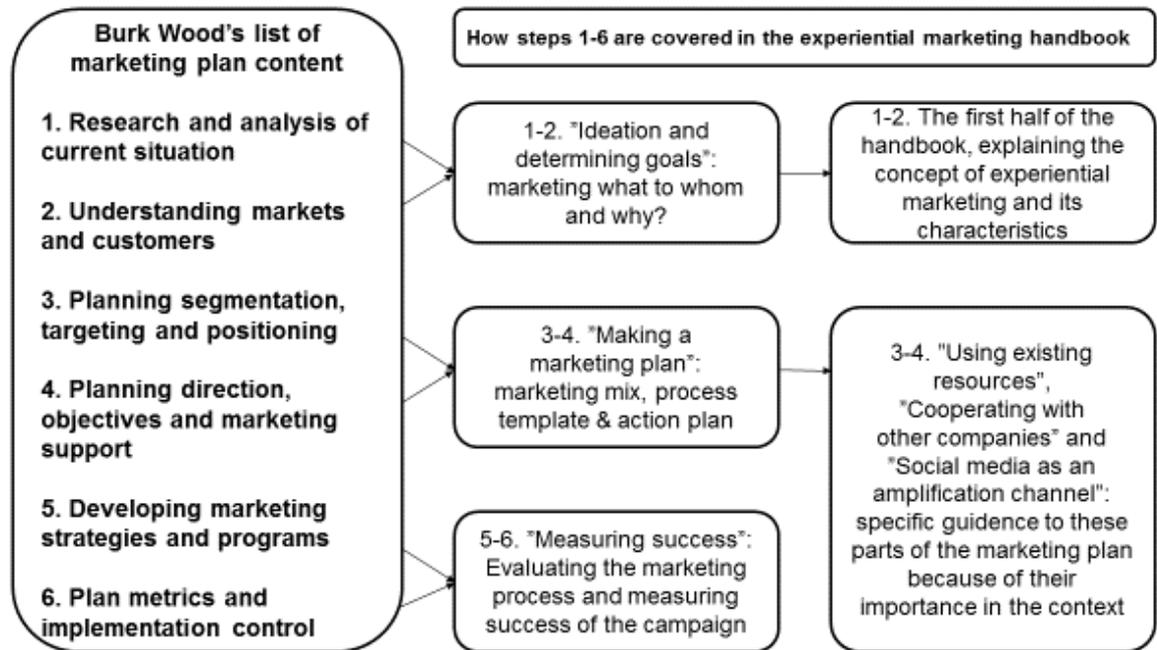


Figure 6 The structure of the handbook's marketing plan content

### **3 Creating the experiential marketing handbook**

This chapter goes into the process of making the product of this thesis, the experiential marketing handbook. It covers the background of the project and a detailed project plan and timeline. It also explains the objectives and purpose of the product as well as the risks and limitations of the project. Lastly an evaluation of the process and product is presented from the point of view of the author.

#### **3.1 Background of the project**

The interested in experiential marketing and the world of experiences awoke in the author quite late in her studies through a set of experience based courses. To advance her learning on the subject she chose her thesis topic accordingly, even though the original topic of her thesis was not related to experience marketing or management. The idea of a marketing handbook came from the author's thesis supervisor, but the delimitation to small businesses as the handbook users generated from the author's own employment in a small business. Also during the research phase of the process it came to the author's attention that most of the existing literature was concentrated on larger brands and most of the successful examples found through the internet were done by large well-known companies.

The thesis process was originally planned to be finished in May 2017, but after doing her advanced work placement in the industry during the summer and autumn of 2016, the author was hired to the work placement company and shortly after promoted to general manager, which in turn took time away from her studies and delayed the whole thesis process. Therefore the whole thesis process from literature research to submission was completed in five weeks during the autumn of 2017. The five week process is broken down and explained in the following subchapter.

#### **3.2 Project plan**

Because of the timeframe of only five weeks, the author made a structured and precise project plan to ensure the completion of the thesis in time. The aim was to finish one chapter per week and work on the thesis product throughout the whole timeframe. The author stuck to the made timeline quite well and succeeded in finishing the thesis by the deadline. The following table illustrates the structure of the five week project plan.

