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LikeMeat: Offering a 'meaty' experience to attract flexitarians

A Case Study

INTRODUCTION

Throughout this case study, we will be profiling plant-based meat brand LikeMeat to demonstrate the strategies it utilises to create a 'meaty' experience and attract flexitarian consumers.

You will learn the importance of:

- 1. Optimising taste and texture**
- 2. Balancing taste and texture with nutrition**
- 3. Accounting for comfort and familiarity**
- 4. Using sensory, taste-inciting language in communications**
- 5. Employing experiential, bold, colourful, and tasty visuals and packaging**

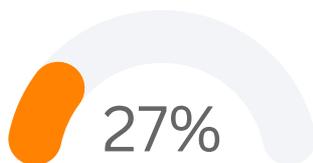
INTRODUCTION

Alternative meat products are surging in popularity in Europe, with:



of consumers identifying as flexitarian, vegetarian, pescatarian, or vegan.¹

Among these groups, flexitarians (the fastest-growing consumer demographic in F&B), who consume both meat and plant-based foods, make up nearly 30% of Europeans.² Shifting focus from the niche vegan market (less than 4% of consumers) to flexitarians can open up a market over 10 times larger.³



of mixed-eaters are also becoming more open-minded about plant-based alternatives.⁴

Both flexitarian and meat-eating consumers – along with some vegans and vegetarians – seek the comforting, sensory experiences associated with meat products, such as taste, smell, appearance, and texture. Meeting these preferences is essential for expanding your consumer base beyond vegans and vegetarians.

WHO IS LIKEMEAT?

LikeMeat was founded in 2013 by entrepreneur Timo Recker, with the goal of 'doubling the pleasure' of food. Inasmuch, Recker wanted to produce food that tastes amazing and does good for the planet, too.

The aim was to make it easier for people to enjoy a plant-based lifestyle by creating products that taste just as delicious as their comfort food favourites, allowing consumers to eat well without having to give up the meaty flavours and traditions they love.



WHO IS LIKEMEAT?

LikeMeat transforms plant-based ingredients into products that satisfy people's meatiest cravings with optimal attention given to taste and texture. But the brand takes customer experience further, using marketing, communications, and product packaging to create an indulgent, sensory experience that not only encourages veggies and vegans but meat enthusiasts to try their products, too.

Currently available in **seven countries**, including the US, Netherlands, Germany, Finland, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, LikeMeat products occupy various formats, including nuggets, burgers, and pieces and replicate meaty schnitzel, chicken, and others.

Read on to discover how LikeMeat creates a 'meaty' experience to attract consumers and how you can, too.



OPTIMISING TASTE AND TEXTURE

The taste and texture of plant-based meat products are pivotal to their success, since taste is the number one purchasing factor for plant-based foods.⁵



“Consumers want tasty products! Consumers are looking for the taste and texture of meat, without the negative effects on the environment and animal welfare. Tasty meat replacements allow consumers to keep enjoying their favourite meat dishes.”

Justine Berger

Global Brand Lead, LikeMeat & Marketing Director DACH

LikeMeat successfully replicates the taste and texture of meat in their products to give that ‘just-like-chicken experience’ by carefully selecting ingredients, chosen for their specific properties.

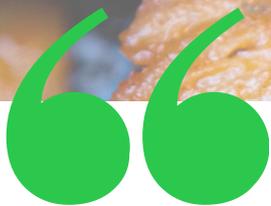
When it comes to your own products, the **protein ingredients** you select are vital – they must allow for the **same juiciness, flavour, and bite** as the meat you want to replicate.

Continued product reformulation and development are paramount – don't rest on your laurels! Invest in the latest technology to ensure that you are producing meat alternatives that cater to consumers' preferences and keep up with competition.

“Using soya and pea in our products offers the best texture and bite. We also have products like our nuggets, chicken burger and schnitzel that are made of a protein blend with soya, wheat, and pea – to create a delicious texture with crunchy breading.”

