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Lexicon/ Marketing Strategy Essay

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Lexicons Explored

Play: The experimentation with surroundings as a form of problem-solving. Play involves some degree of interaction with an object or performance that is considered a product.

Third Space: The space outside of work and home where an event of activity takes place.

When considering arts organizations, the third space is often the institution.

Audience: Those participants taking a 'non-active' role in an event or performance. Often the audience guides decisions in performance and marketing.

Accessibility: The ability of come into contact with an organization or performance.

Accessibility is often measured in terms of education, finances, mobility, and/or intellectual or developmental disability.

Infrastructure: The structure of a community, both physical and virtual, based on manners of communication.

Experiential Marketing

Experiential marketing focuses on an experience as a cultural product to market. Using an experiential marketing strategy combines the knowledge of the background of the organization, establishing a clear message, identifying target audiences, and pulling the information together in the form of an experience (Smilansky, 2009). For many arts organizations that could be seeing a band at a festival, seeing *The Nutcracker* live, or having the chance to see an original Picasso painting. These events have experiences that are directly tied to them that are sometimes marketed as a prior interaction with the cultural product. Teaser videos capture part of the experience while leaving the consumer, hopefully, wanting more. Live demonstrations give the experience of a hands-on interaction with the ultimate goal of bringing new audiences to a venue or institution with the complete experience. While teaser videos are beneficial to the experiential marketing campaign, live demonstrations create an interactive environment that relates to the cultural product.

Experiential marketing takes place in a **third space**. The third space does not have to be identified with a continuous presence or use outside of work and home. In the case of experiential marketing, the use of a space that is not commonly associated with that product but is used as a way of communicating a product is the third space of the marketing campaign. With the examples below from the corporations Samsung and Carlsberg Brewing Co., the third spaces used in the experiential marketing campaign are transitory spaces as well.

The **infrastructure** of a marketing campaign is dependent upon the community that is the foundation of the loyal consumer base. The community infrastructure is comprised of the organization or corporation that is providing the cultural product and the **audience** members. The audience drives the marketing campaign with their demographics and experiences with previous products. With an experiential marketing campaign, the audience is incredibly influential because the difference between a good or bad experience can drastically change future decisions concerning products that organizations are trying to sell.

To date, many corporate organizations have used experiential marketing to draw in a crowd of potential consumers or current consumers that the company would like to convert into loyal customers. For example, in conjunction with the Olympic Games in 2012, Samsung created the experiential marketing campaign called “Samsung Studios” in various locations that see high amounts of foot traffic, such as a traveler’s lounge in Heathrow International (Moth, 2014). This marketing campaign relied heavily on the concept of **play** and it being the basis on an experience. In the Samsung Studios, visitors could experience hands-on demonstrations of the then new products, the Samsung Galaxy S3 and Galaxy Note. To tie into the Olympic theme, Samsung created an Olympic Games app that visitors could play on these new products. In this way, play is being used in a literal sense because the hands-on experience is tied to a game on the product. These Samsung Studios were teasers of these products as the company made the decision to limit these booths as demonstrations only with not merchandise on sale (Moth, 2014).



(“Samsung Opens Galaxy Studio”, 2013)

Another example of current experiential marketing was found in the middle of last year in London. The Danish brewing company, the Carlsberg Group, created a billboard that was very minimalistic in design on Brick Lane (Ratcliffe, 2015). However, this billboard was very low to the ground next to a sidewalk instead of higher in the air by a highway similar to the billboards in the United States. What made this billboard special was the claim that this was “Probably the best poster in the world” (Ratcliffe, 2015). Under this tag line, a single tap came out of the billboard where passersby could experience this beer with a single taste test (Ratcliffe, 2015). These taste tests were monitored by plain-clothes security to maintain the single taste test rule which in turn also maintained that this experience was simply a teaser with no merchandise being sold (Ratcliffe, 2015). A benefit of this particular marketing campaign was the element of **accessibility**. Potential consumers are able to walk down the street and sample Carlsberg Brewing Co.’s new product. There are no physical boundaries for trying this product. A college degree is not

needed to try a cup of beer out of a billboard. Similarly, those with limited mobility such as being wheelchair bound are not excluded from this teaser experience because the tap is not situated higher than they can reach.



(Ratcliffe, 2015)

Both the Carlsberg Group and Samsung created a way for visitors to experience product without obligation or pressure to purchase as a way to build a relationship between consumer and product with a focus on creating a memory through experience.

Conner Prairie

Conner Prairie as an interactive history park is built on the experience of the visitor. In comparison to other third spaces, both virtual and physical, Conner Prairie creates its distinct experience by being separate from home and work as well as modern technology

and society as the visitor steps back in time. The overall community of the interactive history park is comprised of two communities that work together. The first community is built of the interpretive actors that portray civilians, doctors, schoolteachers, fur traders, and Lenape natives. Without these interpretive actors, Conner Prairie would not be considered the living history museum that it is today. The second community is built of the visitors.



(Rothstein, 2011)

The two communities come together to create the community infrastructure of Conner Prairie establishes the experience with an emphasis on play. Rather than using play as a way of problem solving, Conner Prairie uses play as an educational tool. Interacting with history, both with people and forms of technology, visitors can achieve the hands-on experience that many experiential marketing campaigns thrive on. With Conner Prairie focusing on a particular historic era with an educational focus, the main audience of the

living history museum would be elementary school students. Fitting with the state standard curriculum, fourth grade students focus on Indiana state history. However, the focus on education and being a field trip destination has changed the marketing focus concerning the awareness of those families in the surrounding areas that could become potential members. In terms of accessibility, Conner Prairie uses a method that can be adapted from audience to audience with limitations to physical accessibility on the large grounds.

When taking into consideration an experiential marketing campaign, Conner Prairie offers many opportunities that can be used as teasers similar to those in past commercial marketing campaigns as a way to gain audience members and build loyalty to the institution. In taking advantage in some of the smaller demonstrations, such as butter churning and candle dipping, interpretive actors can go outside the park to various community events and schools to share those teaser experiences. For example, a candle dipping display could have a small space at the Talbot Street Art Fair, an annual outdoor event in Indianapolis. The Conner Prairie candle dipping experience has a distinct visual appearance as well as smell that could draw in small crowds to make their own small candles that they can take away with them. With this small set up, small collateral with admission prices and dates as well as membership applications can be available for those that enjoy the experience and want to know more about the organization that is behind this teaser experience.

With the resources available in the Indianapolis community and its surrounding suburbs, Conner Prairie has many events in which to provide a teaser of the experiences that are available at the interactive history park. The advantage of using this experiential marketing strategy comes from a logical thought process: if Conner Prairie is built on experiencing history, why not market it using experiences?

References

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