Table 1 The project plan/timetable

TIME	TOPIC	CONTENT
5/16-10/16	Choosing topic	Changing topic 3-4 times before final topic
10/16-10/17	Delimitation, topic research	Work life interference
23.-29.10.17	Kick start week	Week off work to concentrate on getting started; finding suitable sources, making thesis structure, starting to produce text
30.10.-5.11.17	Introduction and final delimitation	Finishing introduction, doing research and final topic delimitation; e.g. originally start-ups = small businesses
6.-12.11.17	Theory & product	Writing theory and product
13.-19.11.17	Theory & product	Finishing theory and product
20.-26.11.17	Creating product & discussion	Writing the missing chapters, thesis presentation, final finishing touches
5.12.2017	Finished	Thesis submitted to Theseus and registering for graduation
18.12.2017	Graduation	Graduation seminar at Haaga-Helia

The first two rows explain the early part of the process that started in 2016, the following five rows break down the five week timeframe for actually writing the thesis and the last two mark the submission of the finalized thesis and the graduation date. During the first week of writing the author took a week off from work to be able to fully concentrate on her thesis. This aided her in getting to the right state of mind and getting the process started. The following week consisted of writing the introduction, finalizing the delimitation and continuing the literature research. During the next two weeks the author concentrated on the theory and the product and finalized them. Lastly she wrote the chapters on the process and the discussion, presented her thesis and finalized the whole paper.

### 3.3 Purpose and objectives of handbook

The purpose of the product of this thesis, the small-budget experiential marketing campaign handbook, is to exist as one lone entity that small business owners can use to execute successful experiential marketing campaigns, without having to gather information from multiple different sources and possibly having to pay for the expertise of others. The objective of the handbook is to educate the reader on experiential marketing and its different characteristics, explain why the use of experiential marketing is so important in the

modern society, inspire to be creative and innovative, and finally to guide the reader through the whole process of creating and executing an experiential marketing campaign.

The handbook is created by using three different points of view; experiential marketing, the limitations of small businesses and creating a marketing plan. Some of the steps in the handbook are only related to the making of a marketing plan, some are only related to experiential marketing and its characteristics and some are only related to reducing costs. By combining these three aspects, the handbook strives to fulfil its purpose.

### **3.4 Limitations and risks**

The tight schedule of the thesis process was definitely a limitation, which effected the depth of the explained theoretical concepts and the quality of the end product. The short timeframe effected the quality of the author's thesis as well as the quality of her work as a general manager. The narrow research methods used also limited the thesis itself and made it subjective. Even though all stated facts in the thesis are referenced, the author's opinions and objectives are vaguely present.

The delimitation of small businesses as the users for the handbook gave the thesis its main point of view, but because the handbook is not specifically made for any field e.g. tourism, food & beverage or hospitality it is quite general and possibly not specific enough for all industries. In this case, the handbook would not fulfil its purpose as a sole source of guidance for an experiential marketing campaign.

Because the thesis is not produced for a commissioning company, nor is it evaluated by any third party except the thesis evaluators, no data has been collected for the thesis of the handbook's actual usability and relevance. The author solely trusts in her own judgement and the support of her thesis supervisor on the quality of the product. The author has also compared the handbook to similar existing products and believes that it is of good quality and contains enough detailed information for the user of the handbook to manage executing an experiential marketing campaign.

## **4 Discussion**

### **4.1 The thesis process**

Because of the diversity of experiential marketing and the lack of a universal experiential marketing framework, putting together the small-budget experiential marketing handbook, in such a limited time, forced the author to a lot of topic elimination and simplifying of subjects. Unfortunately, in the author's opinion, the handbook only scrapes the top of the ice berg of small-budget experiential marketing planning, but is a good base for future research and similar products. The author sees the handbook as a simple entity that covers the most critical steps of making a marketing plan and specifically an experiential marketing campaign.

The author regrets the delay of making her thesis, because she would have preferred to work longer and dig deeper into the experiential marketing world in order to make a more detailed and specific product and literature review. Time management is not one of the author's strongest attributes, but working under pressure is, which made the whole month long process possible. Her great interest in the subject and desire to produce a useful and relevant product helped her to use the time she had for the process wisely and to do as wide a topic research as possible.

In addition to her own interest in the subject, what helped the author to finishing the thesis process was the enthusiasm and useful guidance of her thesis supervisor. The supervisor was a great help in choosing the right topic for the author and getting the process started. She was also very patient during the author's year of working and was very receiving and supportive when the author finally started her prompt thesis process.

### **4.2 Learning outcomes**

The main focus of the author's degree program is tourism management, and because of this she discovered the experience specific subjects very late in her studies. Through her studies of experience creation and experiential marketing, the author grew more interested in the subject and that is why she chose experiential marketing as the base of her thesis. Writing about this specific topic gave her the chance to continue her studies on the topic of experiences individually. Unfortunately as stated before, she did not have a lot of time to internalize everything about experiential marketing that she needed in order to produce the best possible product, thus she is keen on continuing her learning even after the thesis process.

One of the steps that the author stresses in her handbook is the ideation process and using enough time on it. In controversy to her own guidance, and due to the circumstances, the author did not use or have enough time to do a detailed and thorough enough research on her topic beforehand and the writing and researching processes overlapped for most of the duration of the process. The modernity of the thesis topic made the research difficult as well, because there are only a limited amount of scientific sources about experiential marketing and to many of them the author did not have access to. This is why she relied a bit too much on articles and blog posts about the different aspects of experiential marketing and had too little sources per topic.

