

This marketing guide is supported by:



EBLEX The English Beef and Lamb Executive
Graphic House, Ferrars Road, Huntingdon, Cambridge PE29 3EE
Tel: 0870 242 1394 www.eblex.org.uk
For more information about the scheme contact the Hotline 0800 781 4221



October 2007

Marketing

a guide for retail butchers and farm shops



How to maximise your sales opportunities with new and existing customers





Neither EBLEX nor the authors of this publication accept any liability for any direct or indirect loss, damage or injury howsoever suffered as a consequence of this publication or of any use of the publication or of the information on which it is based whether or not as the result of negligence.

©English Beef and Lamb Executive 2007



Marketing

your business

To develop and run a successful retail butchery business today you need to have an understanding of marketing. In particular, you need to know how to promote your enterprise in line with your business plan and how to boost sales.

There are many facets to 'marketing' and no one element can be dealt with in isolation. They range from researching and understanding consumer needs to how to initiate a successful sales promotion.

In order to give you the confidence to develop and appreciate the steps involved, this manual contains a great deal of information, ideas and examples to guide you in planning and implementing a marketing strategy that truly backs up your business plan. We hope you find it useful.

It is by no means a definitive guide. The responsibility to ensure that what you offer for sale is safe, and that the way you sell it is legal, is yours. Always consult the appropriate body if you are at all unsure.

Phil Davies
EBLEX Trade Marketing Manager



Contents

This manual aims to help you identify key marketing opportunities to benefit your business. It covers a wide range of topics, with specific emphasis on how sales promotion can form part of a successful retail butchery enterprise.

In order to get the best from this manual it is advisable to have your business plan in place, with clearly defined targets.

6 Sales Promotion & SWOT analysis

The benefit of sales promotion and how to maximise opportunities using different sales promotion tactics.

15 The steps to a Successful Sales Promotion

All successful marketing requires planning and research. This will help you explore ways to communicate successfully with your customers.

26 Merchandising

How an eye catching display cabinet and point of sale material can really boost sales.

33 Evaluation

Constantly evaluate your marketing activity to learn from your experiences.

35 Promotional Law

Make sure you understand the legal aspects of a promotion in order to protect your business and your customers.

39 Internet

How to sell your meat via the internet.

43 EBLEX Quality Standard Mark

Consumers want reassurances on the provenance and quality of their meat. The EBLEX Quality Standard Mark can help you meet their needs.

46 Further information

A useful guide on where to go for more detailed advice and support.

WHAT IS A SALES PROMOTION?

Promotions are short-term tactical marketing tools which can be used to achieve specific sales objectives during a defined period of time. They are invaluable in helping achieve the goals set out in your individual business plan.

WHAT CAN SALES PROMOTIONS DO FOR YOU?

- Maximise sales to existing customers
- Attract new customers
- Increase consumer awareness
- Stimulate interest and draw attention to new and existing product ranges
- Encourage trial and repeat purchase
- Boost seasonal buying peaks
- Enable you to target specific customer sectors
- Provide you with a major advantage over your competitors

To secure the maximum business potential, all sales promotions should be:

- S** – Specific
- M** – Measurable
- A** – Achievable
- R** – Relevant
- T** – Timely

WHAT IS A SWOT ANALYSIS?

Before launching a sales promotion, it helps to carry out a SWOT Analysis. SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

The SWOT Analysis is a very useful tool for improving understanding and informing the decision-making process in your business. It can help you identify what your business is good at and what needs to be improved.

Each SWOT analysis will be different depending on when it is conducted. Some elements will always be the same but many will change. After the analysis has been carried out you will be able to decide on a promotional activity that plays to your strengths and opportunities, yet minimises any weaknesses and threats.

The SWOT Analysis Form

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
List the elements that you and your business are good at and may give you competitive advantage.	List those elements that concern you with the business and the surrounding environment.
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
What new elements can you develop to give you a competitive edge?	The competition, external factors that will have some effect on you and your business.

Using SWOT effectively

An effective SWOT analysis will look at both internal and external factors.

