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Field sales solutions provide an outstanding means of influencing consumer behaviour at the point of sale. Several studies have shown that the vast majority of purchasing decisions are made when a consumer is shopping, meaning that experiences within the store (or 'in the field') have an unparalleled capacity to influence purchasing behaviour.

There are a range of different services available from field marketing agencies under the umbrella term "field sales solutions". Field sales solutions can mean anything from display optimisation and merchandising to product demonstration and assisted selling; different field sales solutions are appropriate to different products and in different circumstances. Despite their differences, all these techniques share a common purpose: to improve sales performance from within the field.

If your business makes a food product or a grooming product, sampling campaigns can be an excellent way to break down barriers to purchase. Many consumers fall into repeat purchasing habits when it comes to products like these, but businesses can break this cycle through sampling, allaying consumer fears and removing the element of risk perceived when straying away from familiar products. An added advantage is that sampling can give a business the appearance of generosity to its customers (and potential customers). This in turn can improve brand satisfaction and even encourage brand advocacy.

Product demonstrations are another powerful way to break down barriers to purchase, particularly when a value proposition hinges on a benefit that consumers view with suspicion (e.g. a knife that never goes blunt or a fountain pen ink that dries immediately). Demonstrations also create a spectacle and can generate interest in your product from shoppers in the vicinity. In high-profile campaigns, the spectacular aspect can be emphasised and enhanced by involving a celebrity, e.g. a celebrity chef to demonstrate the ever-sharp knife.

Display optimisation is the process of arranging and displaying products so they are most likely to pique consumer interest. Packaging is a form of advertising, and through display optimisation, you can make sure your packaging is fulfilling its advertising potential. As with other forms of advertising, some positions are more effective than others, and in most stores these include much-coveted end-of-gondola displays and positions around the eye-line of an average shopper. A field marketing agency can help to ensure your products are displayed appropriately, thus reaching their audience effectively, improving brand visibility and ultimately driving sales.

The above list is by no means exhaustive and there are a range of other field sales solutions that could benefit your business. Bear in mind when deciding between marketing agencies that their strengths lie in different areas. An agency with proven expertise and a track record for success in its sampling campaigns will not necessarily be the best choice for a product demonstration, and perhaps more importantly, a general marketing agency is unlikely to be as effective or experienced as an agency with a strong field marketing focus.

Whichever service satisfies your requirements, field marketing can open doors for your business, helping to maximise return on investment in distribution, increase brand awareness, grow your consumer base and provide a substantial uplift in sales figures.

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