

CASE STUDY

SALES STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT: REGIONAL COFFEE BRAND

BACKGROUND

The Coffee Services Division (CSD) of a regional coffee brand manages the distribution of their most popular products including a wide variety of roast types available in grounds or k-cup pods to restaurants, convenience stores, hotels and offices. As the brand expands its regional and national footprint, it asked MDRG to conduct research to further its understanding of food service buyers within the key segments of the CSD in order to choose and develop a cohesive selling strategy.

OBJECTIVES & METHODOLOGY

The primary goal of the research was to understand coffee purchase decisions by corporate decision makers across hotels, convenience store chains, restaurant groups and business offices in order to help develop marketing and sales strategies around the benefits and advantages of switching to their coffee service. MDRG conducted two concurrent research projects: qualitative research with convenience store chains and food service customers, and quantitative research with office customers.

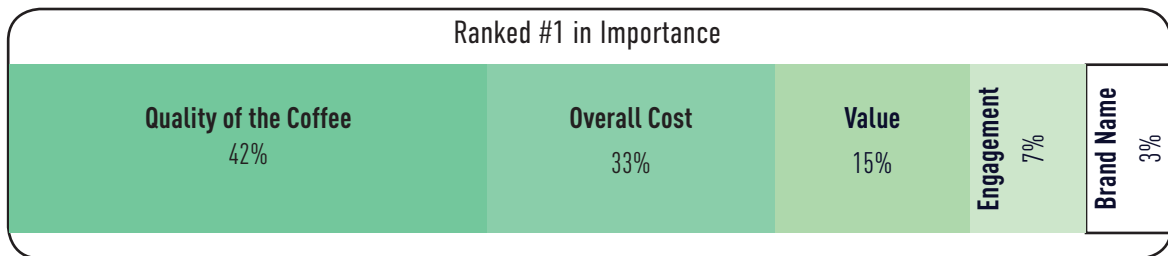


KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE RESEARCH

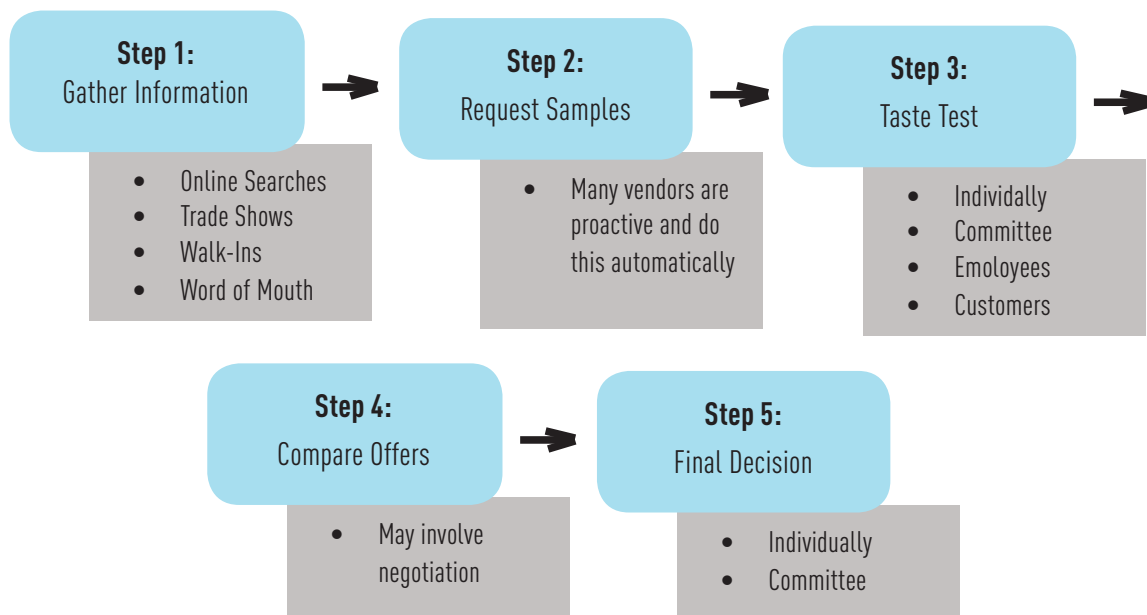
1 WHEN IT COMES TO SELECTING A PROVIDER, QUALITY AND TASTE ARE THE FIRST HURDLES TO OVERCOME. COST BECOMES A KEY CONSIDERATION WHEN FURTHER ALONG IN THE PROCESS.

The quantitative research found clearly that quality was most important followed by cost. Similarly, the qualitative study offered some additional detail around the process but also found that only after coffee passed the taste test did price become a consideration.

Quantitative Study Results



Qualitative Study Results



KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE RESEARCH



2 THERE WERE DIFFERENCES IN HOW THE BRAND'S COFFEE PRODUCT SHOULD BE POSITIONED TO EACH SEGMENT.

The quantitative research with office coffee buyers indicated that the impact on employee morale is the most important message to communicate, followed by messaging around the coffee beans and flavor.

