



CAB Corner on Quality
(graphic file logo for heading
available on request)

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Marketing that hits the target

By Tracey Erickson, CAB Vice President

You'd think marketing the *Certified Angus Beef*[®] (CAB[®]) brand to consumers would be easy. Like asking a small child if they want ice cream. After all, who wouldn't want the most tender, juicy and flavorful beef you can buy, at every beef-eating opportunity?

It's true that the taste keeps customers coming back. It's true that the CAB brand offers the most consistent, highest quality beef on the market. But we have to tell more future customers, in ways that grab their attention.

That's not easy in a culture where the consumer is bombarded with advertising at every turn. The latest trend, renting foreheads for logos, makes you wonder, "What next?"

Even though we are the world's largest beef brand, we are a not-for-profit company using no producer funds. We couldn't afford to play those games, even if we wanted to. We have to make better use of our packer commission funds.

CAB's promotional spending has to be creative and concentrated. The answer? Targeted marketing. This strategy allows us to reach consumers most receptive to our message. In CAB's case she is female, age 34-55, married with kids and \$50,000 or more household income. Males in the same category are the secondary targets.

Our advertising messages are like guided missiles, rather than random bombing. We select two markets annually for a four-year intense focus. It starts with ramp-up, or a year of preparation. Then there are two years of implementation and one year of ramp down. CAB's current targets: Pittsburg, Penn., and Detroit, Mich. Sacramento, Calif., and Albany, N.Y., are on deck. We select markets based on commitment level of licensees and potential for growth.

Once we pick the targets, we let fly a combination of promotional arrows. Traditional ads cut through the clutter with the slogan, "Mouthwatering would be an understatement," graphically communicated with a dramatic visual of Niagara Falls. The campaign positions CAB as the best Angus beef available. It connects with an emotional experience our demographic relates to.

Broadcast and billboard advertising dominate the plan. In 2006, CAB will debut its new television commercial in these markets. The spot shows a shopper (female, age 34-55) at a meat case, confused about Angus beef. A beef expert (cowboy) helps her by asking for the only logical choice: "the *Certified Angus Beef*[®] brand, please."

That's fun and should be effective. But consumers buy based on word of mouth. They're four to 10 times more likely to buy if they hear that kind of "buzz." That's why we use all kinds of other subtle or direct darts to hit the targets, layered in with advertising.

We join in events, help sponsor them and form strategic partnerships to reach consumers in a more personal way. You could say we want to allow the customer a high impact interaction with the product. Yes, that's right: they get to taste it. Events can bring press coverage and third-party product mentions, sometimes even recommendations. No amount of advertising can buy such impressions.

Should you visit Detroit or Pittsburg this year, you might hear one of eight CAB brand radio spots. You might see a billboard promoting the brand, or see a truck providing double-duty as a moving billboard. You might hear about CAB's involvement in a local home and garden show, or a hamburger promotion at a CAB-licensed restaurant.

You might see CAB Corporate Chef Dianna Stouffer preparing delicacies on a local TV morning or mid-day news show, or even hear her grilling CAB steak and eggs for the local radio personality. "Wow," you might think. In Detroit and Pittsburg, CAB's presence will rival major national brands.

Business growth comes from four places: acquiring more customers, persuading each to buy more, persuading each to buy more expensive products ("up selling"), and persuading each customer to buy more profitable products.

CAB's targeted marketing aims to position the brand in the mind of our key consumers so that growth is inevitable. It may never be quite as simple as getting a child's emphatic yes to ice cream. But the target strategy removes barriers and simplifies their beef-buying decisions.

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