As conclusion, the author is very happy of her topic decision and is pleased with the end product, taking the timeframe and her pressing work into consideration. She sees that the learned knowledge through this process will be very useful for her in the future – work and study wise. She is keen on taking the theory that she has gained into practice through her current employer and to test out her thesis product. The thesis process has also given her insight on which field of business she wants to work in and perhaps motivation to further educate herself.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Handbook for small-budget experiential marketing campaigns

# HANBOOK FOR SMALL-BUDGET EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

Bachelor's Thesis – Aino Junttila

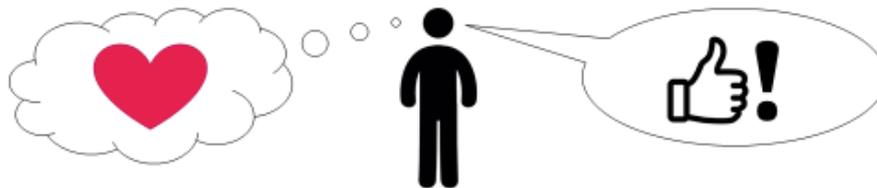
Haaga-Helia – Degree program in Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management

## INTRODUCTION

This is a step by step guide of how your business can achieve profitable and effective experiential marketing with a minimal budget.

It takes into consideration the limitations of small businesses and specifically gives instructions for ways to achieve successful experiential marketing with limited resources, such as money, staff, knowhow and time.

This handbook will guide you to the world of experiential marketing and help your business create meaningful customer experiences and raise brand awareness.



## CONTENT

- What is experiential marketing?
- Why should you use experiential marketing?
- Sensory perception and its importance in creating experiences
- Examples of sensory perception in experiential marketing
- A guide to the guide
- **THE GUIDE** →
- Summary check list

### Step 1: Making a marketing plan

- Marketing Mix
- Process
- Action plan

### STEP 2: Ideation and determining own goals

- A guide to a great idea
- Ideation methods

### STEP 3: Using existing resources

### STEP 4: Cooperating with other companies

### STEP 5: Social media as an amplification channel

- Ways to utilize social media

### Step 6: Measuring success

## WHAT IS EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING?

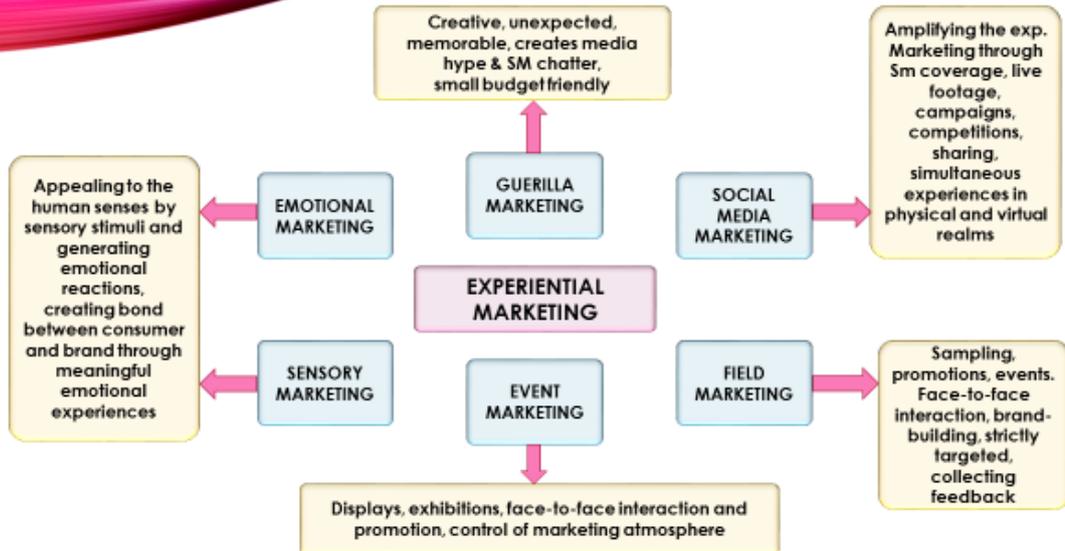
Experiential marketing is simply put, marketing products and services through immersive meaningful customer experiences. The aim is to create a deep bond between the consumer and the brand and thus generate long-lasting and profitable customer relationships as well as visibility and brand recognition.

Consumers are blasted daily with thousands of different advertisements and commercials, which they can easily block, skip or mute. Experience marketing works around this problem by using two way communication and creating an experience *with* the consumer, unlike traditional marketing which aims to only talk *at* the consumer.

