



Source: Oumph!

Oumph!: using taste-based marketing to attract flexitarian consumers

A Case Study

WHAT WILL YOU LEARN?

Throughout this case study, we will be profiling plant-based meat brand Oumph! to demonstrate how their effective use of taste-based marketing helps to drive their product sales.

You will learn how to:

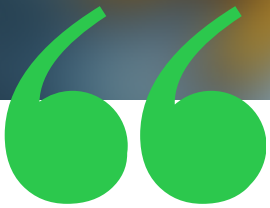
- take advantage of consumers' needs for indulgent experiences similar to those they already know by utilising taste-inciting language in your messaging and branding
- reach new consumers through partnering with chefs and food-service businesses
- build and appeal to a large audience through influencer collaborations
- raise your profile and lower the consumer purchase barrier through the use of food-trucks, pop-ups, and freebies.

WHO IS OUMPH?!

Founded in Sweden, Oumph! is a plant-based meat brand that is steadily powering up the sector. They are one of many vegan brands helping to change consumer perceptions of what 'meatless meat' tastes like, launching their first offering, plant-based pulled pork, in 2014. They've since developed plant-based mince, kebab strips, ribs, burgers, buffalo wings, and spicy pulled pieces, with more products being added to their repertoire yearly.

Oumph! products are sold in a dozen countries (and rising) in Europe and beyond, and they all succeed using the same core principle: taste and texture come first.





Oumph! was founded to shift perceptions and create change, leading more people to plant-based food. Our ambition is always to create products with the potential of converting flexitarians to eat even more plant-based food.”

Henrik Åkerman

*Global Brand Leader at Oumph!
LIVEKINDLY Collective*

WHO IS OUMPH?!

All of Oumph!'s products have been developed with a focus on replicating favourite 'meaty' foods, making it easy to incorporate them into recipes that are all about comfort and flavour. As a result, the Oumph! portfolio of products lends itself very well to taste-based marketing tactics, which use various strategies to appeal to consumers' desires for tasty foods.

“At Oumph! we do not want our food to be a compromise; we want vegan options to be exciting, so we focus on really good texture and flavours with that extra Oumph!, topped with guilt-free and disruptive branding.”