Rank	Likely Adopters - Ranking of Phrases
1	A great cup of coffee goes a long way with employees. It can improve morale and work performance.
2	Coffee X offers a variety of premium blends, including Breakfast Blend, 100% Columbia Altura, and extra dark French Roast coffee.
3	Your first month of coffee from Company X is free.
4	Company X offers coffee roasted only with 100% Select Arabica Coffee Beans - for rich flavor, delicate aroma, and a smooth, satisfying finish.
5	Coffee can be the social fabric of the workplace. The right coffee can make workers feel better about the company.
6	A simple benefit, like a quality coffee program, pays off in reduced employee turnover and easier recruiting of new employees.
7	Company X offers World-Class Service.
8	Treating employees to premium blends demonstrates your commitment to them.
9	Company X offers state-of-the-art brewing equipment.

The qualitative research found that convenience stores and restaurants valued the service the brand offers, and described them as more of a partner than a vendor.

“ To be honest with you, the coffee is great. My customers love it. And the salesman, the drivers, the service - it is the best that I have ever dealt with. Whenever I have a problem, all I have to do is call...So it is really the easiest part of my job. ”

Food Service Customer

KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE RESEARCH



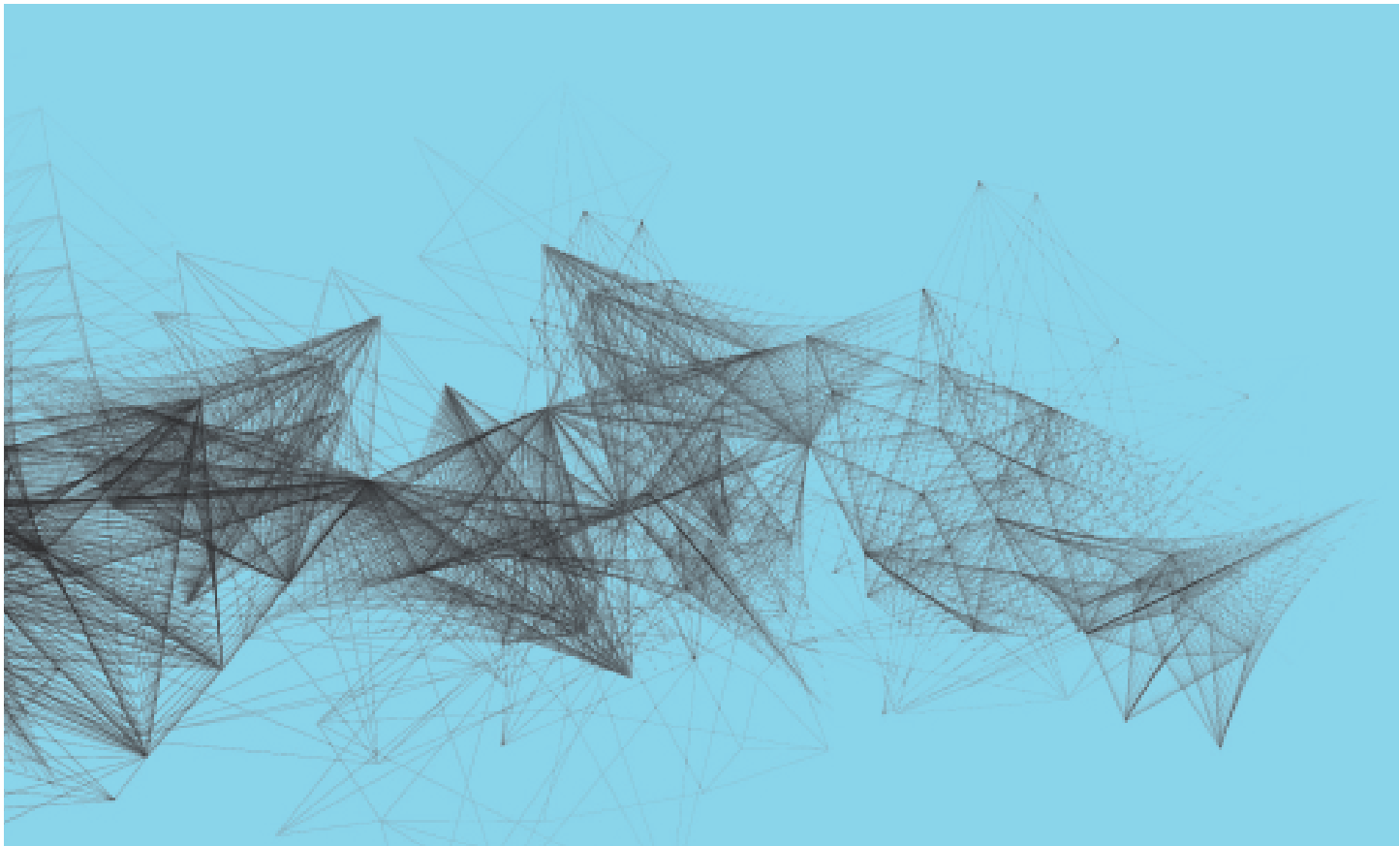
3 THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH OFFERED INSIGHT INTO THE SERVICES CSD PROVIDES TO CONVENIENCE STORES AND RESTAURANTS.

Researchers were able to categorize the service offerings of CSD and offer insight into the value associated with each.



BUSINESS IMPLICATIONS

- + The client leveraged these findings to develop comprehensive sales and marketing strategies unique to each vertical.
- + Leveraging the sales cycle developed in the qualitative work, messages were created for each phase that spoke directly to the pain point at hand.
- + Integrating research findings into their sales and marketing strategies allowed for cohesion between the two departments and increased efficiency when developing marketing materials.



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