

People buy pubs not beer

Success Story

Summary: Creating pub experiences aligned to values modes drive strong results and has evolved the pub experience dramatically over the last decade.

Starting State

A large, traditional English brewing corporation was forced, by legislation, to make a choice between brewing and inn keeping. Deciding on inn keeping, they knew they needed to begin mass branding their outlets if they were to leverage the power of their thousands of locations.

Conventional thinking was to present their pubs as “open for everyone” and hope that enough people would come through the doors to meet their profitability targets.

We were called in to help develop new concepts for pub chains that specifically appealed to specific market segments.

Research & Analysis

Our values research revealed that frequent pub going was a young activity, concentrated into a few years between 16 and 25. The 25 to 30 year olds were more frequent than the over 30's but not as frequent as the under 25's.

It was found that the most frequent users were Prospectors, followed by the Pioneers, with the Settlers making up the numbers.

Through a series of workshops, working with values data, we guided the concept development and design of pub concepts targetted at very specific groups.

Our client came to understand that a pub that appealed to everyone was unlikely to get the *loyalty of anyone*. Each of the three Maslow Groups could be slightly satisfied by the lowest common denominator approach of the pub but would most likely go find another that felt “more like me” – “my kind of place”

Recommendations and Actions

A concept test program was set up in the high street of 6 towns in which three pub concepts (some almost adjacent) to appeal to young, single people within each Maslow Group - Pioneers (All Bar One), Prospectors (Edwards) and Settlers (The Granite).

We recommended that the research and development should be phased over several years, developing the estate of outlets along the lines of high street outlets, suburban outlets and then restaurant outlets and then leisure outlets.

Essentially, this was a hierarchy based on the impact on profitability of the different types of outlet and the ease with which a new brand could be spread.

Outcomes

As predicted the idea of creating different retail outlets with distinct brands within the high street pub market was a huge success. The dynamic within the high streets of Britain's city centres was changed as other pub chain owners attempted to follow suit.

The rolling programme has now been applied to suburban and village outlets. It was then applied to new concepts of restaurant chains, but based on the different Values Modes preferences for dining in a drinking outlet.

This approach has contributed to the sociocultural change in out-of-home drinking and eating habits.

Our client became and continues to be an innovative market leader.

Client Testimonial

“It upended our thinking about how to reconfigure the traditional pub experience to appeal to specific customers. When customers walked into a concept not designed for them, felt the experience and they left immediately... this was eye-opening and made us realize we were innovating a completely new direction for the whole pub experience ”

Marketing Director, Mitchells & Butlers

