



Production and Marketing Strategies that Match Consumer Demand



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General Observations

- There is no Silver Bullet Solution
- Past ideas
- Communication is King
- Production
 - New varieties...Super Freak, gourds, color variations.....everybody does pretty good

Production



- Most growers do a great job of offering “new” varieties of pumpkin/gourd products
- It's up to you because you customers probably have not idea what is available

Social Media

- Facebook
 - Twitter
 - Websites
 - YouTube
-
- Many consumers interested in constant contact.....information

Being Part of the Community

- Involvement with Chambers and Tourism staff
- Storefront/Downtown Decoration Contests
- Early strategic neighborhood/business displays
 - BAIT!

Advertising

- Probably not block ads in local paper
- Through Social Media
- Coupons on back of business card?

Logos and Branding

- If you don't have a logo....get one!
- Promotional items very reasonable
 - For employees (keep separate)
 - For customers
- Hats, shirts, bumper stickers, key chains, huggies, calendars

Cooperative Marketing

- What else is going on in your area?
- Can you work together more effectively?
- Customer referral
- Offer a more “complete” experience

Season Extension

- Add crops/products to keep the customer engaged and thinking about your farm
- How to better utilize resources
 - Multiple enterprises

Diversify Operations

- It may be difficult to meet financial goals with seasonal income
- Difficult to make \$X,000,000 from one activity
- Maybe more achievable to have several things to make \$X,000
 - It all adds up

Annual Business review



**All employees/family
members not created =**



Redneck Swimming Pool

Know Your Customer

- More efficient to increase sales among current customer than to find new ones.
 - Find a way to track customer expenditures
- Gather information
 - They probably won't fill out an "official" survey but most will give basic info to enter a drawing or other promotion

Target Market

- Brainstorm to identify new customer groups.
 - More efficient than broad marketing
 - Customers will share certain demographic characteristics
 - Schools, churches, civic organizations, clubs, businesses, etc.
- Also identify poor targets to avoid wasted marketing efforts

Customer Service

- Always strive to exceed the customers needs.
- Sometimes it doesn't take much to make an impression (good or bad)
- Inform employees that there is more to their job than just selling (X).
- Consider formal training for staff

Develop Product Packages

- Give customers ideas of how they can use your products
- Many customers lack the imagination to visualize how your products could be used effectively at home
 - Example displays
 - Quantity discounts (but larger quantities)

Expand the Sales Season

- Utilize facilities outside of the main sales season
 - Weddings, reunions, retreats, meetings
- Camping?
- Star gazing?
- You have a private park
- Scouting events

