

Field Marketing & POP (Point of Purchase)

Flexible, multi-faceted and highly effective

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"It is a fact of life that people like to deal with people directly. Field marketers interact with staff and customers to raise a brand's profile and win sales."

A decade ago field marketing was something of a mystery – and one that many companies were happy to ignore. But now its importance has been recognised, and if it is not part of your marketing mix, then you may be missing out. Field marketing is a flexible, multi-faceted and highly effective discipline.

Field marketing is the use of merchandising / promotional staff in a marketing campaign to boost sales of a brand. Typically, the field force will distribute product samples and carry out non-brand related tasks that must be in place to maximise sales, such as compliance, auditing and merchandising.

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and win sales. The face-to-face element makes field marketing a powerful medium. Think about it – you can pass a poster ten times a day without paying any attention to what it advertises, but meeting someone who enthuses about it might inspire you to buy it. Field marketing is essentially a sales aid, which when used with effective Point of Purchase and Point of Sale can significantly increase both brand awareness and actual sales.

Word of mouth is not just the oldest form of marketing, it is arguably still the most effective form of marketing. Recent research by Proctor & Gamble childcare brand Pampers has shown that a mother who talks about a product will set off a chain reaction that eventually reaches 1,000 other mothers (Source: Brand Republic).

Industry experts claim 'Field marketing is

probably the most influential marketing discipline when it comes to increasing the profitability of a product. This sector has developed into a sophisticated strategic marketing tool, yielding big rewards and return on investment. It is one of the easiest marketing activities to quantify results, which makes it especially attractive'.

Field marketing began as a way of ensuring that a brand's products are accessible in shops. This is more of an art than you think. Positioning can make the difference between an item that flies off the shelves and one that gathers dust. Many manufacturers make agreements with retailers about how their products will be displayed and promoted. At least 4% of an FMCG product's sales depend on getting this right.

Field marketers also provide 'mystery shopping'

services, posing as ordinary customers to measure the sort of service they receive. This is often used by service based industries such as airlines, hotels etc to make sure their staff are courteous and answer questions correctly. It is a good management and marketing tool which can yield results for future planning.

Field marketers' value is perhaps most visible when they interact directly with consumers. In the past that simply involved handing out product samples, but activities have developed to include a variety of innovative approaches. One such approach is to combine sampling with incentives. In the UK recently Nestle Rowntree ran a promotion called 'Kit Kash', offering prizes such as cars, holidays etc. Field marketing staff visited stores to create high impact displays and boost stock to ensure the promotions' viability. Another more recent example was the Pampers 'World of Babies' Roadshow where Proctor and Gamble aimed to push its Pampers baby brand to the fore of young parent's minds by sharing insights about baby development. A roadshow was created which visited key supermarkets in the UK, allowing parents to see the world through their baby's eyes. Visitors could try on 'impossible shirts', learn to walk on wobbly floors and try writing with giant pencils. To build empathy P&G employed real-life mums to

interact with parents. Visitors received a nappy guide, and Early Learning Centre voucher, while branded T-shirts helped drive immediate sales. Almost 600,000 consumers were exposed to the experience, Research showed a strong word of mouth effect, with each visitor telling three more people about the roadshow, and a third telling six people or more. Overall market share rose 5% as a direct result of the activity.

The world of POP has grown significantly in latter years as a key sales and promotional tool. In essence POP and POP Advertising is a generic term for display units (e.g. retail display stands, showcases, interactive displays, literature dispensers, poster holders, sign holders etc) used to merchandise specific goods and services, or as a vehicle for presenting point-of-sale advertising such as printed leaflets, posters or audio-visual media.

With many purchasing decisions being made at the point-of-purchase, it is important that you make your impact. It's one of the key areas where your sales message has to get through loud and clear. This message is given to the customer via POP sales aids such as: dump bins for product display, shelf talkers, aisle stoppers, end caps and many more.

Finally here's some Do's and Don'ts for Field Marketing

- Do allow plenty of time to plan and implement an activity
- Do involve your specialist agency early on to get the most from its expertise
- Do use demographic data to identify areas where your target audience is most likely to be found
- Do make sure the field team are properly trained and know how best to represent your brand
- Don't forget to set measurement targets
- Don't start a campaign before booking sites, informing your customers if necessary
- Don't neglect other mechanics and media as ways to amplify the activity and make the budget work harder
- Don't buy on cost alone; think in terms of what you can gain.

If you require further information on field marketing contact the field marketing specialists PMM at info@pmms.ie



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