The aim is to evoke deep emotional reactions by appealing to the human senses and through this creating meaningful experiences and memories.

Experiential marketing splits into two parts; the physical experience and the social media amplification. Only a handful of people get to actually experience the physical marketing campaign, but the whole world will see it through social media.

Experiential marketing is a mixture of different marketing types, such as guerilla marketing, social media marketing and sensory marketing. The characteristics from each marketing type are explained on the following page...



## WHY SHOULD YOU USE EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING?

Like said before, reaching the modern consumer is tough now-a-days and companies need more and more eye catching and personalized ways to communicate with consumers.

Experiential marketing is a tool that can create meaningful bonds between consumers and your brand, thus generating long lasting and profitable customer relationships.

It is a very modern and striking way of marketing that can quite easily be done with a small budget. It is also versatile, so the possibilities and options are never ending and only depend on you creativity!

What you can achieve with experiential marketing:

- Reaching new customer groups
- Creating long lasting and loyal customer relationships
- Visibility and brand awareness
- Differentiation from competitors
- Launching new product or service
- Launching new company

# SENSORY PERCEPTION AND IT'S IMPORTANCE IN CREATING EXPERIENCES

To enable deep emotional reactions in consumers, the experiential marketing has to appeal to as many of the five human senses as possible. By manipulating how the customers perceive our products or services through smell, taste, touch, sight and hearing, we can influence their emotional reactions, memories of the experience and through this, their purchase habits and choice making.

All used sensory triggers should be in line with the company's core values and convey the same message. If the different sensory stimuli are in collision with each other, the conveyed message is mixed and is less likely to make a permanent impression in the consumer's memory.

The most commonly evoked senses in experiential marketing are sight, touch and hearing, but smell and taste are a bit harder to manipulate, unless your company is in the food and beverage industry. The five senses and their use will be explained in the following pages, after which there are examples of a few already existing experiential marketing campaigns by well known brands, and explanations of what senses are triggered and how.



Different sight triggers that can be manipulated are:  
-Design, packaging & style  
-Color, light & theme  
-Graphics, exterior & interior

**Sight** is the sense people most trust and which gives us our first impressions. The sight sense is amplified by the other four senses, so when designing an experience you should start with sight and build around it.

-> The product packaging with its design and style; the colors, lighting and theme of the interior and exterior service landscape; and the graphics used such as the company logo and all digital content on e.g. social media all contribute to the sight experience. As the sight is the most used and most easily manipulated sense, it is important that all aspects contributing to the sense experience are coherent and are in line with the brands image and values so that consumers can easily relate what they see to your brand.

-> For an experiential marketing campaign, the most relevant triggers to take into account are the atmospheric ones; lighting, design, themes and colors, exterior and interior service landscape. Everything visual that is in the virtual part of the campaign has to be taken into consideration as well.



Different touch triggers that can be manipulated are:

- Material & surface
- Temperature & weight
- Form & steadiness

**Touch** is the enforcer of sight, so people better understand what they see when they are able to also touch it. When something is touchable, it is more real and it leaves a more lasting impression. Through different textures, people get different conceptions of your brand quality and personality and e.g. different kinds of materials make people feel different emotions; wood is often sensed as warm and homey, when on the other hand metals are seen as cold and unwelcoming.

-> The touch sense gives people a lot of different insight, usually requiring skin contact. With touch consumers can evaluate the material and surface of your product or service landscape. They can also assess e.g. the temperature of the atmosphere and the weight of the marketed product. They can also perceive the steadiness and form of the product or service landscape; e.g. if the packaging of a product seems unsteady it can be perceived as cheap.

-> When planning an experiential marketing campaign, remember to pay attention to every point of touch - the more people touch the better!



Different sound triggers that can be manipulated are:

- Jingle, voice & music
- Atmosphere, theme & advertency
- Sound brand & sound signature

**Sound** can be used to trigger emotional reactions as well as deliver rational messages.

-> The jingle is a catchy and memorable short piece sound sequence which is usually accompanied by a short lyrics, e.g. the well known McDonald's theme jingle "...I'm loving it!". The sound brand is a sound that a brand has legally acquired and other companies are restricted from using, e.g. the Hemglass ice-cream truck sound used in the Nordic countries. A signature sound is a sound that is consistently used in connection with the brand but it is not legally protected.

-> For a marketing campaign, the most relevant are voice and music when designing the atmosphere and theme. Different voices make people feel differently, so e.g. the customer service voice and voiceover on a promo video have to be thought out carefully. If you for example make a pre promotional video, the voiceover should be 'trailer' -type to build anticipation. Music is also an important emotional tool; it should be suitable for the right target audience. You probably wouldn't play heavy metal at an old-folks-home? If the consumers like the music, the more likely you are to leave a lasting impression and lengthen their stay.



