

дженів визначається також цілями і стратегією підприємства. Крім цього в процесі розробки маркетингової стратегії обов'язково слід враховувати ще й певне коло додаткових показників, основними з яких буде ступінь конкурентоспроможності продукції, яку випускає підприємство та його можливості щодо задоволення платоспроможного попиту споживачів.

Саме це положення обумовлює необхідність подальшого проведення більш глибокого аналізу та визначає **напрямки подальших досліджень**.

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CHARACTERISTICS OF BRAND PERCEPTION IN A COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT: RESEARCH RESULTS (CELEBRUM LABS)

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the research of Celebrum Labs company (through unique neurotechnology in marketing – Celebrum X). This study aims to accomplish several goals on the example of brand «Kozelsky» (Kozelsky Dairy Products). Firstly, the business goal, which consists of improving the brand's visibility on the storefront and increasing sales by 30% in comparison with 2020 figures by attracting new consumers and increasing customer loyalty. Secondly, the goal of the study as a whole, which consists of acquiring understanding of the peculiarities of brand perception within a competitive environment.

Keywords: consumption of daily products, “Young hedonists”, “Homemakers”, “Venerable elders”, Celebrum X,

Features of consumer perception must be considered in the form of two components - rational and emotional. In the West, a brand has always made a promise, behind which was the product, and it could be a rational or an emotional promise. Emotional promise is fundamental to modern branding theory and is associated with the measurement of customer loyalty.

Taking into account the fact that branding is a management concept, it can be argued that the focus of brand managers should be on the management of customer loyalty (consumers), since it is loyalty that serves as the main prerequisite for making repeated and subsequent purchases, and therefore the basis for the formation of commitment and the status of a regular customer (consumer).

Methodology: the author's method of Celebrum Labs Company - "Method for remote collection and group processing of psychophysiological reactions when presenting various information." The technique allows you to assess the attitude of the audience (sample of respondents) to the advertised materials (video, images, text), as well as to determine some qualitative characteristics in their perception - trust, attracting attention, recognition speed, desire to purchase, etc. In the course of collecting the Data, the Respondents evaluate the elements of the advertising message (fragments, frames, scenes), self-assess the influence of the

studied advertising on them, while using the mobile phone sensors, involuntary psychophysiological motor response components are recorded. Data from mobile phone sensors (Celebrum X) are transmitted to the central server in order to obtain group statistical estimates characterizing the advertised materials. A detailed description of this technique is available on the Internet, on the official website of the Contractor (www.celebrum-labs.com).

The desired objective is to gain insight into how: 1) to best evaluate and arrange product characteristics according to the following parameters: Attractiveness, Confidence, Uniqueness, Desire to Purchase 2) to assess brand perception in a competitive environment 3) to measure the situational consumption of dairy products and the level of desire to purchase the product of the brand for specific situations.

The participants of this survey were women aged 25 and older, divided into several segments, depending on their consumption of dairy products and on whether or not they have children. The survey spanned such regions as: Moscow, Saint Petersburg and cities from the Central Federal District with a population of at least 250 thousand people (from Moscow Oblast, Kaluga Oblast, Tula Oblast, Bryansk Oblast, Oryol Oblast, and Kursk Oblast). The scope of the survey comprised: 5

sessions with 500 respondents each. The four target audience segments: 1) “Young hedonists” 25-45 years old. Without children. They purchase dairy products for themselves and their husbands as well as for other family members. 2) “Young hedonists” 25-45 years old. Without children. They purchase dairy products for themselves and members of their family (they still live with their parents). 3) “Homemakers” 25-45 years old. Raising children. They purchase dairy products for the whole family and their children. 4) “Venerable elders” 45+. Their grown-up children live separately. They purchase dairy products mainly for themselves and their children or grandchildren.

As a whole, the most effective claims are those that point to the naturalness of the product and the use of healthy ingredients. But this is not enough. The main conclusions to be made are the following: 1) The most attractive claims for all segments of the target audience were those relating to the naturalness of the product (the use of organic fodder and absence of synthetic ingredients) and the content of natural protein. Among other claims that the respondents found attractive were those about the health benefits (of raw milk) and the presence of bacterial cultures. 2) Only the older women (45+) are convinced in the uniqueness of claims relating to fat and protein content. As for all the other groups, such claims rank lower on the uniqueness scale. 3) The claims that inspire most confidence are those referring to health benefits (of raw milk), to minimal thermal processing, to the presence of bacterial cultures and natural protein. Older women are more convinced by claims about short shelf life. 4) Desire to purchase is most affected by claims about the absence of synthetic ingredients and GMOs, the presence of protein and bacterial cultures. Older women are further convinced if the product claims that: it has low sugar content, the cows grazed on clean pastures, and it was produced in accordance with GOST (the Russian state standard).