INTERNAL FACTORS

Walk the shop as a customer would and look at all the following areas with a critical eye and evaluate them to identify areas that require attention:

- Internal layout of premises - Is it easy for people to access the serving areas? Are products clearly on display and easily accessible? Could the layout be improved to ensure the whole shop is utilised?
- Point-of-sale material – Is it up-to-date? Does it look eye catching? Is it in highly visible locations? Are leaflet dispensers full and clean? Have wall posters been put up straight?
- Window display - Is it colourful and inviting? Are the products on display relevant to the time of year (e.g. barbecue products in July, not stewing beef). Are all the sales hot spots (see page 26) well positioned and full?
- Chiller cabinet displays – Are they well stocked and presented? Are key promotional lines prominent? Is supporting point-of-sale material in position?
- Dry goods displays – Are they full and well priced? Are the cabinets/shelves clean and tidy? Do the goods on sale complement your product range? Is promotional material in position?
- Appearance of staff – Do they conform to agreed standards of presentation and personal hygiene? Are their uniforms clean and presentable? Are hats on or is long hair tied back?
- Floors – Are they clean and clear of clutter?
- Walls – Are they clean with all residue (including sticky tape) removed?
- Lighting and fixtures – Is the lighting appropriate and does it help create the right ambience? Are the fittings clean and well maintained?

EXTERNAL ANALYSIS

This section can be divided into four parts and for each part you should carry out a SWOT analysis:

1. Your customers

2. Your competitors

3. Beneficial relationships

4. Traffic generators

Example Strengths

- Location (situated on the corner of the High Street, next to a car park, and 90% of users have to pass the doors)
- Prominent High Street shop window frontage
- Established family business, been in town for two generations
- Undergone a major refit
- Sell locally reared meat, from local farms
- Won various accolades for fresh meat products in numerous competitions
- L.Chop (son) young retail butcher of the year
- Finalist for three consecutive years in Top Shop Awards

Example Weaknesses

- Double yellow lines outside the front of the shop
- Many shops closed in the High Street, situated next to a charity shop
- Situated at the opposite end to the pedestrian precinct
- Car park closes after 6pm and shut on Sundays (except Christmas)

Example Opportunities

- Launch of home delivery and/or carry to car service
- Join the EBLEX Quality Standard Mark scheme
- Development of take-away meal service (for business people on their way home)
- Take advantage of personal experience and knowledge
- Vary opening hours to suit passers by

Example Threats

- New supermarket with fresh meat counter opening shortly
- Independent High Street green grocer closing within three months
- Closing shops mean fewer reasons for people to shop in the High Street
- Son wants his own shop

10 EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL SALES PROMOTIONS

Undertaking a SWOT analysis should help you identify suitable sales promotion tactics, such as:

Increase customer awareness

Distribute leaflets in targeted catchment areas to encourage people to shop with you. Give them a reason to visit, such as 10% off purchases on specific days.

Stimulate stock movement

Promote a slow moving product by adding value or discounting the price.

Encourage repeat purchases

Give a money-off voucher to be used on the next visit.

Increase penetration of new/existing products

Offer customers a sample or let them taste something new. Initiate a BOGOF - Buy One Get One Free – or discount additional purchases, for example “buy a beef topside joint and receive 250g of our new sausages free”.

Bring forward buying peaks (seasonal sales)

“Order your Easter leg of lamb now and receive 15% discount or a free product.”

Attract customers to your premises

Get people in through the door with great offers. For example, “every customer that spends £10 on fresh meat this week will receive a free pack of sausages”. Launch a free prize draw.

Increase customer frequency

Think about a loyalty card or token collection scheme to reward regular buyers.

Draw attention to your product range

“Purchase any two products from this season’s barbecue selection and get the third free.”

Stimulate new uses for products

“Free savoury mince spicy mix when you purchase 500g of beef or lamb.”

Increase appeal of products to specific target audience

How about a Bonfire Night Special? “Buy the burgers and get the bangers free.”

MAKING THE MOST OF 'READY CUSTOMERS'

At his farm in Warwickshire, David Eglin runs 800 pedigree ewes, mostly Poll Dorsets and Charmoise. Keen to maximise returns after the Foot and Mouth Disease crisis of 2001, David began thinking about direct sales of lamb.

Today he markets lamb year-round to customers who find him on the internet, via courier to the south of England and from a small cold table next to the farm office.

"It's a busy place here as we store 400 caravans so we have quite a few people through every day," says David. "That's a good customer base for us. We also use family contacts and other word of mouth means to sell via a courier service that delivers whole or half lambs to London and the south."

David specialises in Quality Standard Mark frozen lamb. He's a firm believer in electronic identification and now that he uses an accredited local slaughterhouse, he can guarantee full traceability.

The farm is a hive of activity, which means there are ready customers to market to all the time. David publicises the frozen lamb to anglers who use the farm's coarse fishing pool as well as to the caravan owners, while family members down south organise courier sales at their workplaces.

"We've taken care to find out what our customers really want," he says. "Many of those we deliver to near London like a modern cut which features mostly chops and steaks, perhaps with one joint. But we also sell a traditional cut which has more joints. Sometimes we can do a special cut that has Barnsley chops, shanks and sausages, too."