Different smell triggers that can be manipulated are:

- Product, congruency, intensity & sex
- Atmosphere, theme & advertency
- Scent brand & signature scent

**Smell** is the sense most linked to emotions; smells help people remember specific experiences and emotions and in return these smells remind them of those specific emotions. Unfortunately successful manipulation of the smell experience is difficult if smell is not one of the natural characteristics of your product or service.

-> The smell of the product has to be congruent (easily related to) the product itself. The intensity and 'sex' of the smell is also important, e.g. if designing a smell for a women's clothing store, the smell should be feminine instead of masculine. The smell at a women's clothing store should also be less intense (to not annoy and disturb the experience) than a smell of fresh bread at a bakery, where the smell is intended to be inviting and encourage the desire to purchase. Smells can be applied to create a certain atmosphere and theme to the service landscape or the product or service. The scent brand and signature scent are the same as with sound, but the scent is more difficult to apply.

-> The easiest factor to manipulate is theme and atmosphere. So for example, if you are marketing Finnish cottage travel, you might want to use the scent of chopped wood or trees to give the feel of Finnish nature. When designing a smell experience it is important for the sold product/service and the smell to be coherent.



Different smell triggers that can be manipulated are:

- Interplay, symbiosis & synergy
- Name, presentation & setting
- Knowledge, delight & lifestyle

**Taste** is the hardest sense to manipulate (except in the food and beverage industry), thus it is not used in most of the examples in the next chapter. Taste is actually a combination of all the five senses, because people build expectations according to what they see, feel, smell and hear before they get to the actual tasting and perceive the taste according to their assumptions.

-> The interplay, symbiosis and synergy refer to all the five senses working together and creating a greater result than they would alone and the taste experience relies on the success of these characteristics. The name and style of presentation and setting creates a certain expected taste for the consumer and often if the expected taste is high, the actual perceived taste is also positive. Knowledge, delight and lifestyle go even deeper to the expected taste experience; knowing beforehand that by combining two different substances like red wine and quality cheese produces a certain type of taste experience will enhance the actual taste experience. The aspects of delight and lifestyle generate from the fact that food is not just a necessity anymore, it has become a pleasure and a sign of social status. People want to make eating into a delight and create pleasurable taste experiences to themselves and each other.

-> The most important thing when creating a taste experience for something that isn't food & beverage related, is that it should be synchronized with the rest of the experience. Taking the cottage travel as an example, you could serve something organic from the Finnish nature like berries or fish at the stager experience.

# EXAMPLES OF SENSORY PERCEPTION IN EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING

## ADIDAS - JUMP WITH D ROSE

**SIGHT:** Simplicity of D Rose Jump Store interior emphasizes the sneakers, large brand visibility in exterior atmosphere. Derrick Rose, American basketball player, as "main attraction".

**TOUCH:** Consumers get to touch and shake hands with D Rose. The whole experience is about an unfamiliar physical challenge for the youth of Hackney, London and excelling oneself to get a free pair of sneakers.

**HEARING:** Unclear from video, but can be assumed that sounds heard were cheering from outside crowd, encouragement from D Rose and other staff, suitable music for target group.

**SMELL:** Smell strategy is unclear from video, but can be assumed that the smell of sweat and fresh sneakers/rubber was present.

**TASTE:** -

-> "With an online film, posters, business cards and zero media budget, we earned over 2 million pounds of free media and hit 4 million people in 10 days." -TBWA/London

URL: <http://tbwa-london.com/project/d-rose-jump-store/>

## GOOGLE IMPACT CHALLENGE - BAY AREA

**SIGHT:** The voting-posters - Google brand visible in posters, website and staff, other consumers using posters to vote, Google staff at some of the busier poster spots.

**TOUCH:** Voting by simply touching poster encourages people to vote with its unexpectedness and easiness.

**HEARING:** Google staff educating the voters (unclear from video) perhaps on the voted topics or the use of the voting-posters. Voters communicating with each other about local issues.

**SMELL:** -

**TASTE:** -

-> Experiential methods used as a way to encourage voting on local issues instead of product marketing; visibility for Google about being innovative and active in the community.

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pa9MuGKIYA>

## TNT - PUSH TO ADD DRAMA

**SIGHT:** The most triggered sense; creates a live action filled taste of what to see on television. TNT clearly visible in the end on the banner for all spectators.

**TOUCH:** The excitement of getting to touch the button and making all of the drama happen. Otherwise touch sense isn't used.

**HEARING:** Intensity of experience is amplified by dramatic commotion, like ambulance sound and gunshots.

**SMELL:** Smell strategy is unclear from video, but can be assumed that the smell of smoke was present.

**TASTE:** -

-> Sight and hearing are most triggered, because these are most relevant senses to the TNT brand.

