Creating multi-sensory congruency for Carte Noire Instinct® via room atmospherics

J Gater and D M H Thomson, MMR Research Worldwide, UK

Methodology

A two-stage research process was used to identify the optimum combination of room atmospherics (appearance, smell, feel and sound) for reinforcing the sensory characteristics of Carte Noire Instinct® (CNI).

Stage 1 – Preliminary Stimulus Selection:

The defining sensory characteristics of CNI (unbranded product) were identified via informal sensory evaluation.

A preliminary selection of room stimuli vision, odour, touch and sound was made by the researchers on the basis of anticipated congruence with the sensory characteristics of CNI. This was followed by qualitative evaluation of the stimuli, using articulate consumers selected on the basis of sensory aptitude.

Elaboration of the emotional content of the brand ‘Carte Noire’ and the fully branded CNI product was obtained from the same participants to provide a more complete understanding of the product’s conceptual makeup.

These two outputs were then overlaid and the consumers identified four stimuli per modality to take forward to quantitative evaluation.

Stage 2 – Formal Quantitative Evaluation:

185 female, coffee drinking consumers (target market) tasted CNI unbranded and rated it for liking.

Stimuli were selected as the ‘top 4’ (from 23) descriptors for unbranded CNI.

On this basis, the four room stimuli selected to augment Carte Noire Instinct® were Dark Purple, Dark Chocolate, Soft Leather and Jazz Saxophone.

At the subsequent launch event for Kraft Foods UK’s Carte Noire Instinct®, consumers were taken on a ‘multisensory journey’ to experience stimuli that created various degrees of congruence with CNI, finishing with the optimum combination as determined above.

The launch event proved to be a very effective demonstration of how room atmospherics/drink environment can influence what is perceived, how we conceptualise the product and how much it is enjoyed.

Research into product/environment consonance within the food and drink sector has generally focused on broad categories, such as alcohol or coffee (Holst-Hansen, 1968; Crisinel & Spence, 2009; Stafford et al., 2012), rather than specific branded products. This study reports a tailored research approach, conducted by MMR Research Worldwide on behalf of Kraft Foods UK, to identify the environmental atmospherics that create the greatest degree of consonance with the sensory characteristics of ‘Instinct®’, a new instant coffee from Carte Noire (CNI).

References


Contact: j.gater@mmr-research.com or d.thomson@mmr-research.com