Establish Relationships with local media

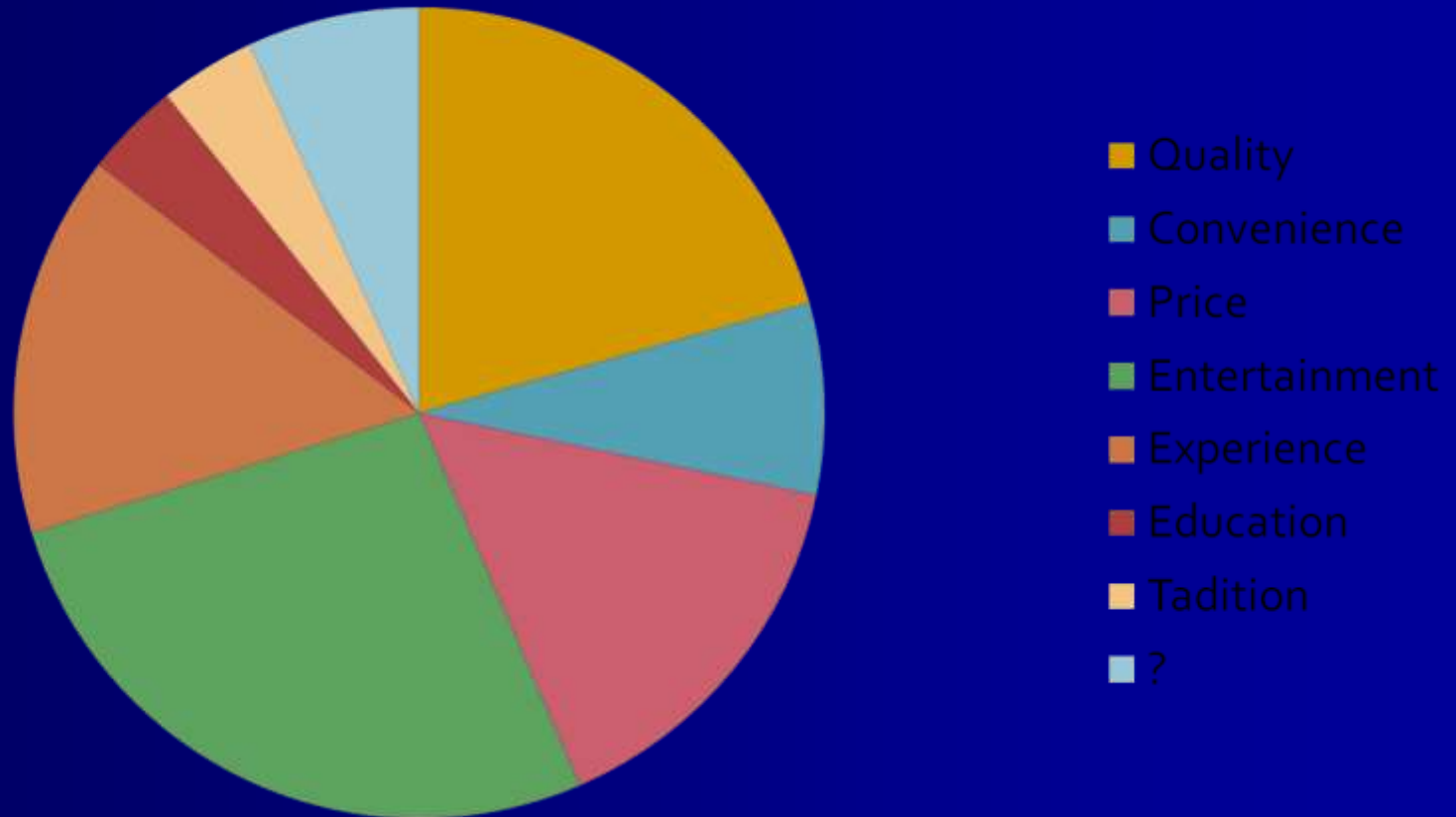
- They are always looking for stories but don't always have time to come looking for yours.
- Be a news source even in the "off" season.
 - Keeps your name in front of the public
 - And you become a resource not a "beggar"

Add Value

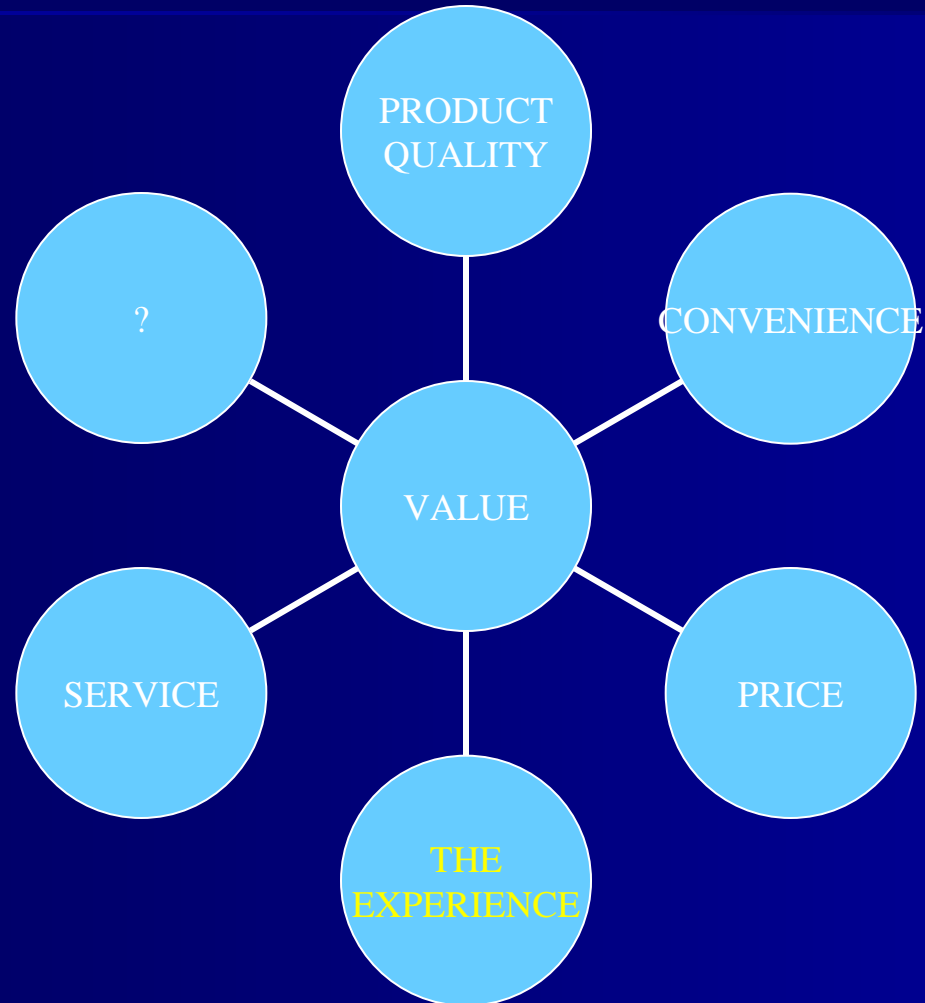
- To the crop
 - Can you process surplus
 - Jams, salsas, sauces, wine?
 - Even a bow?
- Through the experience