URL: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=316AzL\\_YfAzw&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=316AzL_YfAzw&feature=youtu.be)

## ZAPPOS - BAGGAGE CLAIM ROULETTE

**SIGHT:** Brand is visually very present with 'Zappos' mentioned on everything from staff shirts to prize items. The roulette baggage belt created anticipation and excitement in consumers.

**TOUCH:** Triggered through the different prize items.

**HEARING:** The event host uses a 'game show' -style voice to create excited atmosphere and build anticipation.

**SMELL:** -

**TASTE:** -

-> Great example of coming up with an innovative and unexpected solution to an existing problem, that is coherent with the brand image.

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J2kqoeV70MY>

## COKE ZERO - Unlock the 007 in you

**SIGHT:** Brand itself is present in beginning and end of experience. Sight is

**TOUCH:** To start the whole experience the consumer has to use the touchscreen soda machine, also touching the product itself; ice cold coke zero, and all the obstacles on the way to the finishing point.

**HEARING:** The James Bond theme song is highly present throughout the whole experience presented in ways that are compatible with the location of the experience.

**SMELL:** Smell strategy is unclear from video, but can be assumed that the smell of coke zero, citrus, dog and flowers were present.

**TASTE:** Tasting the refreshing product right before jumping into the given challenge and finishing the experience with it.

-> All senses were triggered either tactically or unintentionally in a synergic way. Because of the Bond-brand's high visibility, experiencers can forget who the real experience provider was.

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tv0CiknTgC0>

## A GUIDE TO THE GUIDE

Now that you have a clear view of what experiential marketing is, why you should definitely utilize it as a marketing tool and what can be achieved by it, you can continue on to the actual step-by-step experiential marketing guide.

Before hopping straight into action, read the whole guide through so you have a clear view of everything that will happen and everything that is needed. Make a realistic timeline for your marketing campaign and use the check list on the last page, to stay on track of the process and to make sure that all steps are taken in order and nothing is skipped.



## STEP 1 – MAKING A MARKETING PLAN

A successful experiential marketing campaign needs more than a great idea, it needs a solid plan and structure. The more detailed and clear the marketing plan is, the easier and more structured the actual process will be.

The following templates give you guidance to what you need to consider when making a marketing plan, and how you should structure the process, from the point of ideation to finally the measuring of success.

The templates include a Marketing Mix, which will guide you to define the script of your marketing campaign; what you are marketing, why, to whom, where, how and lastly how did you succeed. Second, there is a simple layout of the actual process; what happens before, during and after the marketing campaign. There is also a template for an action plan to guide you through the whole marketing campaign process that starts with ideation and ends with the evaluation of the marketing process.

## MARKETING MIX

### IDEATION

#### WHAT?

Product or service?  
Old or new?

#### WHO?

Target group?  
Existing customer base?  
Potential new customers?

#### WHY?

Main objective?  
What do you want to achieve?

#### WOW!

The core experiential idea?

### ACTION

#### WHERE?

Where is the physical experience going to take place? What kind of service landscape? What social media channels are used?

#### HOW?

What methods used and actions taken?  
Needed resources?  
Content of the marketing?

### FOLLOW UP

#### SO...?

How did it go and what will you do differently next time?  
Was it successful and did you achieve your goals?  
Expenses vs. income?

## PROCESS

### BEFORE

Ideation process

Detailed and clear action plan & preparation actions

Pre-campaign promotional actions

### DURING

Virtual realm experiential marketing actions =  
All activity taking place on your SM and other digital channels

