

Mark A. Mitchell Robert A. Orwig, (2002), "Consumer experience tourism and brand bonding", *Journal of Product & Brand, Management*, Vol. 11 Iss 1 pp. 30 – 41

Building a bond between customer and brand using the tool of touristic attractions. That is what the article of Mark A. Mitchell and Robert A. Orwig is all about. The authors define the notion of CET: consumer experience tourism. Which is a leisure experience that the buyer will have linked to the brand.

There are many different ways of creating CET: museums linked to the brand or with apparition of the brand in it, wine tasting tours, plant tours, breweries offering on the spot maid beers or stores showcasing the production process. With the evolution to the service economy, it has become more and more popular to visit industries and discover how products are done practically. However, due to industrial espionage the number of visit of factory has been reduced. Recently, a new way of CET developed: virtual plant tour. It permits consumer to enter virtually the company and follow production even when it takes place far away from their home.

Using CET has many different advantages compared to traditional ways of advertising. Most of all, it allows a stronger involvement of the customer. The word of mouth and the feeling of belonging is way stronger with touristic experiences than what could be achieved with any other marketing strategies. Consequently, the buyer will be way more loyal and this loyalty is incredibly valuable for the company.

For a CET to operate well, the location of it is determinant. It should be situated according to 3 criterions: where there is a positive economic growth, in a region with well-developed transportation systems and where there are already existing hospitality accommodations.

This new approach to marketing allows the company to reach 3 different publics: current and potential consumers, business partners and community stakeholders. First, it becomes a low-cost entertainment for families, community groups, travelers or business groups. Second, it gives the chance to coworkers to know perfectly the company and for partners to trust the brand. And finally, it is an effective way to communicate positively to the community surrounding the business.

When CET are successful, the company reaches many different outcomes such as improving the company image, educate the population in the surroundings, permit a good communication between the company and its partners and stimulate the local economy.

In conclusion, the merging between tourism and marketing is positive for both of the actors. The company builds a better customer-brand relationship and, on the other hand, the buyer experience a unique and cheap form of leisure.

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