

Our thoughts on...

Consumer Sensitivity Strategy

April 2020

Viener&Partners.



WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND...[BESIDES THE OBVIOUS, OF COURSE]

Are you and/or your team having discussions like:

- ▶ Sales are holding steady, but we recognize our current brand strategy/position/messaging isn't appropriate given the economic and cultural environment.
 - How do we re-position to stand out, avoid over commercialization or not appear tone-deaf?
- ▶ Right now, our brand is nearly dormant due to the extreme changes in the marketplace.
 - Do we try to reposition, pivot, or operate "in name only"?
- ▶ We are in a holding pattern and want to use this time to address opportunities for innovation.
 - Within what context do we do this?
- ▶ We are trying our best – and discounting or giving away products and/or services – but can't sustain this or we'll go out of business and have to let our team go.
 - How do we do well by doing good, and keep our business running?

Let's start by exploring the benefits of developing a Consumer Sensitivity Strategy.

WHAT ARE SOME BRANDS DOING?

- ▶ **E&J Gallo Winery** producing and bottling hand sanitizer for Stanislaus County
- ▶ **Brown Forman** donated 1M to restaurant workers and the USBG
- ▶ **Tito's Handmade Vodka** donated 2M to charitable food and beverage orgs
- ▶ **Vita Coco** donated 1M to feeding America and No Kid Hungry
- ▶ **Jose Andres:** Feeding those in need through charitable foundation World Central Kitchen. "Without Empathy, Nothing Works."
- ▶ **DoorDash** – Delivering an estimated 1M pounds of groceries and prepared meals to households in need in partnership with United Way Worldwide
- ▶ **Fresh Direct:** Add a donation to your order to buy pantry meals or produce for individuals and families through NY Common Pantry
- ▶ **Sweetgreen:** dedicating their operations and resources to support hospital workers and medical personnel "on the front lines" by delivering free salads and bowls to hospitals in the cities it serves.
- ▶ **High Brew Coffee:** delivering canned cold brew to nurses, respiratory therapists, and clinical assistants
- ▶ **Bare Bones Broth:** donating 100% of their online profits from March 25 to April 8, 2020 to the Restaurants Care Fund



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Questions? hilarie@vienerandpartners.com

WHAT'S YOUR CONSUMER SENSITIVITY STRATEGY?

The HALO Method ^{V&P} Characteristics of a brand exhibiting Consumer Sensitivity

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| Honor | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Be true to brand values and how they relate to consumers▶ Operate with the understanding that this effects EVERYONE |
| Adapt | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Pivot (product, creative, positioning) in a way that best serves – paying keen attention to new social "norms" |
| Lead | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Be responsible, strong and aim to have a positive impact |
| Offer | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ In the "now" – using your best judgement, what can you offer your community?▶ For the future – carve out an opportunity to innovate as to provide a sustainable pathway to resuming, restructuring or re-building |

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APPROACH

Based on the **HALO** Method, we see a clear 3-step approach to a **Consumer Sensitivity Strategy**

ASSESS - What do we have to work with?

Clear your head and identify your actual current landscape from all angles and through all channels that effect your consumer and your business (such as C-19, Economic, Environmental, Human Capital, Feasibility...)

THINK - What can we do now?

How do we - Honor, Adapt, Lead and Offer

ACT - Develop and execute a Bridge Plan

Your plan MUST be flexible and constructed to be easily adaptable and made with intention to pivot.

Why is it called a Bridge Plan? Look at it like this....picture a long, majestic bridge over a body of water....**why was it built?** To connect to places that were once impassible....**how was it built?** It was built purposefully to sway with the tide as it will not function otherwise.

We are currently in a place where we don't really know what will await us on the other side of the Bridge.... but in order to get there, we have to figure out how to build it in the smartest way possible.

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HISTORICAL RELEVANCE

In 1933, as the Great Depression was ending, Revlon introduced color-coordinated nail polish and lipstick. While this might have seemed like an inopportune moment to launch a vanity business and his competitors (Charles Revson, Co-Founder of Revlon) at first called the colors 'trashy', Charles' insight of the needs of women at the time was to convert into business success.

He instinctively understood that after a period where women had worn drab colors, recycling rather than buying new fashions, they wanted to feel feminine and 'pretty' again and so there would be a market for relatively inexpensive glamour. ("Relatively" because Revlon's products were sold at a premium compared with traditional brands, many of which were only available in pale and transparent colors).

Their first products were nail varnishes, but the brand moved to what Charles called "Matching Lips & Tips", introducing lipsticks to complement each of their nail-enamel shades. The idea is said to have come to him when he noticed a woman in a restaurant whose lips and nail polish didn't match. He also realized that if women used the different shades to suit different outfits, moods, and occasions, it would expand the market....and it did.

*This charming case study was written by our friend, close collaborator, author and world-renown brand historian, Giles Lury of The Value Engineers. Other clever stories like this one can be found in **The Prisoner and The Penguin**.*



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WHAT WE DO KNOW

Look, no one has a crystal ball, treasure map, algorithm or any real proven touch-point to compare this situation to, so lets just do what we call "Future-casting with no benchmarks" – How? Well...

- 1 WE KNOW HOW TO THINK**
Sounds simple, but it's very valuable, actually. Each of our team members has been a professional brand problem-solver for at least 20 years – knowing how to think and problem solve is HOW we are all going to create the "map" through uncharted territory.
- 2 WE UNDERSTAND**
We understand culture, trends and social cues – how to infuse brand messaging to hit just the right tone.
- 3 WE ARE A GLOBAL TEAM OF EXPERTS,**
Our team has experience working on 100's of brands, in almost every category imaginable – across geographies around the world.

Lets address what we DO know and DO have...and find the pathway to create a positive impact...

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HOW CAN WE HELP?

We vited by stating that we are all in this together...and our team has spent a lot of time sharing ideas – from points and points of view around the globe – from Australia to Israel to Italy to London and across Europe...and of course, various locations in the US...and this one question keeps coming up....

What's the new currency?

The ability to help each other....sharing knowledge is a gift that has more value than ANYTHING Together, we will get through this....

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WHAT WE DO

- ▶ Brand & Product Strategy for Launch, Re-positioning & Product Extensions
- ▶ Campaign Development & Execution
- ▶ Consumer & Market Research & Insights
- ▶ Creative Development for Branding, Advertising & Marketing
- ▶ Digital, Influencer & Social Media Strategy, Planning, Development & Execution
- ▶ Interim CMO/Marketing Professionals
- ▶ IT Support & Digital Data Management
- ▶ Media Planning & Buying
- ▶ Messaging & Content Development
- ▶ Omni-channel Communications & Marketing Strategy & Plan Development
- ▶ Public & Media Relations
- ▶ Strategic Partnerships & Sponsorships (Research, Planning & Execution)
- ▶ Trade Relations Campaign Ideation & Execution
- ▶ Visual Identity (Branding, Logo & Packaging)



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TEAM

We lead a team of specialists, experienced in brand history, development, marketing and communications.

We bring C-Suite level insights to companies and organizations from promising start-ups to Fortune 500 brands, offering decades worth of experience and strong track records of success working with over 100 brands around the world in categories such as Automotive, Beauty, Fashion, Food, Non-Profit, Sports, Technology and Wine.

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About Us

In the beginning of 2020, FeastPR and Viener&Partners - two vibrant, multi-service branding and communications agencies formed a strategic alliance. United in our deep understanding of the complexity of consumer and category dynamics, importance of collaborations and partnerships, we are passionate about and committed to effecting positive change.