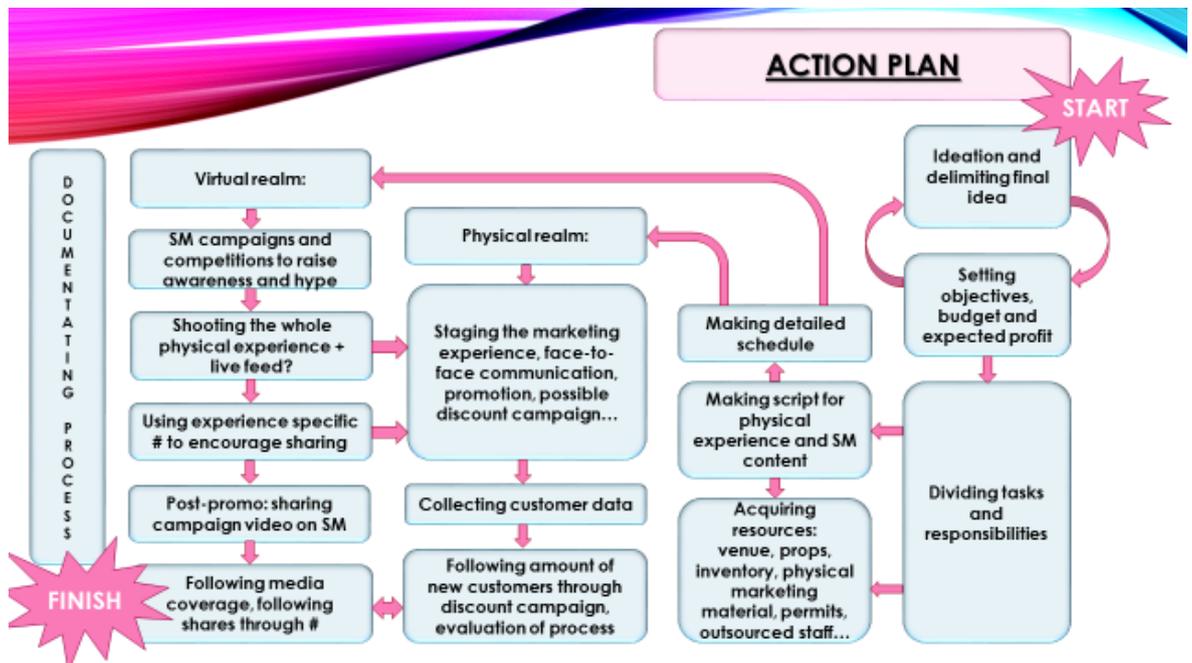
Physical realm experiential marketing actions =  
All activity taking place during the physical experience and face-to-face campaign

### AFTER

Measuring success and evaluating the whole process for future improvements

Post-campaign promotional actions

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## STEP 2 – IDEATION AND DETERMINING OWN GOALS

The core of your marketing idea should evolve around two factors,

1. Your brand values, image and message
2. Your target audience

-> Whatever the purpose of your marketing is, whether it's a new product launch or building stronger customer relationships, the marketing message should always be in line with your brand's core values and purpose.

-> Secondly, you should always think first about who you are marketing to and start building the idea from that target group's point of view. Take into consideration factors such as age, sex, cultural background, lifestyle and e.g. shopping habits.

Ideation is the most important part of the whole marketing process, with a great core idea you can get far! So take your time, involve the whole team and do not settle for the first thing that pops into your head. In the following pages you will find guidance to a great idea and a list of different types of ideation methods, that you can try out!

## GUIDE TO A GREAT IDEA



## IDEATION METHODS

### SIX THINKING HATS

The six different colored thinking hats represent six different points of view in an ideation session. Everyone in the ideation team should act as one of the points of view while ideating.

**BLUE:** manager, keeps everyone else on the subject and goal

**WHITE:** factual, only thinks about facts, using existing information

**BLACK:** pessimist, thinks realistically, points out difficulties and faults

**YELLOW:** optimist, thinks realistically, points out potential and benefits

**GREEN:** creative, outside the box thinking, all is possible

**RED:** emotional, thinks with feelings and gut reactions

### YES, AND...

Divide into pairs or small groups and start from a simple core idea like 'marketing chocolate to the elderly'. One starts with a statement like 'the elderly could get their pension in chocolate' and the next one would say 'YES, AND there would be a special chocolate station where they could get that chocolate pension' and the next one would say 'YES, AND they could also have chocolate credit...' - In this method you take a simple idea and start building on top of it; never saying NO or BUT! Even if the end result sounds impossible, with a little tailoring even impossible ideas can be implementable.

->Chocolate shop store credit system for the elderly?

### AND WHAT?

This is a great method if you're stuck in a creative rut. Take your product/service AND add something to it, e.g. 'Chocolate AND books, chocolate AND the beach...' First make a long list of these couples and then start elaborating on the ideas, like how chocolate and books could be connected and made into a marketing strategy. This can help you come up with totally new perspectives on your product/service and the way it can be used or marketed.

### POST-IT's

Brainstorming is one of the most common ideation methods, and it can be done out loud or e.g. using post-its. Everyone writes down as many ideas as they can come up with on separate post-it notes in the given time frame. Afterwards the whole group goes through all the ideas and filters out 2/3 of the least popular ideas. When re-examining the 1/3 left, the original idea-creator can elaborate on their idea and the team can discuss and choose the best ones that will be taken forward. This is a good method if the team is shy about their ideas and thoughts.

## STEP 3 – USING EXISTING RESOURCES

Before your ideation takes you to the moon, take into consideration what are your existing resources and how can you maximize the use of existing resources instead of thinking about what non-existing resources you would need or want.

Things to consider (among other field specific factors) are a realistic and minimal budget, existing employee's and their input possibilities, existing props, tools and physical spaces, the potential of non-paid social media marketing as well as networks and connections that can be utilized with e.g. trade of goods or services.

