

# Sensory marketing

## ■ Definition

The area of psychological marketing known as “sensory marketing” is an advertising tactic aimed at **appealing** to one or more of the five human senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch to create an emotional association with a specific product or brand.

When you walk into a bakery, the smell coming out of the oven is often enough to push clients to buy sweets. The sights, sounds, and smells of the modern marketplace are rarely accidents; more **likely**, they are tools of this evolving strategy of sensory marketing designed to create a brand image in the customers’ mind, win their loyalty and, most of all, their money.

*Adapted from Pincas, Loiseau, A History of Advertising, Taschen 2004, p. 315.*

## ■ A bit of history

Sensory branding dates back to the 1940s when marketing managers began exploring the role of sight in advertising. At the time, the main forms of visual advertising were printed posters and **billboards** and research was focused on the effects of colours and **fonts** within them. As time went by, television entered every home, so advertisers began appealing to consumers’ sense of sound, too. The first TV commercial with a **catchy** jingle goes back to 1948 and was an advertisement for a **cleanser**.



## ■ Multi-sensory marketing

Noting the great popularity of aromatherapy and its connection to colour therapy, advertisers then began researching the use of smell in advertising and brand promotion during the 1970s. They found that carefully selected **scents** could make their products more appealing to consumers. More recently, **retailers** have seen that infusing certain scents in their stores could increase sales, that’s why the popularity of multi-sensory marketing is still spreading. They believe an effective sensory marketing effort can make consumers choose a certain product over a similar but less expensive alternative.

**to appeal:** attirare  
**billboard:** cartellone pubblicitario

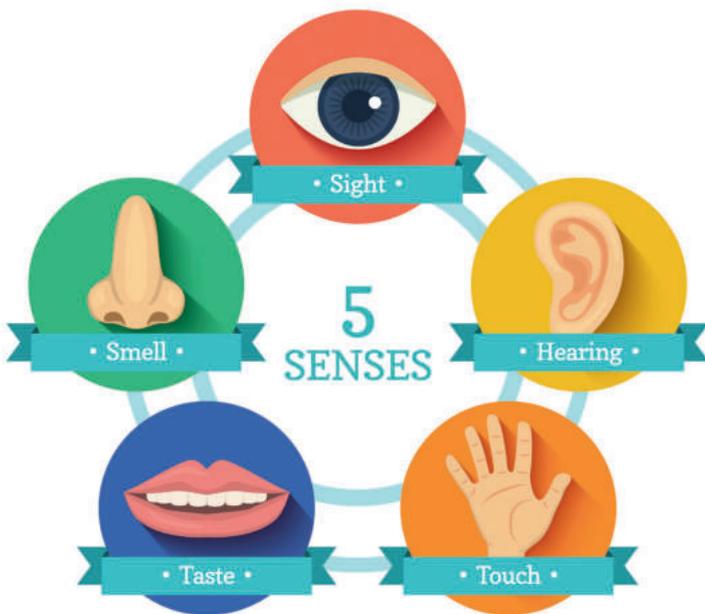
**catchy:** accattivante  
**cleanser:** detersivo  
**font:** carattere tipografico

**likely:** probabile  
**retailer:** negoziante al dettaglio  
**scent:** aroma, profumo



**1**  Choose a colour for each of the five senses according to what you deem the most appropriate for a product of your choice and explain the reasons for your choice.

Product	.....
Sight	.....
Smell	.....
Hearing	.....
Taste	.....
Touch	.....



**2 Translate into English.**

1. I dirigenti del marketing devono conoscere i bisogni, i desideri e le aspirazioni dei clienti delle loro aziende.
2. La psicologia può aiutare a fornire la comprensione necessaria dei convincimenti, degli atteggiamenti e delle intenzioni dei consumatori.
3. Identificare, misurare e comprendere le emozioni dei consumatori è essenziale per il marketing sensoriale.
4. Questo jingle non è orecchiabile. A te piace?
5. I negozianti al dettaglio stanno scomparendo a causa dei supermercati.

**3**  In pairs, discuss the following statements.

1. Sensory marketing should be banned by law because it influences you in an unconscious way.
2. Psychologists should not help marketers to persuade people to choose an expensive product over a cheaper one.



**AD LINGO**

Advertising and marketing terminology is very peculiar. **Ad** and **advert** stand for **advertisement**. **Advertising** is used to mean publicity in general, that is to say the activity to attract attention to a product, service or business. **Commercial** is a television advertisement, especially in the US. Another fundamental word to learn is **advertising claim**, which is what the ad promises, trying to balance on the narrow line between truth and falsehood by a careful choice of words.