Everything is vacuum packed, with the exception of the lamb burgers. They come in all flavours, such as tikka masala, tandoori, mint or spicy.

"It's taken quite a bit of investment – we've had to bring in an industrial deep freeze and we have also just introduced the cold table," says David. "We work with two collaborative groups, though, which I am keen to develop. They promote us through their websites, too."

One of the biggest challenges, David believes, is managing stock levels to their optimum and organising lead-in times. "The cold table has been a steep learning curve and we have been left with surplus stock once or twice, so we do need to improve there, but that's only to be expected."



THE STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL SALES PROMOTION

There are four key areas to address when planning a successful sales promotion:

1. Campaign focus

2. Publicity

3. Advertising

4. In-store activities

In addition, merchandising is also a key factor to consider – this is dealt with in much more detail in the following chapter.



1. CAMPAIGN FOCUS

Before any publicity programme to support your sales promotion can start, you need to decide a number of things.

Agree on what you are going to promote

You need to have a “strong offer” for your customers, so decide what it is you want to sell. Is it:

- New product range?
- New service (i.e. home delivery)?
- The opening of a new shop/branch?
- A special charity event?
- A guest appearance, perhaps by a local/well known chef?
- Membership of the EBLEX Quality Standard Mark scheme?

Decide on the target audience

Carry out some market research - take a close look at who lives near the shop, who shops with you most at the moment and who you would like to attract through the door. Involve your staff in the research project.

Create a database of customers

This is probably the most valuable asset you will ever have! One way to obtain customers' names and addresses is to organise a monthly prize draw. Alternatively, contact local authorities and local business organisations and ask if they make their own databases available for a fee.

Check the Electoral Roll (you can do this at most local libraries). Once you have contact details, you can target these customers by direct mail to let them know about promotions or special new products.

Remember, if you have a database you are legally responsible for protecting the names and addresses of private individuals on it, and you must be registered under the Data Protection Act. Data protection legislation dictates that you cannot pass on or sell the list without the individuals' consent.

2. PUBLICITY

Having identified what it is you want to promote and your target audience, you need to think about how to reach your customer. That's where publicity can help.

Publicity can take many forms, from a chalkboard outside the shop to a more organised public relations campaign. Of course, one of the best forms is recommendation – customers telling others how good your shop is.

What is Public Relations?

PR, as it's more commonly known, is a very effective way to communicate positive messages about your business. It encompasses key areas such as the media, advertising and direct mail. When all these are brought together to publicise a defined objective, you have a “PR campaign”.

One tried and trusted way to promote your business successfully is via the local newspaper or radio station. If your promotion has a clear message or a strong offer that will prove attractive to readers or listeners, chances are it will be of interest to the local media.

Contacting the local press

You can do this yourself by following these simple steps:

- Make sure you have all the facts at your fingertips including information on what you are promoting and all the contact details for your shop.
- Call your local paper or radio and ask for the news desk.
- Tell the journalist that you have a story of possible interest and ask if they're the right person to talk to.
- Once you have the right person on the line, ask for their name and start building a relationship with them - this will make it easier to 'sell in' stories in the future.

It may be that the journalist asks if you have a press release. This is just a written version of the information you have given over the phone in a more concise format. It is fairly straightforward to put together your own press release

What should a press release include?

Again, ensure all the relevant information about your promotion is included, together with names (check correct spellings) and full contact details. Keep it short, preferably no longer than one side of A4 paper, and to the point. Read it back to make certain it answers the “5 Ws”:

WHO? WHAT? WHEN? WHERE? WHY?

Press releases make life easier for you as you can use them over and over again. You can include photographs and email or post the release to a number of different contacts. They also make things easier for the journalist – with all the information to hand, they are more likely to cover your story.

An editorial piece will certainly influence customers and help raise your profile. As editorial is considered independent, a good article in the paper or on the radio can really stimulate traffic and has the added benefit of immediacy.

One word of warning, though – as you have not paid for this coverage there is no guarantee of inclusion, nor can you dictate exactly how something is worded.

3. ADVERTISING

Advertising guarantees you the coverage you want. It is a much more controllable form of publicity as you can dictate precisely how your information is presented and the date it will appear. All this control comes at a cost, however. Costs vary depending on whether you choose a local or regional newspaper, a magazine or local radio/TV and what size or position you want your advert to have.

Newspapers/magazines

Local weekly newspapers are relatively cheap, while big regional evening papers or magazines can be more expensive. The cost is linked directly to the paper's circulation (the number of people who read it).