Make a list of all existing resources and cooperation possibilities that you can think of, and based on that list start exploring different possibilities of execution. This way, you can try to work with what you have and minimize the need for new resources. If new resources are required for the final idea, try to still come up with alternative ways of execution, and only acquire the obligatory needed resources.



## STEP 4 – COOPERATING WITH OTHER COMPANIES

A budget-friendly way to get more visibility and the possibility to amplify the scale of your experiential marketing campaign is through cooperation. Teaming up with another company or companies will give you the chance to market to a larger audience and use more marketing channels. As a small business, the ideal situation would be having a larger and better known company as a partner, because of the brand recognition and existing customer base. A few important factors to consider in cooperation are,

- The cooperating companies' values and images should match your own
- Making sure everyone benefits equally from the cooperation
- Making sure everyone gets a fair amount of visibility according to resource input
- Communication is transparent and clear from the start to finish to minimize misunderstandings and conflict situations
- A clear leading company and a signed cooperation agreement



## STEP 5 – SOCIAL MEDIA AS AN AMPLIFICATION CHANNEL

In experiential marketing only a handful of people get to actually experience the marketing, but what is as important as the physical experience is to make these people share their experience to their peers. It is also common and highly useful to document the campaign and sharing it on your social media channels to achieve global visibility. The best and most successful experiential campaigns take place in the physical and virtual realms.

Social media is *the* marketing channel of the modern economy. It can be utilized in numerous different ways, from campaigns and competitions to introducing your company and product/service to the consumers in a highly personal way. Modern consumers highly value the opinions of their friends and family, and an aim of experiential marketing is to maximize the word-of-mouth spreading of the consumers' experiences.



## WAYS TO UTILIZE SOCIAL MEDIA

### DOCUMENTATION OF THE PHYSICAL EXPERIENCE AND SHARING IT ON SM

Only a small part of the gained visibility from an experiential marketing campaign is through the physical experience itself. The way the world will hear about your campaign is through a good quality marketing video made of the physical experience. The video can be trailer-type with suitable foreground music and short clips of the experience, movie-type where the viewer is one with the actual experienter and the real sound experience is also present, or documentary-type where the story of the making of the experience is shown. All 3 types are presented in the experiential marketing examples. Nothing is stopping you from utilizing all 3 types for different purposes.

### CREATING HYPE AROUND THE PHYSICAL EXPERIENCE THROUGH SM CAMPAIGNS AND COMPETITIONS

Because only a handful of people will actually experience the experiential marketing and to make sure that at least that handful actually show up, it is important to share the experience also to the virtual realm. To build anticipation you can have SM competitions and promote the physical experience to maximize the amount of consumers that get to be a part of the physical experience. Live streaming of the event is also quite common, especially with a younger target group. Keeping the hype alive afterwards is important as well and can be done with e.g. the official video material, documentation-type throwback posts and competitions.

### CONSUMERS SHARING THEIR EXPERIENCES IN SM

Word-of-mouth is an extremely important marketing tool in an experiential marketing campaign. Put effort into encouraging consumers to share their experiences by "share and win"-type campaigns, simply using the experience campaign specific hashtag and having it visible, and just telling them to tell their friends and family during the physical experience (assuming their experience was positive). People trust their close ones, so turning the consumers into 'brand-advocates' is an extremely useful and cheap way to spread the word. Trust in the power of the grapevine!

## STEP 6 – MEASURING SUCCESS

Measuring success of the experiential marketing campaign can be difficult, since there are no immediate results. In terms of income it can be impossible to get accurate data on how profitable it actually was, but the amount of visibility gained can be easily followed. Here are some tools to measure the success of the campaign,

- Using the campaign specific hashtag (e.g. #googleimpactchallenge) in all social media channels to follow how far the hype reaches
- Using analytical social media apps to follow the amount of new page likes, post shares and the amount of people who view and click your posts
- Having a discount campaign with a specific discount code to follow how many of the people from the physical experience actually come and buy your products or services
- Using media monitoring tools (e.g. Mention) where you can define search words and get real time data of all the media channels that you have been mentioned in

## SUMMARY CHECK LIST

		✓
1.	Take time in ideation, get inspired and don't settle for anything average.	
2.	Consider your existing resources and delimit your idea accordingly.	
3.	Start building around the marketing idea and maximize the use of sensory triggers, but consider each sensory experience carefully.	
4.	Consider all the aspects of the marketing mix to have a clear objective and strategy.	
5.	Make a detailed action plan, and don't forget to document the whole process.	
6.	Find suitable cooperation companies, acquire needed resources, start pre-promotion...	
7.	Prepare everything for physical and virtual experiences.	
8.	Stage physical experiential campaign and amplify it through social media.	
9.	Share promotion video of the physical experiential marketing campaign.	
10.	Measure success and evaluate the process.	