Creating an Authentic and Memorable Onboard Experience:

- Positioning Techniques and Future Outlook
What are we going to talk about?

- **Airline Brand Equity**
  - Branding Trends

- **Sensory Evaluation**
  - Basic brand sensory issues
  - Sensory questions, and developing the right instruments and scales
  - Types of passenger sensory tests
    - Setting up the right tests and the importance of protocols
    - Evaluating results and putting them to use
  - Sensory panels overview

- Quantitative Descriptive Analysis (QDA)
imagine....
Airline Brand Equity: Overview

Airline brand equity model (adapted from Aaker, 1991).

Airline Brand Equity

Perceived Quality

Airline Brand Awareness

Airline Brand Associations

Airline Brand Loyalty
1. Pre-usage
2. Post-usage

Other Proprietary Airline Brand Assets
Sensory relationship between an airline brand and a passenger
1. sight
2. sound
3. touch
4. smell
5. taste
Airline Branding Trends

• Brands are more about people
• Passengers prefer authentic, realistic airline brands
Airline Branding Trends

• Brands are more about people
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Airline Branding Challenges

Airline brand warfare hotspots (Kefallonitis & Sackett, 2002)

airline offering    communicating media    consumer understanding

Specific elements of brand warfare (e.g. brand commonality)
commonality
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APEX Asia
November 2013

Day One
blue?
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Why is sensory evaluation important in analysing airline food & beverage trends?
Passenger Cognitive Process

- Consumers (passengers) skim myriads of messages and only keep those of significant importance

- Interesting and useful messages are kept in memory
Passenger Cognitive Process

- Airline brand extension as aesthetics keeps the brand alive
- A brand forms a personality based on consumer meaning attach to it, and its perceptive value

Human Perception Measures (Kefallonitis, 2013; Cook, 1992)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>We learn most through:</th>
<th>We remember:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taste 3%</td>
<td>10% of what we read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touch 6%</td>
<td>20% of what we hear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smell 3%</td>
<td>30% of what we see</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing 13%</td>
<td>50% of what we see and hear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sight 75%</td>
<td>80% of what we say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90% of what we say as we do</td>
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What are the basic food & beverage sensory elements?
Food & beverage sensory elements

▶ Taste
  ▪ Basic taste sensations
    + Salt
    + Sweet
    + Sour
    + Bitter
    + Umami
  ▪ Top notes (generally recognisable flavour directions i.e.: orange, cheese, etc.)
  ▪ Heat (chilli) and cooling (mint)

▶ Smell
▶ Texture
▶ Appearance
▶ Aural (sound – crunchy, mushy, etc.)
What are the different things we need to learn about each (in the food & beverage context)?

- Taste
- Smell
- Texture
- Appearance
- Aural (sound)
Asking the right sensory questions...

Preference/Acceptance/Comparison
- ‘Do I like it or not?’
  - Do I like the taste, colour, texture, smell, appearance, sound, type of flavour, the intensity of all of these attributes?
- Which do I like better?

Recognition – fit with expectation
- ‘Is it what I expected?’
  - EXAMPLE: The expectation of vanilla is very different from region to region, depending on tradition/experience
- ‘Does it fit with the form/category?’
  - EXAMPLE: Savoury flavours in milk are in most cultures seen as unsuitable

Intensity (strength)
- ‘Is it too weak; just right; too strong?’

Difference
- Particularly useful for QC/QA, off-note testing, shelf-life, etc.

Sustained consumption
- ‘Can I eat/drink more than just a small taste?’

Consistent and understandable description
- Particularly useful in QC/QA, purchasing (i.e. tea, coffee, etc.), NPD
Types of scales
Measuring the answers to the sensory questions

➤ Hedonic
  - Preference, acceptance, PERSONAL OPINION
  - 2 point, 3 point, 5 point, 7 point, 9 point
  - ‘Smiley’ scales for kids

➤ Just About Right (JAR)
  - Determining acceptability of an intensity of an attribute

➤ Line scales
  - Description

➤ Any understandable method of evaluating
  - A, B, Cs – Stars – etc
  - MUST BE UNDERSTOOD and/or EASY TO EXPLAIN
Quantitative Descriptive Analysis (QDA)
QDA is good for...

