

# What is on the mind of your Whisky ~~drinker~~ thinker?

What do Chivas Regal, Ballantines and Black Douglas have in common? When it comes to sales and promotional activity, it better not be a lot. Whisky drinkers are not all the same, but how do these brands deliver more profitable customers within the same category and create new demand?

The answer is fundamentally practical and simple; each brand has very different consumers in terms of mindsets and these consumers have very different expectations of the outlet they purchase from. Therefore, it's fair to say that whenever these brands try to emulate each other in sales and marketing activity, they are neglecting their own territory.

To grow sales you must be geared towards better focusing your efforts on serving the expectations of your own customer today and locating new outlets that are clearly aligned to them.

In the whisky category there are three clear sets of consumer expectations (that all deliver volume) and each of these expectations has its own set of guidelines because they will respond differently to on and off premise environments, brand and promotional efforts.

	MINDSET A	MINDSET B	MINDSET C
<b>% Drinkers in the Whisky Category</b>	20%	25%	24%
<b>Critical Consumer Issues</b>	You must earn my trust	Give me the opportunity to share something superior and different with my friends	Give me access to quality brands at competitive prices
<b>Sales &amp; Marketing Risks</b>	Clever messages and package or product changes	Same old messages and using price to increase sales	Sacrificing brand value for short term volume
<b>Advertising Imperatives</b>	Leverage brand heritage and be consistently stable with positioning	Intrigue me, be clever and different	Clearly state your reputation and brand success
<b>Promotional Imperatives</b>	Be the best price with a limited time offer	Make me a sales promotion offer, but it better not be common	Make me a special cost saving offer and I'll buy every time
<b>Outlet Imperatives</b>	Give me familiar layouts with easily visible offers and categories.	Give me a great range and show me something new	Give me the brand that I want and make it quick
<b>Customer Service Imperatives</b>	Look after me and I'll be back	Make sure you know what you are talking about because I'll want to know	I'll ask for help if and when I need it
<b>% of Drinks Trade readership (includes on &amp; off premise)</b>	20.4%	18.3%	21.8%

*Research cited in this article has been provided by Dr Colin Benjamin of the Horizon Network.*

## What can you do?

The fastest way to grow your sales is to understand which expectations deliver more today and how your current activity is geared to consistently delivering on these expectations. From your brands point of view you need to understand if your current position is the right one and if so, what must you do to grow the business. If your current position isn't the right one, what is the gap? And what has to change to deliver results today and tomorrow. When you know the market you want from a volume and value point of view, these guidelines for engagement (and yes there is more detail) provide you with clear direction for getting results quicker and reduce trial and error costs. Ultimately you are in the business of selling more and delivering to consumer expectations. Consumer behaviour does not need to be guesswork. When you define a market by its expectations, measurably, the whole game becomes very simple indeed.

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