

Consumer brand activations help you develop a positive perception of your brand



By [Michelle Storey](#), issued by [Tradeway](#)

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Take a moment to think about the top brands that you consume - what tech you prefer to purchase, what cars you hold in high regard, even the grocery stores you choose to shop at - and ask yourself how you came to value them. The answer lies in a process known as brand activation, the different elements of which I will explore in this article.

This marketing process is about building a positive brand image through a range of strategic, creative marketing ideas and events. By getting to the heart of consumer interests, these brand positioning campaigns inspire demand by connecting with customers at the right time and place through in-person experience events that submerge the consumer in a positive brand experience.

Promotional marketing strategies

A key element to successful brand activation involves promotional marketing aimed at your target consumer group, which can include businesses, retailers, wholesalers or end consumers.

Through the use of loyalty programs, giveaways, product sampling, point-of-sale displays and special offers, brands allow consumers the opportunity to engage with the brand and sample products for themselves in a positive and rewarding environment.

Combining these promotional tools with workshops, event sponsorships and trade show booths will deliver exposure while placing your brand amongst other valuable industry leaders or directly into your consumer's interests.

Three steps to creating brand activation that promotes engagement

1. **Know your goals:** What actions do you want your consumers to take? How would you like consumers to interact with your brand? What values would you like them to associate with your brand? By articulating your goals clearly, a targeted strategy can be developed that keeps your message on-brand and consistent.
2. **Leverage your activation:** A successful activation needs the perfect timing and exposure, so ensure that paid advertising, programming, digital strategies, public relations and other advertising channels are involved for a precision rollout.
3. **Make it last:** Brand activation is a process of constantly – and consistently aligning the brand with consumer values in order to keep the conversation going and transform customers into brand advocates. It's not enough to focus on one event – brands need to prioritise connecting with consumer emotions to ensure they care about the brand itself.

Three brand activation pitfalls

1. **Dismissing strategy:** Brand activation is a massive process that involves every level of a business, so comprehensive, detailed strategies are key. Done right, it creates a consistent, positive message where consumers become active in spreading your brand's message and values. Done incorrectly, it results in confusion, mixed messages and failure.

2. **Limited commitment:** This process is simply not going to bring in the right results if every aspect of the brand is not fully committed to this change. It is not enough to revamp a logo and identity – it is a symbol of much greater change where efforts are fully aligned to business strategy and embraced by the public.
3. **Not looking ahead:** Brand activation is not a once-off event or even a campaign – it's a complete and on-going commitment that needs to be renewed in each and every marketing campaign. Once the brand is launched, the real work actually begins.

Strategic elements of brand activation

Without the right mix of strategy and creativity, a solid brand activation campaign will quickly fall apart. Just as the campaign needs to captivate the emotions of your consumers, so your product needs the right amount of time on the market and the right promotional elements in order to make the maximum impact. Essential strategic elements include:

- **Conversion targets:** Determining the measure of communication against actual action.
- **Sales targets:** For example, implementing a direct action like scanning a coupon at till points in order to record sales.
- **Communication targets:** Set your targets beforehand to determine how many engagements need to take place with the consumer audience.
- **Calls to action:** Prepare calls to action in line with the brand activation to launch support on social media, etc.
- **Promotion product distribution:** Determine how many promotional items are to be distributed and where they will be distributed during the event.
- **Measure results independently:** Put measures in place to independently monitor and report on changing consumer behaviours and perceptions of your brand.

ABOUT MICHELLE STOREY

Michelle Storey is CEO and founder of Tradeway, results-driven marketing specialists in customised promotions, brand activations and experiential marketing solutions for leading local and international brands.
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