- Product fingerprinting
- Product development testing
- Competitive product comparison
- Storage/shelf-life testing
- Quality control monitoring
- Independent verification of data
How QDA works
A brief overview

▶ Group is tested and trained on tasting procedures, but also on basic taste sensations and various descriptors/attributes
▶ Samples are discussed using a tasting range – they agree most important sensory attributes (and refer to the references)
▶ At a separate session, the group tastes the samples and evaluates them (usually on a line scale) from ‘0’ (no detection of the attribute) to ‘100’ (a significantly high level of the attribute – note: this is subjective, but it ‘evens out’ in the panel after training and experience.
▶ The mean scores (with SD) are plotted (usually on a star-chart) and the ‘fingerprint’ is created.
▶ The samples can be compared by looking at the various ‘fingerprints’
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Desirable Characteristics Of Descriptors/Attributes For QDA

- Discriminating/differentiating
- Not redundancies/repetitive
- Relate to consumer acceptance/rejection
  - It is important to understand the attributes that ARE important
- Precise and consistent
- Able to achieve panel’s consensus on definition/reference
- Clear
- Reference attribute is easy to obtain and understand
- Easy to communicate
- Relates to the real ‘world’
QDA Evaluation

- Actual product evaluation is usually in isolation in booths
- Intensity of attributes is rated on unstructured line scale
- All descriptive evaluations should be about perceived intensity and should be free of hedonic responses
- Variables like lighting, rinsing, timing and sample coding are controlled
- Replications within subjects required (≈ 6 times)
Use of QDA

- Complete description of sensations associated with the product
- From initial visual assessment to aftertaste
- Can also judge a narrow range of attributes
Competitive Comparison

Cookies

(Source: http://www.sensoryanalysiscenter.com/example4.html)
It is also useful to merge QDA information with consumer preference data...
When a concise understanding of large amounts of data is needed, you can apply multivariate statistics to find the relationships among large numbers of products with many sensory characteristics.

In this example, principal component analysis was applied to further understand the relationship between consumer overall liking scores and the product characteristics as determined by descriptive sensory analysis (10 sensory attributes) for 22 different products.

(Source: http://www.sensoryanalysiscenter.com/example3.html)
Preference/Acceptance/Comparison

+
- Determines overall preference
- Help to identify attributes
- Must be done with target consumer groups
- Difficult for passengers to differentiate perception of one attribute if they dislike other attributes
- Significance is usually difficult for similar samples
- Other aspects (than that being tested) can sway the response
**Recognition/Fit with expectation**

**+**
- Form expectations regarding brands or flavours
- Used as a vehicle to communicate whole brand/packaging

**-**
- If a product does not meet expectation, it does not necessarily mean that it is not preferred.
Intensity

+ Important to assist in helping to understand whether there is ‘too much’ or ‘not enough’ of an attribute in a product

- The concept of the scale is difficult to teach
- Separating some attributes can be difficult for consumers
  - Relatively easy are sweetness, colour intensity (though difficult to ascertain if it is intensity or hue), and texture (ie crunchy)
Difference

+ Particulariy useful for off-note detection and ‘matching’ programmes

− The ‘different product’ can be preferred - if using a consumer panel it can be useful to include a preference question as well
Descriptive

+

- Particularly useful to understand similarities and differences of products in a category (competitive set analysis)
- Useful when taking a sensory trend from one category and transferring it to another

- Needs a greater commitment to training and resource
  - It can be outsourced or an agency can be hired to conduct projects
- Can be a substantial investment to set-up the proper facilities, software, staffing, etc.
Sensory Protocols
A few important considerations

► It is important to set up specific and duplicable system
  ▪ A script needs to be developed and read to each group of respondents
  ▪ Colour of cups, plates, etc. to be neutral
  ▪ Amount of serving to be the same
  ▪ Temperature of products needs to be the same
  ▪ If the product uses a condiment (ie sugar, ketchup, salt, mayonnaise), then this needs to be measured and identical for each sample
  ▪ In many situations the light needs to be controlled (to reduce difference perceptions)
  ▪ External smells need to be controlled (ie no cooking samples in tasting area, no perfumed soaps or fragrances by the serving team, etc)

► Samples must be rotated – there is an ‘order effect’ that must be minimised

► Timing between samples should be monitored – and enough ‘resting time’ needs to be in-between samples

► Neutralisers (water, plan wafer biscuits without salt, puffed rice, etc) need to be consumed between samples
Examples from other industries
smell
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touch
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Day One

Introducing the world’s first iPad inflight entertainment system.
(coming sooner than you think)
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taste
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co-branding?
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Thank you – questions?

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