Justine Berger

Global Brand Lead, LikeMeat & Marketing Director , DACH



“We are constantly working to deliver the best taste and texture with quality ingredients. Thanks to our innovative in-house technology we can create a ‘chicken’-like texture and a great-tasting product.”

Justine Berger

*Global Brand Lead, LikeMeat & Marketing Director,
DACH*



BALANCING TASTE AND TEXTURE WITH NUTRITION

Taste and texture must be prioritised, but it's also important to keep ingredient quality and nutritional values in mind:

“While delivering on taste and texture is most important, it's essential to produce our products in the best way - with as few ingredients as possible. While most people don't look at the ingredient list, we know it's an important element to assure on - even more into the future.”

Justine Berger

Global Brand Lead LikeMeat & Marketing Director DACH

Therefore, when developing and marketing your alt-meat products:

- Streamline ingredient lists, where possible – consumers may not always scrutinise the ingredient list, but it remains a critical element in building trust. Keep it concise, using **high-quality, kitchen-recognisable ingredients** (whenever feasible).
- Highlight recognisable ingredients on packaging – make a point to incorporate recognisable ingredients into your plant-based meat products. This approach **enhances transparency** and **resonates with health-conscious consumers** who want to know what they're eating.

- Do not compromise on nutritional value – develop products that **not only taste good** but also **contribute positively to consumers' overall health**.
- Promote protein content – to gain consumer favour, ensure your plant-based meat products are **rich in protein**. Highlight the protein content on packaging and marketing materials to **attract health-conscious consumers** seeking high-quality protein sources in their diet.



“Using soya and pea in our products offers the best texture and bite combined with optimal nutritional values and protein content – which is 19% in our LikeChicken – making it a great protein source for our products. – Justine Berger, Global Brand Lead LikeMeat & Marketing Director DACH

ACCOUNTING FOR COMFORT AND FAMILIARITY

Almost two-thirds of consumers prefer products that are similar to foods they already know.¹ At the same time, many consumers are looking to reduce their meat intake. This creates a natural opportunity for plant-based alternatives to satisfy consumers' traditional taste and texture requirements while also meeting their modern preferences for healthier and more sustainable foods.⁶

73% of plant-based products are purchased by omnivores and flexitarians⁷ whose primary motivation for purchasing and consuming plant-based foods is taste.⁸ It is therefore vital to focus on products that offer a familiar taste-and-texture experience when creating your plant-based product range.

Fostering familiarity is something that LikeMeat has done well, directly through product offerings and indirectly through marketing.



ACCOUNTING FOR COMFORT AND FAMILIARITY

PRODUCT

Primarily, LikeMeat products focus on comfort and meaty indulgence – their products replicate a wide range of “meat favourites”, like chicken, gyros, and schnitzel, “to make the step to eat less meat as easy and tasty as possible.” Develop products that replicate animal ‘meats’ to gain consumer favour.

Product formats also aid with this – by making plant- and animal-based meat products **like-for-like in application**, consumers can use them as direct swaps. For example, LikeMeat offers drumsticks, patties, and meaty chunks which require the **same prep** and **cooking time** (and less, in some cases) as animal-based versions.



ACCOUNTING FOR COMFORT AND FAMILIARITY

MARKETING

While it's important that the product evokes comfort and familiarity, marketing also contributes to generating the 'meaty' experience. From LikeMeat's product packaging to its website, everything has been tailored to provide a sensory and familiar experience for the consumer.

- Product naming: LikeMeat products are **named after animal-based ones** – i.e., Like Chick'n Wings, Like Gyros, Like Snichitzel, Like BBQ Chick'n, Like Chick'n Kebab – to create a direct comparison to animal-based counterparts. Opt for **'meaty', recognisable names**, where legally possible.
- Website imagery: across LikeMeat's site we see people eating LikeMeat food in **familiar, delicious-looking dishes**; they have food smeared around their smiling faces, clearly enjoying it. Emanate this on your own site – ensure that your **imagery depicts your food as comforting**, fun, indulgent, and enjoyable!
- Product imagery: shows a **direct comparison of LikeMeat to meat**, with juicy, delicious images that evoke a meaty experience and make the viewer hungry! We see comfort classics, flavour explosions, sensory enjoyment, and familiar pleasures, with the images conjuring the idea that LikeMeat consumers don't need to give up anything. Opt for **product imagery that conjures up the visceral emotions and feelings of eating**, and compares your food to foodie favourites.



