

Chicken Fillets or Mouse Guts: Which Will You Advertise?

Cats have very different taste buds than humans. Unfortunately for pet owners (consumers), we're the ones that end up buying the cat food.

Pet food companies have figured this out. That's why you see pet foods in flavors that humans like. If Purina made cat food in flavors that cats would really want, humans would never buy them.

Ask a hungry cat what he'd really like to eat right now. What do you think he'd say?

Mouse Guts.

So why does Purina Cat Chow only come in flavors like Seafood Blend and Savory Chicken? Because we pet owners are the ones making the buying decisions for our cats... and we'd rather have them eat something that doesn't turn our stomachs.

If cats could understand and act on advertising, here's what you'd hear on the radio:

"Hey, cats... it's a crisp, steamy fall morning, and you're fresh from the morning kill. It's what you live for... find a mouse, bat it around, and then proudly bring it home for breakfast. That's why we created Purina Cat Chow with Mouse Guts... so you can re-live that moment and enjoy the taste you crave each and every time your owner remembers to fill your bowl. Purina Cat Chow with Mouse Guts. It's what you want. Right now."

To some of you, this is pretty funny stuff. To others, it makes you a little queasy. That's good. Advertising is supposed to move you in some way.

What does *your* advertising make your customers do?

Some of you are writing advertising that only pleases you. You may think it's really important that people know you've been in business since 1971. (Mouse guts.) You just remodeled your entryway. (Mouse guts.) Your delivery trucks all just got new tires. (Mouse guts.) It makes your mouth water to hear those things. For everyone else, it just doesn't apply to their lives. It's all Mouse Guts to them.

In fact, it's worse than mouse guts. At least with mouse guts, people have a reaction of some kind. With advertising that only *you* care about, a much worse thing happens. No one else cares. And they tune you out.

The opposite of love is not hate. It's indifference.

Is your advertising suffering from indifference? If you're not selling benefits that someone will drool over (the equivalent of a tender, juicy bar-B-Q chicken fillet sandwich), you're wasting your ad money.

And if your ads only appeal to those people who don't make a difference to your bottom line (i.e., cats), maybe it's time you re-adjusted your advertising focus.

Here are the two questions you must answer: What do your potential customers crave? And how is that craving satisfied by you?

Let me repeat that, because it's that important.

What do your potential customers crave?

And how is that craving satisfied by you?

Write that down somewhere. Bring it to your next team briefing or sales meeting, and ask everyone to answer these two questions, either on a sheet of paper or in a group discussion forum. Focus your energies on them, and listen to what the group is saying. You'll find that the resulting advertising messages you create will improve measurably.

Everything else is mouse guts.

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