

How to launch new products.

by ^{TE} ESPRESSO San Diego's Coffeehouse & Café Newspaper.

In 18 years of ad sales, ESPRESSO has noticed some recurring elements and patterns in our client's ads used to promote new products or services; We've summarized some things we think are important to keep in mind when launching something new. Some are glaringly obvious and following them can greatly increase returns on ad expenditures. Yet product after product is launched with sublime indifference to some basic truths; those products or services almost always fail. Here are some of the things we've learned that will help keep you from repeating others' mistakes:

1. THE PRODUCT: It's best to launch a new product that has real differences from competitors.

If a particular market is growing fast or has few products in it, a "me-too" product stands a good chance of success.

However, "second" brands in a market tend to get half the share of the pioneer—unless they spend outrageously on ads, promotion and general marketing. Even then, the results may be questionable—if you don't have a *real difference* from the competition.

The difference may be in terms of *better value*, a *new use*, a *new service* or *better quality* or *performance*. The sharper and more obvious the difference is, the more it has to be promoted. Customers need to know *why* they need to buy your new product.

2. THE PACKAGE: Your package must help position your product and express its promise and personality.

The packaging of your product has to work with it—not against it, and it has to reflect the taste of the

customers you are trying to attract. One example is See's "Old Time" Candies in a fancy black and white box. Compare this to M&M's—a candy for people on the go and children, sold in a bag with a motto that says that it won't make a mess when eaten.

Put your advertising promise right on the package *in the same words your ads use*. It helps if the product is visible through the package, or at least pictured adequately.

Don't skimp on package design, graphics or quality. It will cost you if you do.

Whatever you do, don't let your package be confused with the competition! A "second" product in a "me too" market that doesn't stand out is an invitation to disaster.

3. THE NAME: Names should position the product and spell out its promise.

1. Three words: Position, position, position!

2. Put your product promise in the name.

3. Make the name memorable. The name needs to ID the product quickly.

4. Test the name and make sure it's *easy to say, remember and spell*. Remember that names affect taste.

5. Make sure your name doesn't mean something off-point in another language. Save yourself the humiliation and lost business.

4. THE PRICE: Prices should be consistent with the image you want to build.

First class is always expensive. Inexpensive is good, so long as it isn't "cheap". Price your wares

according to the position you want to attain in the market. But if your brand is a "me-too" product, *never price it above the competition*. If your product has a real difference, then you can safely increase its price later, since people will be willing to pay for the difference between competitors.

5. THE ADVERTISING: Vital principles

Ad results depend on how ads are positioned—not by size, color or graphics. *Positioning ads is the first step to effective advertising*.

Your ad has to reflect a Big Idea or it will fail. No exceptions.

If your product is new, say so! And be sure to say what's new about it.

Put the price in your ad. The public will want to know.

Tell the customer how to use the product. Tell them how it will fit in their life and show the product in use in your ads.

Hammer home the name in your ads—often.

Don't be afraid to state the obvious—it may not be obvious to everyone, and that isn't their fault.

Don't overclaim. People are more intelligent than many copy writers would have you believe.

When your ads work, *stick with them*. If you want people to be loyal to you, you have to be consistent with them. This will get you a lion's share of the market over time.

6. HOW TO BUY PRINT ADS

Once you have a position worked out, your print ad buys should have adequate space to *promote every aspect* of your position.

Saving pennies on ad space and crowding text and pictures into small ads is useless. Ads need enough space to focus the eye on where and what is important.

Color is essential for new product advertising. People see in color and they need to see your product in color like they'll see it at a store.

Ad space should be bought for one-year periods, with options on bigger spaces at a discount price. Using a reserved-page spot is worth the extra cost in the beginning.

Depending on your position, it may be wise to reserve small ad spaces on different pages of the same issue that tie to a bigger, main ad on a back page or cover.

And last but not least:

Advertise in ESPRESSO.

An intelligent, affluent, early-adopting and savvy public willing to experience new things and happy to tell their friends about their finds are to be found in the hundreds of coffeehouses throughout San Diego County.

ESPRESSO's readership is a perfect public to introduce new products, goods and services to because *they bond and respond to the businesses they like*. Café Society remains a trendsetting core public for products of all kinds.

You can advertise anywhere; it makes sense to advertise with a newspaper that knows your needs—and how to help you find the clientele that will make all the difference to you.

^{TE} ESPRESSO

San Diego's Coffeehouse & Café Newspaper since 1992.

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