The Value "Bundle"

Components of Value



The Value Bundle



Maintain Customer Contact

- In season
- In off season
- Newsletters
- Farm Updates
- Recipes
- Early order discounts
- contests

Develop Partnerships

- Cooperative marketing
 - Brochures, media, etc.
 - Direct customers from business to business
 - Market the “package”
- Work with other businesses (agritourism or not) to hold customers in the area longer

Utilize Tourism Resources

- They can't promote you if they don't know you exist
- Tourism professionals are always looking for things to promote and package
- Helps to keep you informed of programs and opportunities that can benefit your business

Learn from your competitors

- Farmers
- Non-farm competitors
 - Kroger, Wal-Mart, etc.
- Visit other operations when possible
 - Send a spy!
 - Attend summer field tours
 - NAFDMA events
- Adapt vs. Adopt

Constant Innovation

- Adding attractions, expanding facilities, etc.
- Plants seeds of curiosity
 - Customers are anxious to come back to see what has changed from last year

Capitalize on Economic Challenges

- Know your market
- Make your business a “necessity” for your customers!
- If people aren’t traveling as much that doesn’t mean that they won’t do anything at all.

Displays Sell!!



Displays

- Restock frequently
- Maintain attractive product mix
 - When possible
- Cull damaged stock from displays often
- As supplies dwindle try replacing large 1/2 full bins with heaping smaller bins
- Bring your displays to life???????

Utilize Creative Displays

- Demonstrates product uses
- Attractive presentations will sell more
- Cull and restock frequently
- Condense displays toward the end of the season.
 - 1/2 bushel of anything in a 1/2 bushel basket will sell better than 1/2 bushel in a 1 bushel basket

Create Memories

- Explore opportunities to record the farm visit so that it will be in front of the customer all year.
- Picture Frames
- Digital pictures
- Video?
- Sell disposable cameras on-site

Custom Decoration

- Utilize employees in pre-season or on “slow” days to decorate area businesses
 - This could be done prior to the main sales season
- Also opportunities to work with FFA, 4-H, Schools or Church groups as a fund raiser
- Include a “disposal fee” too!

Fund raisers

- Options to work with schools, clubs, Church groups, etc.
 - Art club
 - Grade school festivals
 - ?
- Opportunities will vary and probably be fairly unique

Enhance Convenience

- Enhance convenience
 - Custom decoration for businesses
 - Pre-sorted decorative packages
 - Pumpkins, gourds, corn shock, straw, mums, ?



Expand Product Line

- New Varieties
- New Crops
- New prepared products
 - Jams
 - Salsas
 - Sauces
 - Crafts
- It's OK to buy these from other vendors (Schwartz has apple juice!)



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