“On average, people cook 10 favourite dishes over and over again. Making plant-based products that are easy to cook and use as a replacement of animal-based protein in one of their favourite dishes makes the transition to plant-based diet easier for consumers. That’s why the naming of alternatives is important – it gives consumers a better idea on how to cook with plant-based protein.”

Justine Berger

*Global Brand Lead, LikeMeat & Marketing Director,
DACH*



USING SENSORY, TASTE-INCITING LANGUAGE IN MARKETING, ADVERTISING, AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

Language is another tool that can continue the 'meaty' and sensory experience for a consumer – and LikeMeat does this brilliantly. Here's some examples from their website:

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'Do good, eat dirty'

'Don't give up meat, sink your teeth into LikeMeat'

'So good it's good'

'We understand that food is personal'

'Love the deliciously drool-worthy flavour and texture of chicken, kebab and bratwurst?'

'Our plant-based products were made to satisfy even the meatiest of cravings'

LikeMeat's language is taste-inciting, meaty, experiential, and compares plant-based food to meat. It's also cultural and personal, putting the consumer and their preferences first.

Ensure that all your communications – on your website, packaging, social media, and advertising – use sensory language to create the meaty and personal experiences that meat-eating consumers understand.

EMPLOYING BOLD, COLOURFUL, AND TASTY VISUALS AND PACKAGING

When consumers' first instinct is to reach for their favourite animal-based meat product, you need to stand out to grab their attention.



“LikeMeat is a bold and vibrant brand, with its colourful packs that pop from the shelf. Appealing to young flexitarian consumers with our fun, light-hearted tone that comes to life in surprising campaigns.”

Justine Berger

Global Brand Lead, LikeMeat & Marketing Director DACH



Utilise bold and colourful packaging; stand out on supermarket shelves with delicious product imagery, and in advertising and social media campaigns, opt for a fun and spirited but lighthearted tone that will keep consumers' attention. This goes for all your brand and product imagery – across your website, too.

It also helps to use images that invoke a flavoursome experience, showcasing images of your products in recipes where the meals look like 'meaty' favourites. For example, [LikeMeat's](#) website depicts numerous images of people eating [LikeMeat](#) products in bold, delicious-looking, familiar, and 'meaty' dishes, with food smeared around their faces.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Using the case study, the New Food Hub makes the following recommendations for businesses looking to attract meat-loving consumers:

→ 1. Optimise taste and texture: The taste and texture of plant-based meat products are critical for success. Consumers want products that replicate the sensory experience of meat. Select protein ingredients carefully to ensure juiciness, flavour, and bite. Invest in ongoing product reformulation and development.

→ 2. Balance taste and texture with nutrition: Strive for products with recognisable ingredients and excellent nutritional profiles.

→ 3. Account for comfort and familiarity: Consumers prefer products that are similar to foods they already know. Create plant-based alternatives that offer a familiar taste and texture experience. Develop products that replicate animal meats to gain favour among omnivores and flexitarians. Use 'meaty', and recognisable product names where legally possible. Showcase people enjoying your food in familiar, delicious-looking dishes on your website.

→ 4. Use sensory language in communications: Use language that incites taste and sensory experiences in your marketing, advertising, and communications. Make consumers feel that your plant-based products satisfy their cravings just as well as meat.

→ 5. Employ bold, colourful packaging: Stand out on supermarket shelves with bold and colourful packaging. Use images that invoke a flavoursome experience and showcase your products in recipes that resemble 'meaty' favourites.

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