

Instore Music – the power of emotional branding

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Imagine, you are a brand manager responsible for all your branches, brand- and flagship stores (I hope you actually are...). These offer your brand great opportunities to reflect and thus communicate your brands image and emotional positioning through a unique music program.

Studies show that a music concept which fits to the brand, store and target group increases the time that customers spend inside the store. Overall, this leads to more purchases with a higher value – more revenue for your company – and brings additional value to the brand by strengthening its individual image.

However; instore music which supports your brand identityat the point of sale is much more than just playing your favorite radio station or your favorite CDs. Appropriate music needs to be developed in harmony with the brand strategy and technical aspects.

Prof. Adrian North (recommended reading: “The social and applied psychology of music”, Adrian C. North and David J. Hargreaves, Oxford University Press 2008) outlines that instore music – if it is well executed – can draw customers into a shop or restaurant, it can make customers stay longer than they otherwise would, influence customers to interact with staff and eliminate unacceptable silences, hence it can influence revenues and profit.

Prof. North states academic research on the issue can be categorised into four

main areas concerning the effects of musically-induced pleasure and arousal, knowledge activation effects, research on waiting and time perception, and workplace morale and productivity respectively.

Furthermore in a more recent article (written by North in cooperation with Joanne P.S. Yeoh) “The effects of musical fit on choice between two competing foods” (Musicae Scientia, Spring 2010, Vol XIV) he shows that musical “fit” can influence product choice “when consumers do not have a clear existing preference for one product over another”. This is often the case especially for low-involvement products.

Overall, high quality instore music that is professionally engineered to cater to the needs of the brand supports emotional branding and can increase revenue. For you as a brand manager developing a music strategy for you stores can be an interesting trip into the fascinating world of music. Go for it!

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