Radio advertising

Promotions on the radio can be a very effective way of getting your message across to a wide audience, but they can be expensive. Speak to your local radio station direct and find out exactly who tunes in at different times of the day. If you are prepared to negotiate and be flexible, the station may provide you with discounted rates for booking a number of advertising slots.

Door to door distribution

If you have a database you will know the areas your customers come from. For example, the database may tell you that large areas close to your shop are not providing regular customers. These are ideal target areas for “door drops”.

Door drops can support your promotional activity and drum up new custom by enabling you to target your message to a specific area with a printed “flyer” or leaflet. Door drops are similar to direct mail in that you can measure the response you get and pinpoint the exact areas you want; however, unlike direct mail they do not carry the recipients’ name and address.

There are four types of door drops:

1. With a free newspaper:

The flyer is either inserted within the pages of the newspaper or posted through the letterbox at the same time as the paper.

2. Solus distribution:

This is when the flyer is distributed on its own either by yourself or paid distributors. This is particularly useful for unusually sized flyers or where you have very precise targeting needs. Whilst this method is more expensive than distributing inside a free newspaper, it tends to generate a greater response as some people will miss your flyer if they don’t open the paper. The Door to Door Council (see page 46) is the trade body established to promote door-to-door marketing and maintain standards.

3. Share plan:

This is where a group of businesses share the cost of distribution by arranging to door drop items together. An ideal share plan may be to link up complementary local businesses, i.e. the green grocer or the estate agent that provides welcome packs for new home owners.

4. Postal service:

The advantage of this service is that your flyer is distributed with the normal post and, therefore, will reach every local household. As you would expect, this method tends to be expensive.

What makes a good flyer?

Your flyers should be eye catching and colourful. Make sure your logo and contact details are prominent. Tell the customer what you are offering and how they will benefit. Consider including a free offer or prize draw opportunity for those who send in their name and address. The text should be written in a nice easy style.

4. IN-STORE ACTIVITIES

Sampling

Nothing sells food products more successfully than taste and smell. Getting customers to try your products is, therefore, an essential part of marketing your business. Make samples available during the main shopping day or invite customers to a special evening event. Remember, though, to pay scrupulous attention to hygiene at all times when offering samples.

Complementary items

This doesn’t just mean offering more to the customer for the same price, perhaps as a BOGOF. In fact, although BOGOFs can be very attractive in the short term, they can drain your returns when consumers simply stock up to the extent that they decrease the frequency of their visits to your shop.

A far better method is to introduce complementary offers that encourage usage of your product, i.e. “Buy one pack of minced beef and get a free pack of stock cubes”. Alternatively, initiate offers that encourage new uses of core products - a stir-fry pack, for example, or recipe booklet.

Encouraging loyalty

Loyal customers shop with you regularly and consistently. To encourage loyalty, make special offers and free products available to regular customers (identified by a ‘proof of purchase’ or ‘ticket system’).

Creating goodwill

Giving away free samples or free gifts is an excellent way of generating goodwill with your customers. Consider giving away recipe books, calendars, roasting tins, steak knife sets or serving platters.

Prize promotions

People love prizes. Competitions that involve skill or judgement are always popular and this will encourage customers to leave their names and addresses. Seasonal raffles, too, can be very successful.



LAYING FIRM FOUNDATIONS

Emma Janaway is convinced that good research is the key to making a success of your farm shop, especially when you're selling fresh meat.

"We have travelled the length and breadth of the country looking at other shops to see how they do it," says Emma, who runs a farm shop with a large butchery counter in Hampshire. "We have learnt such a lot from other people, who are always happy to advise you."



When Emma's farm shop opened just over three years ago, she says they "advertised everywhere". A lot of money was spent, but she's not convinced that was the best approach. "We didn't necessarily target our adverts well. It cost us a lot of money but the returns weren't as good as we had hoped. Now we focus our advertising much more locally – parish magazines, local papers and county journals are a really good way to reach our customers."

Word of mouth, Emma believes, is still the best marketing tool there is. "If you sell good meat and add value to it, word will get round. You need loyal customers, then they will tell others about you. We analyse our database and know that 80% of our clientele live within 10 miles of the shop. That's why it's best for us to target our advertising locally."

One good tip, Emma says, is to offer money off vouchers on additional purchases and to give vouchers as prizes for local charity events. That brings new people into the shop who are positive from the outset. Good presentation is also essential, she advises, and the displays change frequently to keep things fresh. Excellent hygiene, modern tills and good scales are all essentials, she says.

"We have learnt such a lot from other people, who are always happy to advise you."