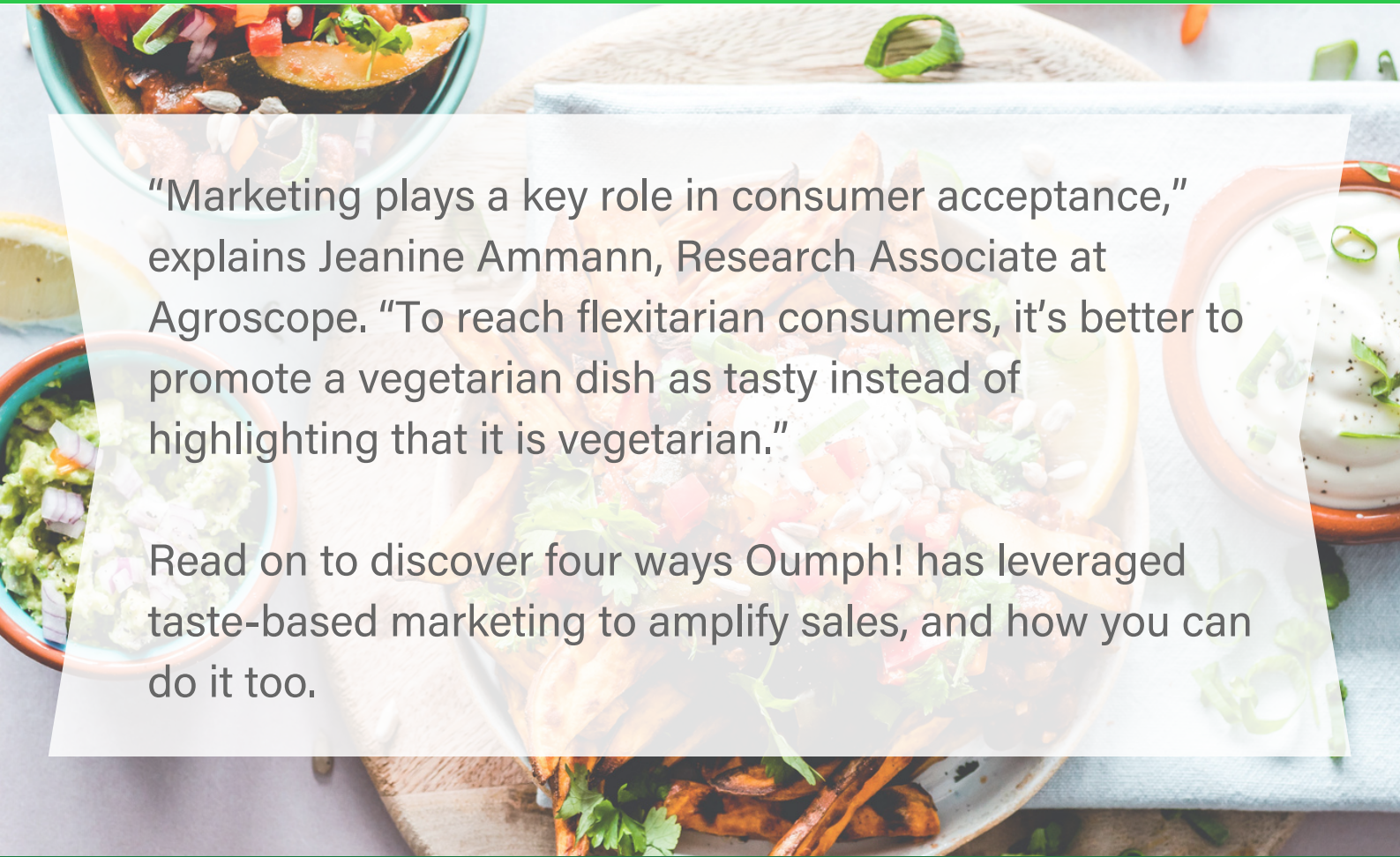
Henrik Åkerman

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WHY TASTE MARKETING WORKS

Research has shown that taste is the primary motivator for plant-based food purchases,¹ and the good news is that the food produced by many plant-based brands is super tasty! But many consumers don't yet know this.² Because consumers are primarily driven by taste,³ plant-based brands need to win over consumers' taste buds before winning over their wallets. So, how do you get a consumer to taste your product before they purchase it?



"Marketing plays a key role in consumer acceptance," explains Jeanine Ammann, Research Associate at Agroscope. "To reach flexitarian consumers, it's better to promote a vegetarian dish as tasty instead of highlighting that it is vegetarian."

Read on to discover four ways Oumph! has leveraged taste-based marketing to amplify sales, and how you can do it too.

MESSAGING AND BRANDING

Messaging and branding can be utilised to take advantage of consumers' needs for indulgent experiences similar to those they already know. Oumph! does this by marketing plant-based food products in a way that portrays them as just as tasty as their meat-based counterparts.

Packaging and product descriptions

Packaging can be a consumer's first interaction with a brand and product, so a product's packaging must succeed in satisfying the consumer's expectations that the food inside is delicious enough to eat.

Oumph!'s packaging communicates to consumers the indulgent sensory experience they'll have access to if they buy the product – the brand uses delicious imagery and sensory language to do this.



1 Imagery shows product cooked in a delicious meal that depicts an identical experience to the meat version, so consumers know what flavours and textures to expect, and how to use the product as soon as they see its packaging

2 Flavour emphasised with taste-inciting language – 'Sticky Smokehouse Rib Style' ('sticky' also creates sensory experience)

3 'Made from soya...' highlights a recognisable ingredient

'Protein' – confirms the same benefit as animal meat

4 'World Food Innovation Awards Winner' – recognised as a tasty and trusty brand by a big corporation



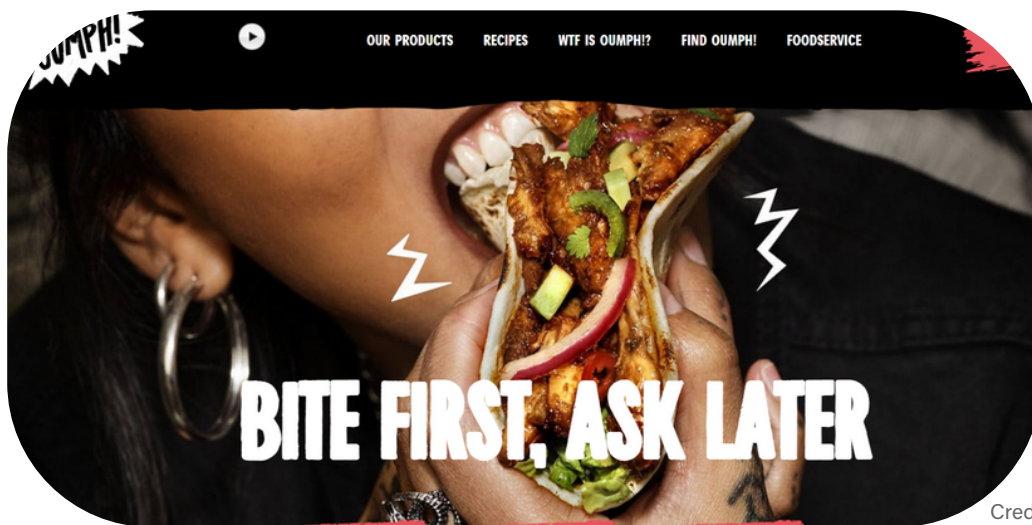
5 Cool, vibrant, food-focussed package design showcasing tasty-looking food, puts taste front and centre of consumer's mind