The following conclusions can also be outlined: The increase in product confidence within each segment of the target audience depends on the respondents' immersion into the category of dairy products and the importance of said category for each consumer. The “Venerable elders” were the most confident and immersed group.

The most loyal group is that consisting of women who are aged 45 or older. Practically all claims work equally well for them. They also gave a more positive assessment of Kozelsky and were very confident in their desire to purchase the brand's products in all suggested situations.

However, it is important to point out that older women were just as positive about and confident in the competing brands. This is probably due to their immersion in the category as a whole. They know of, notice and accurately assess the naturalness and relevance of all the competing brands. They are slightly less inclined to buy products from local and less-known brands, such as Piskarevsky and Bezhin Lug. They were also less confident in the Vkusnoteevo brand. This was also reflected in the results of the survey about local producers – the level of confidence in their responses to the suggested claims was quite low.

All suggested claims had a positive effect on their level of confidence in the brand and the perception of its attractiveness. However, the claims that generated a more positive response to brand uniqueness and increased the desire to purchase were concerning the following: the absence of synthetic ingredients, raw milk and milk originating from cows that grazed on clean pastures, the presence of bacterial cultures, and a low sugar content.

Thus, this particular group can be currently viewed as the pillar for the development of the brand – it has a positive and confident attitude toward the product and could potentially spread brand awareness to the younger women.

The second “pillar” group – the “Homemakers” – is also highly immersed in the category due to the presence of young children in their family. Respondents from this group also gave positive feedback, though with less consistency than the “venerable elders”.

1) The “homemakers” that have children also expressed positivity and confidence when assessing the claims. However, when comparing the brand to the competitors, they clearly demonstrated preference for such large federal brands as B.Y. Alexandrov, EPICA, Activia, and Vkusnoteevo. Local brands, including Kozelsky, received less confident reactions, proving that the respondents are only moderately confident in the assessment of claims pertaining to local producers.

2) They find most claims attractive, even though they do not find them unique. The claims that inspired most confidence, including in the uniqueness of the product and the desire to purchase it, were those about the naturalness (the absence of synthetic ingredients) and the presence of natural protein. Other claims that significantly increase the group's motivation to purchase the product are those relating to minimal thermal processing, the presence of bacterial cultures and the absence of GMOs.

3) The women are prepared to buy the products of this brand for most of the suggested situations. However, they are most prepared to consume the products at home and less likely to consume them as snacks on the go or at the office.

4) Seen as these women represent the core of the target audience in the context of the category of dairy products as a whole, it would make sense to put in extra effort to sustain and develop their loyalty to the brand. In order to achieve this, possible strategies could involve communicating the naturalness of the product, expressed in the absence of synthetic ingredients and GMOs, and informing them about the presence of healthy ingredients (natural protein and bacterial cultures). Ways to further engage this group could involve suggesting new appropriate situations for consumptions and helping them overcome their lack of confidence in local producers.

Responses from the “Young hedonists” differed significantly depending on whether they live separately with their partner or with their parents. The young women that were still living with their parents were least confident in their responses.

1) As a whole, this group demonstrated a moderately low and inconsistent level of confidence. It is interesting that those living separately were more prepared to buy the products of the brand for consumption at home for breakfast or as a midday snack, whereas those living with their parents – as a snack at the office. The most popular competitors are Valio, Activia and Vkusnoteevo.

2) The claims that attracted most attention from the young women living separately were those about naturalness (the absence of synthetic ingredients and the use of organic fodder), production in accordance with GOST, and health benefits (of raw milk). As for the women living with their parents, they were convinced by claims relating to naturalness (the absence of synthetic ingredients and the use of clean pastures), health benefits (of raw milk), minimal thermal processing, the presence of natural protein, and the absence of GMOs.

3) The claims that induced most confidence were those about naturalness (of the organic nature of the fodder for those living separately, and of the absence of synthetic ingredients for those living with their parents) and about the health benefits of raw milk.

4) The desire to purchase was most affected by claims referring to the absence of synthetic ingredients and GMOs, and the presence of protein and bacterial cultures. Important claims for the older women from this group were those about: low sugar content, the use of clean pastures, and production in accordance with GOST.

5) The attention of the “Young hedonists” is attracted by claims about production in accordance with GOST and naturalness (all three aforementioned aspects of it). The claims that are most effective when it comes to this group are those about the presence of protein and bacterial cultures, as well as those about health benefits (of raw milk) and the naturalness that results from the use of organic fodder.