Novel marketing techniques also really help bring the customers in through the door. At Christmas, the shop mailed out flyers in the shape of turkeys. A recent initiative saw flyers shaped like tractors. "It does cost a bit more, but it really helps us sell more, which is what it's all about. You have to put some budget behind your marketing."

Emma says that the company is learning all the time. Her next challenge is to improve how the shop "tells the story" that much of the meat they sell is from their own farm. "We're perhaps not as good at that as we could be, yet customers do like to know that the meat is from our fields, so we're going to work on that."

They would also like to erect signs in the local area to guide people to the shop. "Getting planning permission for that will be a challenge, but it would definitely help bring in new custom as we are very near to major towns and the motorway."

WHAT IS MERCHANDISING?

Merchandising is the principle of influencing sales without direct customer contact using a variety of promotional materials. The standard of display and the manner in which the merchandising is executed are very powerful tools within the retailer's portfolio.

Ask yourself a question - how often have you purchased as a direct result of the way something was presented to you?

How customers buy: top tips

- Most customers buy with their eyes
- Most are right handed and so look first to the right hand side of the counter/shop
- Most are attracted to the centre of long displays and the right of short displays. These are called "hot spots".
- All customers make impulse purchases.
- All shops have the ability to influence sales by the clever use of merchandising.
- Use of colour is important and this is best achieved with garnish using vegetables and fruit rather than plastic grass or flowers.
- Customers are put off by empty displays. Check your levels of fill regularly. The crime here is for promoted lines to be off-sale.
- The two most critical sale times are at the beginning of the day and at the end.

Merchandising will persuade customers to buy the products you want them to buy

Merchandising will also persuade customers to buy additional products

- Poor displays of product and merchandising result in poor sales



- Clearly marked products, well presented in your shop cabinet display will increase sales



*QSM Membership Materials



Display Posters



Ticketing Kit



Beef & Lamb guides



Certificates



Recipe leaflets

* For further information about the Quality Standard Mark, how it can benefit your business and how to join, refer to page 37.

Point-of-sale material

The overall image of a shop can be easily judged by the care and attention taken over the manner in which its point of sale material is positioned. Poor displays of product and merchandising result in poor sales, while clearly marked and well presented products will increase sales.

Designing your own material can be cost effective if done correctly. First, decide on your theme, message and price. Then, communicate your messages clearly and simply.

When designing “showcards” for the counters, consider the following:

- Use a good quality card – various colours and sizes are available from all leading stationers.
- Use the appropriate size of pen for the size of card (use a permanent ink based pen with a ‘chisel’ head).
- Divide your showcard into two halves – top half for the message, bottom half for the price.
- Plan the design in pencil first.
- Frame the showcard to create impact and focus. Use no more than three colours.
- Remember the mantra “Eye line is buy line”.

Mount posters on foamex board (available from discount stationers) or use good acrylic poster holders that are easy to clean. Change the posters regularly - the same poster for more than two weeks will bore the customer, while a barbecue poster in February is simply irrelevant and will not communicate a positive message about your business.

Another good tip is to use posters to lay in window beds and empty display cabinets when you are closed.

Quality Standard Mark members can use specific Quality Standard Mark-branded point-of-sale materials. These can also be used to work alongside any national or regional consumer campaigns EBLEX may be running.

Make sure you can meet demand

It is not good merchandising/sales practice for promoted products to be off-sale or to run out so make sure you have good stock levels. But don't overstock to the detriment of your other, more staple products.

To boost sales, position the promoted product in a key hot spot. Customer flow within your own shop will dictate where the best hot spots are, but as a rule of thumb, a particularly good place would be at the front and centre of a window display or cabinet.

Rather than stuff the cabinet with your promoted product, allocate sufficient space at the outset and continually refill when required. Consideration should also be given to your usual pattern of customer demand through a normal trading week. In other words, don't promote roasting cuts on a Monday if that's out of tune with your customer requirements.

Benefit from seasonality

A effective merchandising programme will reflect seasonal trends and be flexible enough to take advantage of changes in the weather. One of your key strengths is the ability to react quickly to changes in product offering - something larger retail stores find difficult. If, for example, the weather forecast on Thursday predicts a hot, bright and sunny weekend, make sure your display on Friday and Saturday features a range of suitable cuts for the barbecue.

Offer "meal solutions"

Customers today are always on the look out for meal solutions. Any help you can give them by suggesting products that will complement the fresh meat on offer will be beneficial.

Make sure you have recipe cards out on the counter as well as jars of cook-in sauce adjacent to your diced beef display, or pasta sauces alongside the minced beef. Mouth-watering posters of succulent meal suggestions should be clearly on view in front of the customer, not behind them. On average, up to 14% of a retail butcher's sales are generated from dry goods such as condiments and sauces.

