

10 things brands must do to drive profitable brand growth within a product category

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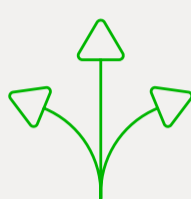
1



Create a difference that has the potential to be meaningful

Competitive advantage can be found in design, route to customer, service, purpose, positioning or communications not just product innovation. Innovation must differentiate the brand from competition and must address a functional and/or emotional need to be meaningful. Test the innovation's potential to appeal to a wider audience than the existing user base.

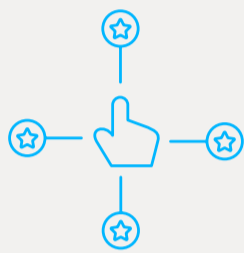
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Maximise availability and ensure your brand is easy to choose

Ensure maximum availability and seek new ways to allow customers easy access to your brand. Make sure the brand's presence within a retail channel is obvious. Make purchasing 'frictionless.' Remove any current barriers to purchase. Seek ways to make purchasing easier.

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Amplify your brand's meaningful difference

Make sure the brand's meaningful difference is obvious to all. Reflect it in every touch point and consumer interaction with the brand in order to create coherent mental "real estate" and a strong predisposition to buy. Create positive anticipation of usage based on the meaningful difference in order to enhance people's experience. Ensure brand can live up to its promise.

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Ensure product and equity justify the brand's price point

Ensure the brand's meaningful difference justifies its price point and helps return a better margin or higher demand (remember that margin improvement will have a greater impact on the bottom line than an increase in volume). When variants are sold under the same brand name but at different price points make sure the perceived value of each offer is well-differentiated.

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Ensure your brand is distinctive

Recognition automatically triggers instinctive desire based on pre-existing brand associations. Build and leverage distinctive brand assets to ensure recognition. Assets will include design and logos but can extend to many different properties including celebrities, images, sensory experiences, rituals, jingles and and tone of voice. Consistently integrate assets into communications and experience to build mental connectivity and then leverage assets to trigger positive associations during search and shopping.

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Make your brand salient

Invest in paid communications to ensure brand is thought of when a relevant need or occasion arises. Invest more in SOV than SOM to improve salience relative to competition. Leverage that spend with compelling creative designed to establish and strengthen strong, brand-linked, memory structures to influence purchase now and for the future. A consistent idea, rooted in the brand's meaningful difference but refreshed with new executions, will help build strong memory structures. Stimulate positive word of mouth and social buzz.

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Maximise retention of existing customers

Every retained customer is one less that needs to be acquired in order for the brand to grow. Deliver a consistently positive, memorable customer experience that lives up to what the brand promises. Fix problems promptly and create experiences that delight and inspire. Find ways to facilitate repurchase and bypass search and shopping.

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Give your brand the greatest possible exposure

Aim to reach and influence all potential buyers. Within the available budget, choose media channels that combine to maximize effectiveness and make the brand's meaningful difference salient, then target specific needs and behaviours. Find the right balance between demand generation and activation for your brand and category. Adapt creative to each media channel and continually optimize reach and frequency.

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Trigger desire during search and shopping

Three quarters of growth comes from people predisposed to choose a specific brand. Ensure brand recognition at POP to trigger pre-existing positive associations among the predisposed. Ensure POP content triggers perceptions of immediate relevance and conveys the brand's meaningful difference. Use price promotion strategically to drive penetration and satisfy retail partners but do not rely on it to drive volume, otherwise consumers will come to expect deals and perceived value will be undermined.

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Continue to innovate or risk disruption

Stay true to the brand's meaningful difference and add real value for the brand's primary target audience. Stay alert for changes in consumer needs and context that create new opportunities or which might demand revitalisation. Ensure that all types of innovation add incremental sales: new users, new occasions, new value or new premiums. Do not fragment the brand with meaningless and line extensions.



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