



NEWS



Summer 2009

Simply...Summer

As temperatures in Kansas heat up, consumers' minds turn toward family reunions, celebrations and outdoor entertaining. How can your business benefit from this?

Due to the changing economy, people are spending less on big ticket items and staying closer to home for entertainment. Sales of high quality food and beverages, as well as day trips, are on the rise in comparison to week-long vacations, dining out and other major expenditures.

Placing your product as one to share with friends, either as gifts for birthdays or July 4th parties, or for guests to enjoy, are good ways to keep your image fresh in the consumers' mind. A variety of Simply Kansas products, from BBQ sauces and rubs; sweet treats to finish off the meal; and meat, fruits and vegetables, will be in high demand for entertaining at home this summer.

Simply Kansas on Facebook

The Simply Kansas program is on Facebook. The Facebook fan page promotes Kansas products and companies to consumers in a new and innovative way. Fans continue to subscribe to the page each day, with numbers nearing 200 in the first month. This tool increases exposure to consumers interested in supporting quality Kansas companies. Entries on the page encourage fans to visit SimplyKansas.com for product information through the on-line directory. Regular posts highlight recipes, articles of interest, Simply Kansas events and featured member companies.

The Kansas Department of Commerce utilizes this social networking tool to reach a consumer audience; increasing awareness of the Simply Kansas brand and therefore promoting member companies.

You may want to create your own Facebook pages to promote products and share information. Tailor your posts to meet the needs of your target audience. Once on Facebook, be sure to become a fan of the Simply Kansas page. This is one more place to have your information on the Internet.

Small Business Tidbit -by Scott Taddiken

The stock market may be down, but Hershey's sales are up! We've all heard the doom and gloom of the economy for some time now, but small luxuries in the form of a gourmet or specialty treat are still within the reach of most consumers. Knowing this creates an opportunity for you.

As budgets get tight, many business owners start trimming the marketing budget -often a big mistake! Instead, while your competitors are backing off their marketing, experiment with some new, positive and fun ideas. Maybe an online contest could help you capture some of the market share. Don't overlook the value of letting your potential customers sample your products.

Finally, don't forget your loyal customers, the ones who will stick with you, consistently referring your product to others. Stay in touch with a quick "thank you" note or an e-mail newsletter; and let them know you appreciate their business. Above all, don't quit marketing!

Provided by the Kansas Small Business Development Center

Who's Your Target Market?

Have you asked yourself this question as you formulate your business plan and marketing strategy? When it comes to consumers, your customer, one size does not fit all. While there are many factors to take into account during planning, the terms Baby Boomer, Generation X and Gen Y may need to be part of your vocabulary.

Here are two examples of why each generation is different. A recent NPD Group study, based on the past five years, shows that Boomers (age 50-64) are going out to eat more often while young adults (18-24) are going out to eat less. In addition, while certain consumer generations are known for brand/company loyalty, not so with the latest crop of the spending public. Generation Y (18-29), the "most diverse population America has ever had," according to trendologist Kara Nielsen with the Center for Culinary Development, is ready to try new products and flavors but always looking for the next best thing.

As you formulate your company's annual marketing plan or ponder whether or not to launch a new product, the concept of generational marketing may be something you want to explore. Simply going online can provide the first steps—understanding the

four most common generations of today: Matures born between 1909 and 1945, Baby Boomers born between 1946 and 1964, Generation X'ers born between 1965 and 1980 and Millennials or Gen Y'ers born after 1980. While each generation is similar, there are some stark differences in their views on life, ways of spending their free time, and of course, their consuming habits.

Knowledge of America's generations will allow you to determine if your product fits all generations or specific ones. This knowledge will allow you to then decide the best approach to efficiently and effectively spend your marketing dollars.

Value-Added Loan Program Available

The Rural Development Division offers technical and financial support for the creation and expansion of producer-based alliances and value-added businesses through the Value-Added Loan program. These competitive loans fall into three categories: the Agritourism Attraction Development Loan Program, designed to assist new and existing agritourism businesses enhance their business operations; the Diversified Farm and Specialty Production Loan Program, structured to aid agricultural producers with the transition to non-traditional crops or livestock as a means to add value to the farm; and the

Agriculture Value-Added Loan Program for all other value-added ventures.

The loans offer competitive interest rates –0 percent for the first two years, followed by 1 percent over Kansas City prime for the remaining term of the loan - as well as flexible terms of repayment. Applications are funded on a State fiscal year basis (July 1 to June 30); the deadline for applications is May 25th of each year. Applications received after the May deadline will be considered for funding in the following fiscal year, with funds available after July 25th. For more information on the program, please visit our website at www.kansascommerce.com or contact Mari Tucker by phone at: (785) 296-6080 or e-mail mtucker@kansascommerce.com.

Simply Kansas Web site Tip

If you would like to be a featured company of the month on the Simply Kansas Website, please send your information to slarison@kansascommerce.com along with a company profile.

For more information about marketing opportunities, contact:

Kansas Department of Commerce
Rural Development Division
1000 S.W. Jackson, Suite 100
Topeka, KS 66612
(785) 296-3737
FAX: (785) 296-3776
ruraldev@kansascommerce.com