The golden rule

ALWAYS, ALWAYS, ALWAYS

Look at your own displays from the point of view of the customer. Do they look inviting? Are the products fresh and appealing?

Merchandising and display are as important as any other aspect of your retail business. Study your pattern of trade through the week, look at what sells and when. Be flexible and tailor displays to the needs of your customers.

EBLEX Quality Standard Mark Kit

All EBLEX Quality Standard Mark members qualify for a special shop kit. The kit contains plastic card holders, special tickets, pens and a printing CD. Make the most of this invaluable kit and use it to promote the Quality Standard Mark in your shop once you become a member. Other special membership materials include posters, beef and lamb guides, certificates and recipe leaflets.

For further information about the Quality Standard Mark and how to join, turn to page 43.



THE IMPORTANCE OF EFFECTIVE EVALUATION

Evaluation is a vital part of all promotions. If you don't consider how successful the promotion was you are missing a valuable learning opportunity.

During the promotion

It is vital you evaluate how things are going on a day to day basis. Record what is working and what can be improved - don't wait until the end of a promotion as you will have forgotten all the small and important details. Talk to your customers about their views and act on their feedback, good or bad.

If things aren't working according to plan, you will need to react quickly and develop a back up strategy. For example, if leafleting the High Street only works when it's sunny, don't waste your time there when it's raining; do a drop in an enclosed area such as the bus station instead.

Looking back

It is important to consider as many factors as possible after the promotion has run its course. Bear in mind that the knock-on effects and benefits of an initiative may not all be instant and may reveal themselves in time.

Recall your aims and objectives for the promotion and evaluate whether they have been achieved.

A typical promotional review form might look like this:

(overleaf)

PROMOTIONAL REVIEW FORM

Title of promotion _____

Objectives _____

Promotion Start Date _____

Promotion End Date _____

Redemptions		
A	Total weeks	
B	Spend on design/printed materials (e.g. leaflets, posters)	£
C	Spend on distribution (e.g. labour, door drop)	£
D	Other costs (e.g. free samples, advertising etc.)	£
E	Total spend (B+C+D)	£
F	Total sales required to pay back spend	£
G	Redemptions received	
H	No. of leaflets printed	
I	No. of leaflets distributed	
J	Actual redemptions received total	
K	Redemption rate % ($J \div I \times 100$)	

Comments 1=V Poor, 2= Poor, 3= Average, 4= Good, 5= Excellent

Customer Reaction ☐ Staff Members Reaction ☐ Operational Ease ☐

Were there any overriding factors during the promotional period that may have affected sales? (e.g. competitor activity, road works outside shop)

If so, how did these affect the result of the promotion?

Other comments

Would you run the promotion again? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, what improvements would you make?

MAKE SURE YOU COMPLY WITH THE LAW

It is very important you comply with the law in all the promotions that you undertake, to protect both your business and your customers.

The information below acts as a brief guideline only. It is essential you seek expert legal advice to ensure promotional activity complies with the law. Local Authority Trading Standards Officers can give you free advice.

Sales Promotions:

Remember that not only should your promotion be legal, it should be decent, honest and truthful. You have a clear responsibility to your consumers to ensure that they are in no way misled.

No advertisements should describe goods or samples as 'free' unless the goods or samples in question are supplied at no extra cost to the recipients (other than actual postage/carriage costs, where appropriate). No sales promotion should mislead by inaccuracy, ambiguity, exaggeration, omission or otherwise.

Availability

Promoters should be able to demonstrate that they have made a reasonable estimate of likely response and that they are capable of meeting demand created by that response. This applies in all cases except prize promotions, where the number of prizes available to be awarded should be made clear to participants at the outset.

Promotions with prizes

Lotteries (which are a distribution of prizes by chance where the customer pays to enter) are illegal unless you are a registered society under the Lottery and Amusement Act 1976. If you are raising money for a charity you should check that the charity is properly registered before you run the lottery.

The 1976 Act also covers promotions, which are not lotteries but where the winning depends on an element of skill. The promotion must not ask any question that requires entrants to forecast the result of a particular event. In addition, winning must depend on a substantial degree of skill.

If you are running a promotion with prizes (e.g. business card draws), entry instructions should be clearly worded on point-of-sale material. The material should explain exactly what participants are required to do. Complex rules should be avoided. Entry instructions should state clearly the following information, as appropriate:

- The closing date
- Any restriction on the number of entries or prizes which may be won
- Any requirement for proof of purchase
- A description of prizes
- Any age, eligibility or geographical restrictions
- Where notification of winners and results can be obtained.
- The criteria for judging entries
- Ownership of copyright entries
- If entries are returnable by the promoter, state how they will be returned
- How participants may obtain any supplementary rules which may apply
- Whether a cash alternative to any prize is available
- Whether any further permission is required e.g. from parent or employer
- Any intended post-event publicity

Promotions involving charities

If your promotional activity aims to support a charity, there are specific rules to be observed.