Remember, you're battling flexitarian fears of missing out – it's super important to counter this with positive messaging about the taste benefits of plant-based food.

WEBSITE AND MARKETING

When you enter Oumph!'s website, the first thing you see is a woman biting into a delicious-looking Oumph!-filled pita, with the words 'Bite first, ask later'. This image and phrasing immediately draw the consumer into the experience of tasting the product.

Oumph! does this throughout its website and marketing campaigns – all images visualise indulgent Oumph! eating experiences that make viewers think of tasting and eating great food for themselves.



Credit: Oumph!

In this way, Oumph! is depicted more as a brand that produces tasty food, not food for vegans specifically – a label that can be off-putting for some consumers.

WEBSITE AND MARKETING

Examples of Oumph! product descriptions:⁴

'Taste-bud rocking plant-based food'

'Oumph is here to rock your taste buds with epic, plant-based food. Simple as that'

'Big, fat, juicy, plant-based slap in the face'

'It's a flavour, a feeling, and an attitude'

'Chilled in style but not in nature, our Tandoori and Korean BBQ Chunks kill boring - they're here to provide a spicy kick that leaves your taste buds wanting more'⁵

'Oumph! has that extra kick you've been searching for - that extra something that'll leave your mouth watering and make you forget your table manners.'

All these phrases emphasise taste and explosions of flavour, working to create excitement around the product and build into the idea that Oumph! products are a flavour experience to be savoured.

When it comes to your own product descriptions, remember, you're selling a tasty, sensory indulgence, so your words need to appeal to people's hedonistic impulses.



“Tell them about the sensory experience they’ll have – e.g. creamy, nutty, silky, with a light note of caramel, fresh, etc.”

Professor Armando Perez-Cueto

Food Behaviour & Public Health Nutritionist University of Copenhagen

CHEFS AND FOOD SERVICES

Oumph! has a clear growth strategy that centres around getting its products into contexts where consumers can try their products. They're available internationally in restaurants and hotels, and public-catering settings like university canteens.

Consumers are more likely to experiment with new flavours when dining out than when cooking for themselves at home or ordering delivery.⁶ And, over half of Millennials believe that a new and unique dining experience is an important consideration when choosing where to eat.⁷ Together, these factors create a huge opportunity for plant-based brands to reach new consumers. And this is something Oumph! has excelled at.



The fact that the product is prepared by professional chefs means consumers don't risk being put off by their own potential mis-preparation of a novel product.

They're getting the best possible taste experience right away, thereby promoting positive mental associations and engendering enduring confidence in the brand.



“The lowest risk way to try a new plant-based product is [to sample it] in a restaurant or canteen. If you like it in one setting, you're more likely to like it in the other.”⁸

Nestlé's executive team

**Oumph!
Swedish
restaurant
partnership
reviews:⁹**

Max Hamburger – “Our most successful launch ever”
[on stocking Oumph!’s burger]

O’Leary’s – “We have never gotten so much positive response on a product launch before”
[on launching Oumph! products into restaurants]

Sibylla – “The launch of the Oumph! Burger was an instant success and many new customers have now found Sybilla”

These food-service partnerships have allowed Oumph! to create numerous touchpoints with consumers, which increases brand awareness and makes consumers more likely to purchase their products from stores. This demonstratable consumer base has helped Oumph! pitch products to new retailers and reinforce retail sales.

INFLUENCER COLLABORATIONS



Consumers don't always have to be the ones doing the cooking and tasting in order for taste marketing to be effective.

A trusted endorsement can give them the social proof they need to make a purchase.

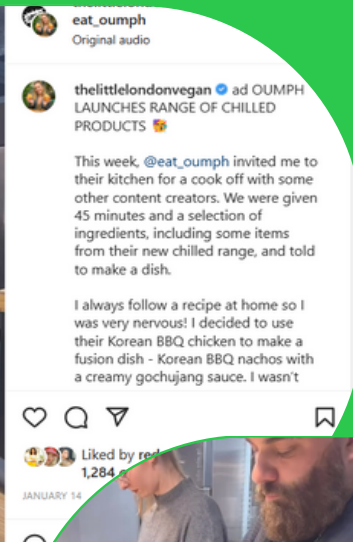
This is where influencers come in – if they taste a product and share that positive experience with their fans, one bite can become amplified to reach thousands of mouths.

