

# The real california cheese campaign marketing essay



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The Real California Cheese Campaign is a great example of a prosperous, positive promotional campaign. This campaign originated because of a study conducted by the Stanford Research Institute to improve the waning dairy industry in California. The California Milk Advisory Board (CMAB) “ is a state agency responsible for promoting California dairy products” (Belch 297). The CMAB took the information from the study to develop and implement a highly effective integrated marketing communications plan.

In order to have a profitable advertising campaign, there must be an integrated marketing communications plan in place. Our textbook defines integrated marketing communication as, “ a strategic business process used to plan, develop, execute and evaluate coordinated, measureable, persuasive brand communications programs over time with consumers, customers, prospects, employees, associates and other targeted relevant external and internal audiences. The goal is to generate both short-term financial returns and build long-term brand and shareholder value” (Belch 12). The “ Happy Cows” campaign did this for the cheese industry in California. First, there was the planning stage when the CMAB appointed the Stanford Research Institute to conduct a survey. Then the plan was developed and the CMAB decided to put the “ Real California Cheese” seal on all their products for brand identity (Greenwald 1). The integrated marketing communication plan was implemented in 1985. This is when they started promoting “ Real California Cheese” with advertising on television and the radio, in newspapers and magazines, and outdoors. In 1995, the CMAB decided to have an emotional approach to their advertising campaign. During the years 1995 to 2000, the slogan for California cheese was “ It’s the

Cheese.” In the year 2000, under the direction of a new advertising agency, Deutsch LA, the slogan “ Great Cheese comes from Happy Cows. Happy Cows come from California” was introduced (Greenwald 2). In the text video, we watched some of these commercials and they are very funny and entertaining. This campaign portrayed a positive image for California cheese that customers will remember. Our textbook mentions this concept by stating, “ Marketers generally try to create agreeable messages that lead to positive feelings toward the product or service. Humorous messages often put consumers in a good mood and evoke positive feelings that may become associated with the brand being advertised” (Belch 178). Our textbook also points out that, “ Humorous ads are often the best known and best remembered of all advertising messages” (Belch 199). One of the reasons this campaign is so successful is because people of all ages can understand and receive the message they are trying to portray to the customer. Lastly, the process was evaluated to get feedback from customers. During the evaluation process, people were asked if they recognized who the advertiser was in cheese advertisements and where the cheese they buy comes from (Greenwald 16). The integrated marketing communication plan for “ Real California Cheese” is measureable because of the results of these surveys. It is also persuasive because their profits and consumption percentages have rose significantly because of this advertising campaign (Greenwald 7). Another reason this integrated marketing communication plan succeeded so well is that they used so many customer-orientated advertising sales promotional (Belch 23) tools in stores; for example: sampling, demonstrations, coupons, flyers, and banners (Greenwald 4). This success has definitely “ generated both short-term financial returns and build long-

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term brand and shareholder value” (Belch 12) for this company. It initially increased sales, and continues to do so, as proven by the statistics on page 7 (Greenwald).

The “ Real California Cheese” seal played an important role in the success of the entire campaign. This universal indicator shows that the milk used to make the cheese is from California cows (Greenwald 1). Our textbook states that “ Positioning has been defined as ‘ the art and science of fitting the product or service to one or more segments of the broad market in such a way as to set it meaningfully apart from competition”’ (Belch 56). The “ Real California Cheese” seal is what differentiates this cheese from other cheeses in the market and is used as the primary symbol of their company. This seal is on every package of cheese made in California, as well as on restaurant menus that use the California cheese, and coupons for California cheese. This is an integral part of their integrated marketing communication plan. The “ Real California Cheese” seal gives it brand identity (Greenwald 1). Our textbook describes brand identity as, “ a combination of many factors, including the name, logo, symbols, design, packaging, and performance of a product or service as well as the image or type of associations that comes to mind when consumers think about a brand” (Belch 56). It made a big difference to the program because buyers of the cheese as well as products made with California cheese are easily recognized (Greenwald 1).