If the beneficiary is not a registered charity, you must define its nature and objectives on all point-of-sale material. You can make no limit on your customers' contribution to the charity. If you set a target of £500 to be raised and you actually raise £1,000, all proceeds must go to the charity.

If anyone asks you to supply authenticated details on the amount of money that you have raised for the charity, you must comply with the request, so please ensure you ask the charity for a receipt.

If you run a raffle, ensure you do not call it a prize draw or you may fall foul of other legislation.

Follow-up publicity

If you run a promotion which will require participants to become involved in further publicity or advertising after the event has finished, you should make this clear to participants at the outset. You should also specify in promotional material both when and how prize winners will be informed of results.

If you are running a competition, the activity should be judged by an independent person, not someone involved with your business or the activity.

Mailings

If you use a database to support your mailing activities, it is very important that it is current, otherwise your efforts will be wasted. Always keep your database up to date and remember that when a consumer requests that their name is removed from the list, all possible steps must be taken to ensure that this is done. For more information on maintaining databases, contact the Office of the Information Commissioner (page 46)

Databases and contact lists can be purchased from a number of sources, although you may want to consider approaching your local paper first to discuss a direct mail insertion (see page 20).

Sales and other special events

In a 'sale', all goods offered must have been previously offered at a higher price. Goods which have been reduced should be marked with both the original higher price and the reduced price. They should be distinguished from goods which have not been reduced.

Retail Law and the labelling of beef

There are a number of laws and regulations that apply to labelling, product descriptions, sell-by and use-by dates. These laws are enforced by Local Authority Trading Standards Departments and have criminal law status with fines and imprisonment for offences.

The onus is on you to ensure that you are complying with all legislation relevant to the running of your business. If you require further information contact your Local Trading Standards Officer or the Food Standards Agency. Alternatively, call the DEFRA helpline on 08459 33 55 77.

In addition to this general labelling legislation, there are special regulations relating to the labelling of beef. These regulations came into force in 1998 and significantly affect the way you can label beef and veal within your shop.

The country of origin and place of slaughter must be specified on the label together with a description of the product as 'beef'. Any additional claims made (eg breed type) must be registered with Defra and independently audited at your expense. Members of the Quality Standard Mark scheme are covered for certain claims, ie 'Farm Assured'.

If you are unsure about the extent of the regulations, contact the Defra helpline on 08459 33 55 77 or your local Trading Standards Office. Alternatively, visit www.defra.gov.uk.

Marketing over the internet

More and more businesses, particularly farm shops, are selling their meat direct to the consumer via the internet. This could be a very useful add-on to your core business. Bear in mind, though, that there are several key areas to consider when planning to provide an internet based service.

Your business website

In order for you to market your business on the internet, you need to launch a suitable website which clearly features the products you are selling. There are lots of specialist website design companies that can help you, but before you contact them you will need to think about:

- what you want to sell;
- issues relating to pricing and packaging; and
- how you propose to deliver orders to your customers.

It may be wise to start off with only a few selected choice products. Remember that consistency of product is important and that you will be judged on product appearance, not just how it tastes.

Ordering and delivery

Customers will require a simple and secure format to pay for their orders so you will either need to set up formal secure credit card online ordering facilities, or provide a phone or fax number for customers to call with their credit card number.

Special rates can be negotiated with dedicated distribution companies to ensure all orders are delivered quickly and professionally. Alternatively, postal or independent courier services are available. Discuss thoroughly your requirements and delivery deadlines in relation to product shelf life and your customer requests. It doesn't matter how good the product was when it left your shop, if it reaches the customer late and damaged you won't receive a repeat order.

Customer complaints

You will need to have a procedure in place to deal with customer complaints (should they arise) and understand what your legal obligations are in relation to distance selling, money back guarantees and food safety legislation.

Complying with food safety laws

Just as you are in a shop, businesses are governed by strict UK food hygiene and safety legislation when selling food products over the internet. It may be necessary to get approval from your local Trading Standards Office or Environmental Health Department before you start your new business venture.

Not only will the products have to be packed in a suitably hygienic fashion, they must also be protected from contamination. Product deterioration must be controlled by temperature. Various types of specialist packaging, including packing with dry ice, are available in the market place.