Let's take a closer look at how this works for Oumph!...

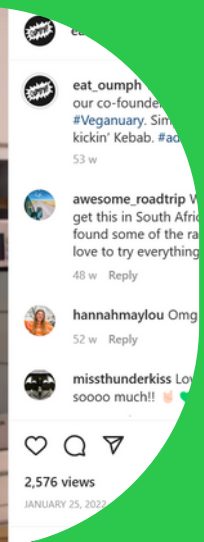
The brand positions its products as part of a big, bold flavour experience and invites both followers and influencers to become 'master chefs' with them. By sending influencers delicious Oumph! products, and inviting them to Instagram 'cook-outs' and tasting events, Oumph! has built an audience of more than 35,000 followers on Instagram and an even larger consumer base.



@eat_oumph vs @thelittlelondonvegan



@eat_oumph vs @keyyo



@eat_oumph vs @ollie_eats



Why has this worked? Influencers are a great way to reach younger consumers without breaking the bank. Almost half of Gen-Z have made a purchase decision based on a recommendation from a social influencer, compared with 26% of the general population.¹⁰

Learn how to effectively work with influencers.

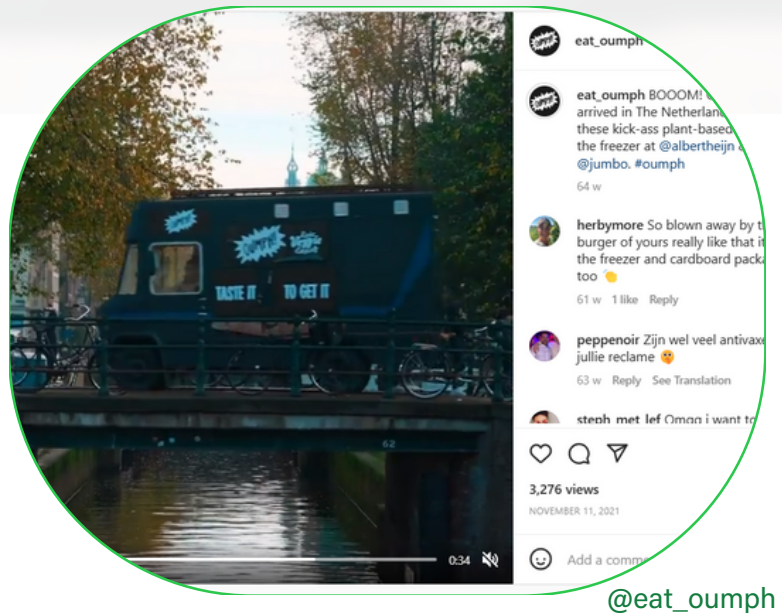
If you want to reach these consumers (which you should, because they're the most open to plant-based alternatives), then, like Oumph!, you should consider influencer marketing.



FOOD TRUCKS, POP-UPS, AND FREEBIES

A great way to raise your profile is by going direct to wherever your target consumers are, and offering free tastings to them in situ. “We go out with food trucks to create buzz,” explains Oumph!’s Ankan Linden. Since the brand was created, it has used food trucks around Europe to increase awareness of its products and allow consumers to try products for free.

Free food that is well prepared attracts new consumers and gets them to like your products and brand. Multiple studies have found that the majority of consumers (about 75%) who receive freebies go on to remember the brand name and hold a positive association with that company.¹¹ This lowers the consumer barrier to purchase.



Food trucks are a great investment – assuming they are parked at a high-footfall location. If you want to emulate Oumph!’s food-truck tactics, be sure to get permission from the land owner and authorities in advance, and make sure that your chosen date doesn’t clash with any major events that could detract from your presence.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Oumph! attracts consumers by adopting the following taste-based marketing strategies:

- 1. Using taste-inciting messaging and branding on its product packaging and across its website and marketing campaigns
- 2. Partnering with food-service businesses and collaborating with renowned chefs
- 3. Collaborating with popular social-media influencers
- 4. Travelling to high-footfall destinations in food trucks to give away free samples of products.

Drive your own plant-based sales by emulating these tactics in your product marketing strategy.

Email corporate@proveg.com to learn how to apply Oumph!'s techniques to your own product strategy and drive your plant-based sales beyond what you thought possible.



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