6) Nevertheless, their perceptions of the uniqueness of the claims vary. Those living separately believe that the most unique claims are those that refer to naturalness, whereas those living with their parents reacted better to claims referring to healthy ingredients. However, at the present moment, neither one of the claims is unique enough to persuade this group.

Two key factors that affect the consumers’ overall attitude towards the product are: brand awareness and confidence in the product’s naturalness. At the moment, Kozelsky is mostly perceived as a brand for the whole family and enjoys positive responses from the basic segments of the target audience when it comes to claims about its naturalness.

1) The responses to claims about the brand in a competitive environment show that the desire to purchase mostly depends on two factors: brand awareness and confidence in the products’ naturalness.

2) It is important to note that Kozelsky, in the case of all the groups (especially the younger ones), is significantly less known than the competitors. This, in its turn, impacts the confidence levels relating to the other aspects of assessment. However, the women that

know the brand well are much more certain in its naturalness.

3) The women were much more confident in their responses as to the family-friendly nature of the Kozelsky brand. Perhaps, this is due to the general perception of this category of products as a whole.

4) It is also worth mentioning that even within the more enthusiastic groups, there is less confidence when it comes to perception of taste and healthy ingredient content. The “young hedonists” are not so certain in their evaluation of the brand’s characteristics: those living separately show a more positive response to claims about health benefits, while those living with their parents are more positive about the modernity of the brand. However, the results still fall short of the threshold necessary for the brand’s further development.

Large federal brands are getting better results than the local ones. Moreover, the products of local brands are considered neither less expensive, nor of a higher quality.

1) Consumers do not expect products from local brands to be cheaper. Yet, price remains an important factor when making the decision to purchase.

2) As a whole, confidence in the superiority of quality and naturalness of local products is also quite moderate.

3) It is safe to assume that women most likely base their evaluation of the brand as a whole on brand awareness and their perception of the basic category characteristics (such as naturalness and health benefits). Most probably, local brands fail to communicate their advantages properly. As a result, consumers display a lack of confidence.

4) Only the “young hedonists” living separately are truly prepared to support local producers by buying their products.

Taking into account the main results of the study, Celebrium Labs would recommend the following:

1) It is necessary to, first and foremost, increase brand awareness. Currently, the brand ranks lower in this regard when compared to competitors, and low brand awareness, in its turn, prevents the improvement of the perception of the other parameters.

2) The older group is already demonstrating a high level of commitment to the brand and supports the positioning of the Kozelsky brand as a natural, high-quality, and healthy product. Women from this segment of the target audience are the brand influencers.

3) An increase in sales in the desserts section is possible if the current packaging gets redesigned, making it more visible to the “young hedonists”. Our hypothesis is that, right now, the packaging does not provide the brand with enough visibility on the storefront and does not reflect the most important characteristics of the products.

4) On top of that, women from the “young hedonists” segment have more faith in Russian producers and in the quality of their products, but do not believe that the products of Russian brands should cost as much as the products of foreign ones. This will make gradually increasing the price of Kozelsky products challenging.

Taking into account the main results of the study, Celebrium Labs would recommend the following:

1) The new packaging should reflect: production in accordance with GOST and the use of natural milk (this will increase attractiveness and confidence), the health benefits of bacterial cultures and protein presented as a benefit for the consumer (will potentially increase level of uniqueness), and information about the use of unique milk processing technologies (as a factor that greatly impacts the desire to purchase).

2) We also recommend that the packaging contains information about the absence of synthetic ingredients and GMOs. This is important to consumers from

all age groups, but does not have the potential of becoming the essential advantage.

3) The design of such brands as EPICA and Valio can be used as an example for the new packaging design, seen as those brands are well-known and are considered attractive by the younger segment of the audience, especially in the dessert category.

4) The dessert campaign tone, style, and subject will be better received if they accentuate the natural character of the brand and the health benefits of its snack products.

Interpretation of the confidence scale.

Table 1

This scale reflects the confidence levels of respondents.

0-20	Very low	The respondent is either uncertain or lying
20-35	Low	
35-50	Moderately low	
50-65	Moderately high	The respondent knows what he or she wants and is certain of it
65-80	High	
80-100	Very high	

Confidence in this case can be defined as the ensemble of conscious and subconscious neural mechanisms that are present in any given individual. The conscious mechanisms can be controlled while the subconscious ones cannot. The aim of the analysis is to gain a deeper understanding of the different levels on which respondents react to the given stimuli: the biological, emotional, cognitive, associative, and assertive levels. When a respondent surpasses the 55-60 threshold on the scale, his or her confidence in a given claim can be viewed as the factor of convergence between the conscious and subconscious neural mechanisms, on the basis of which, we can come to the conclusion that, 87% of the time the respondent's action in real life will coincide with their response.

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