The advertising agency was assigned to target women ages 25 to 54. They are the main buyer of cheese, have fairly higher earnings than average, and are most likely to be married with a family. They had a yearly budget of \$33 million to spend for developing the campaign (Greenwald 3). The “ Happy  
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Cows” personality that was created can be described as fun and entertaining. They use humor and positive imagery in their advertising campaign. Our textbook points out that, “ One study found that people who enjoy a commercial are twice as likely as those who are neutral toward it to be convinced that the brand is the best” (Belch 167). The pros of the campaign are that they were able to reach out to so many people in different ways. They used many different advertising outlets to reach a wide audience. They use mass marketing to advertise their product on radio and national television, as well as on outside billboards, and transportation shelters. In 2004 and 2005, they used mass marketing during the Super Bowl. They marketed “ Real California Cheese” in stores by giving out coupons and samples. This was all part of their “ identity-building ad campaign” (Greenwald 3). They advertise in retail outlets, in the food service industry, and at various trade shows as well (Greenwald 3-5). They actively advertised their campaign, making sure it was positive, and included the “ Real California Cheese” seal. The con of this advertising approach is that it costs a lot of money to maintain. No advertising approach can be continued indefinitely. As we saw in the text video, they have added different animals in their commercials, such as bulls and sheep, which give the commercials more variety. Since internet advertising is constantly growing, they will need to expand their advertising presence on the internet. They already have their own website, but they should expand to advertising on other websites, such as Google or Facebook, which is very popular these days.

There are three main consumer promotion tools used by the CMAB, “ cross-promotions in-store that utilize instant redeemable coupons, in-store product

sampling, and self-liquidating premium offers” (Greenwald 5). These tactics allow customers to save money, not only on the cheese, but also with products that go with cheese. It allows potential customers to try before they buy the products. They can also have souvenirs of the “ Happy Cow” campaign with merchandise bought from the website. This way is used to reinforce the advertising by keeping the merchandise fresh in the consumers’ mind with the primary objective of repeat customers (Greenwald 5).

Public relations is used as part of the integrated marketing communications program by having articles in premium food magazines tout their many awards for their advertising as well as recipes that use “ Real California Cheese”. Along with their advertising awards, they have won international cheese competitions that are covered by the press. Stories about how the cheese is made are also part of their public relations program. They use different types of magazines and newspapers depending on the angle of interest of the target audience. Not only magazines centered on food are used, but also travel magazines or travel sections of the newspaper are used to reach different audiences (Greenwald 6).

The “ Real California Cheese” website homepage exhibits the certification seal for “ Real California Cheese”. This is one way that the seal reinforces the integrated marketing communications program. Other things on the website are: videos of television ads, “ Happy Cow” merchandise and cheese for sale, coupons, maps, recipes, articles, game section for kids, professional section for chefs and restaurant operators (Greenwald 6). All of these things support the other parts of the integrated marketing communications program by <https://assignbuster.com/the-real-california-cheese-campaign-marketing-essay/>

putting their name and logo out there so it stays prominent in the customer's mind (Greenwald 5).

The CMAB used customer surveys to evaluate their IMC program (Greenwald 16). They have won many awards for their creative "Happy Cows" campaign, so this is another way it has been evaluated. The company's statistics give a numerical indication of the success of the campaign. The cheese production has significantly increased since the start of the campaign because of the increasing demand for "Real California Cheese", even internationally (Greenwald 7). Customer satisfaction is a very big part of the success of any campaign. Therefore, they should continue with the coupons and sampling of the product and focus on that.

Customer trends are ever changing and no one really knows what the next trend will be. I came up with a few ideas, and then looked at the Real California Cheese website, and most of them were already on there. The Real California Cheese website is full of useful information and different activities ([www.realcaliforniacheese.com](http://www.realcaliforniacheese.com)). One idea that I am pretty sure they have not done yet is having a "Happy Cow" jingle about "Real California Cheese". The cows could hum the jingle while they are grazing contently in the pasture. Janice and Diane could sing the jingle on radio commercials. This jingle could be made into a ring-tone for cell phones. This would reinforce their message by keeping it prominent in the customer's mind (Greenwald 5). Another idea I thought of is to have a "Happy Cow" costume that an employee could wear at events, such as trade shows. This "Happy Cow" character could be at a restaurant when they first introduce Real

California Cheese on the menu, like a grand opening ceremony. The “ Happy Cow” character would definitely carry the “ Real California Cheese” seal.

The California Milk Advisory Board really got it right when they came up with this integrated marketing communications plan. They went through all the stages of a successful integrated marketing communications plan: plan, develop, execute, and evaluate (Belch 12). It has all the elements of success. It is appropriate for all ages, humorous, creative, positive, and non-offensive. The website contains a wealth of information about “ Real California Cheese”, including recipes, coupons, sustainability, and nutritional information. There are also fun activities, videos, pictures, and contests ([www. realcaliforniacheese. com](http://www.realcaliforniacheese.com)).