

**Multisensory Experiential marketing as an added value for Latin America strategic commodities**

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Introduction: There is a common agreement among researchers regarding the involvement of multiple senses when flavors are being experienced. What we see, and hear can somehow affect our tasting experience. This presentation summarizes the work of this author when assessing the influence of sound on flavor judgment. Here, he shows that it is possible to design soundscapes that can have a significant influence on tasting experiences, by altering the way people judge taste and flavor attributes, and by adding hedonic value to foods and drinks. The core of this research is based on behavioral studies implemented mostly in Europe, and involving mainly the interaction of sound and flavor, where chocolates or beers were used as tasting stimuli. Now, when reflecting on these outcomes, we detect that the demand for such know-how, applied within the context of marketing, is growing. However, such ideas are being mostly discussed from the psychological perspective, and within the European population. Hence, we further intend to shift our horizons towards marketing and consumer behavior. In parallel, we foresee the opportunity to transfer such ideas towards the local Latin American market – e.g., towards the commercialization strategy of local commodities.

Literature review: Recent studies have addressed the question of how what we hear influences the taste/flavor of foods and beverages, even though most people do not find it such an obvious association. The research to date suggests that certain types of sounds can, at least under the appropriate conditions, add significant value to the overall eating/drinking experience. Such studies have highlighted the multisensory nature of taste/flavor perception, and have proposed several different methods with which to assess the effect of what we hear on what we taste (see Reinoso Carvalho et al., 2013, for a summary). On top of that, some of our recent results in the domain of food and color correspondences, have shown that there may be cross-cultural implications, when working in the context of multisensory experiential design (i.e. Reinoso Carvalho et al., 2017b).

Methodology: Our upcoming new studies will be developed between 2019 and 2020, as part of an interdisciplinary framework, composed by renowned universities such as U. Oxford, KU Leuven, U. Tokyo, and Univ. de los Andes, along with the private sector. This work will mainly rely on cross-cultural assessments. Here, we will replicate some of our existent findings, but now within the local Colombian/Latin-American context. The studies to be replicated will consist of

behavioral assessments, combined with standards for sensory analysis. Local consumers will evaluate food-drink tasting experiences under different multisensory conditions (e.g. under the influence of different colors, sounds, etc.). DVs such as using preferences, recall, willingness to pay, or brand awareness, among other consumer behavior relevant ones, will be prioritized, in order to bring clearer contributions to the literature of marketing. Also, with these new studies, we intend to give priority to the usage of realistic experimental environments, since, now, our core objective is to look for the valorization potential of our outcomes in the context of consumer behavior. Important to note, however, that these experimental set-ups will be wellcontrolled/confined/replicable. The discussion of the new experimental data will prioritize robust quantitative analysis. Qualitative approaches may be included as part of our discussions as well.

Results and Contributions: This presentation will be initiated by listing the main contributions that our work has brought into this existent field of studies so far. To begin, we were able to validate more than one prominent line of work in the scientific literature, bringing more robustness into this scientific enterprise (Reinoso Carvalho et. al., 2015a, 2016a, 2016b). Second, we brought consistent new contributions into this field, such as the possibility of producing sounds that can influence the consumer's judgment on neverbefore-approached flavor attributes - think of creaminess of chocolate and alcohol content of beer (Reinoso Carvalho et. al., 2016a, 2017a). Third, we suggest that consumers may be willing to pay significantly more for multisensory experiences involving sound and flavor congruency (Reinoso Carvalho et. al., 2015b). Fourth, we demonstrate that it is possible to add hedonic value into tasting experiences, when including sound as part of the experience's context (Reinoso Carvalho et. al., 2015b, 2016c). Within this context, we have also shown, for the first time, that consumers who have a previous emotional connection with a song that is being used as source of inspiration for a beer's formula (i.e., participants knew the song that was being played while drinking a beer), have enjoyed the multisensory tasting experience more and have also enjoyed significantly more the drink in question, when compared to consumers who did not have a previous relationship with this song (Reinoso Carvalho et. al., 2016c).

Implications and Value: By implementing the proposed cross-cultural assessments, and by discussing the existent results towards marketing and consumer behaviour, we believe that there is the opportunity of adding great value to existent strategic Latin American commodities. For instance, the author of this presentation has already implemented a successful business case following these scientific ideas, entitled ‘The Sound of Chocolate’ (see [www.thesoundofchocolate.be](http://www.thesoundofchocolate.be)). This project was funded by the city of Brussels, and it focused on the implementation of an innovative way of experiencing Belgian chocolate through music. Such ideas could be further transferred towards the Latin American context. For instance, Colombia has a one of the most strong music industries of Latin America that helps valorizing the Colombian cultural identity around the globe. A synergy between such Colombian music industry, and important commodity stakeholders, such as coffee and chocolate producers/commerce, could generate an interesting longterm chain of added value.

**Keywords:** multisensory perception, experiential marketing, sound, colour, flavour.