Promoting your website

You will only get orders from your website if internet users know it exists. Promote your site in the same way you promote your business – see our section on this earlier in the guide. And most importantly, make sure your website design agency knows how to maximise internet searches to ensure your site comes near the top.

This kind of specific marketing activity is very specialist so if you are considering a move onto the internet, you may prefer to tap into some expert help. Your local Business Link office should be able to give advice.

MASTERING THE WORLD WIDE WEB

“Quietly gaining momentum.” That’s how John Geldard describes the website he set up 12 months ago to market meat from his Lake District farm shop.

The website was a new venture to increase volume sales and John is really pleased with progress to date. Flyers and packaging have been produced to publicise the site’s address and new customers have been brought in from London and the south of England.



Beef, saltmarsh lamb and pork sold through the website and the shop is all produced locally in the Lakes. The beef and lamb bear the Quality Standard Mark and are from the Geldards’ own Cumbrian farm and prepared in the cutting room behind the farm shop. Farm shop manager, Paul Harrison, is tasked with developing web-based sales and he is positive about the future.

(Continued overleaf)

“Our customers want assured meat and now that our local abattoir is accredited we can provide what they want,” says John. “We have had some wonderful feedback. We can provide better quality so customers are prepared to pay for it.”

“We can provide better quality so customers are prepared to pay for it.”

At the moment, buyers can view products online and add purchases to their own “basket” before paying via a secure credit card system. Alternatively, they can choose to print off an order form and either fax or phone their orders to the shop. Payment is then organised over the phone. All orders are delivered in three days, with standard deliveries taking place between Tuesday and Friday. A surcharge is levied for Saturdays.

Paul says that one of his biggest challenges is getting the website further up the Google search engine listings. “If people know about us, they order from us and we get a lot of repeat orders,” he says. “The website address is on all our packaging, whether that’s for items sold in the shop or via the internet. We keep all the email addresses in a database and contact people with special offers. That’s an excellent way of driving more sales.”

“The website address is on all our packaging, whether that’s for items sold in the shop or via the internet.”

Meeting consumer needs

Over recent years, the meat industry has been striving to aspire to new standards in quality, consistency and product integrity. Consumers increasingly want to know where the meat they are buying comes from.

In response to this, EBLEX launched the Quality Standard Mark for Beef and Lamb in November 2004.

Quality Standard Mark for Beef and Lamb



The Quality Standard Mark for Beef and Lamb is a scheme that provides retailers and consumers with high levels of assurances about the meat which is purchased and sold.

Quality Standard beef and lamb are produced by a supply chain which is fully assured and independently inspected at every stage from farm to meat counter. It is the only scheme to cover eating quality, and in so doing it includes such factors as tenderness, succulence and special processing requirements where appropriate.

The benefits of the scheme to you as a retailer include:

- Potential to grow your business as demand increases for quality assured products.
- Potential to benefit from extensive marketing support including TV and press advertising.
- A fully assured supply chain with traceability back to the farm.
- Uniform standards and compliance with all current Codes of Practice.
- The ability to satisfy consumer demand for product integrity.

The Quality Standard Mark for Beef and Lamb also covers beef mince and beefburgers.

Qualifying schemes

Businesses registered in the EBLEX Quality Standard Mark scheme must be registered with one of the following qualifying schemes:

	Beef & Lamb
Farm Assurance/ Assured Auction Mart	Assured British Meat Standards through FABB L Beef and Lamb or ACCS Beef and Lamb ABM Auction Mark Standard Farm Assured Welsh Livestock Northern Ireland Farm Quality Assurance Scheme Specially Selected Scottish Farm Assured (The QMS Farm Assured Cattle and Sheep Standard) Genesis Quality Assurance (Whole Farm) (Beef and Sheep Module) Soil Association Farm Assurance Module for Beef and Lamb
Abattoir	ABM Abattoir, Cutting and Packing Plant Standard (Core + Module A) British Retail Consortium Standard Quality Meat Scotland Processor Standard Soil Association Processor Module
Cutting Plant	ABM Abattoir, Cutting and Packing Plant Standard (Core + Module B) British Retail Consortium Standard Quality Meat Scotland Processor Standard Soil Association Processor Module ABM/NACB Catering Butchers Standard
Further Processor	ABM Abattoir, Cutting and Packing Plant Standard (Core + Module B) British Retail Consortium Standard Quality Meat Scotland Processor Standard Soil Association Processor Module ABM/NACB Catering Butchers Standard
Wholesaler	British Retail Consortium Standard Soil Association EFSIS Storage and Distribution

Only beef and lamb produced, transported and slaughtered through an EBLEX-approved assured supply chain is eligible to carry the Quality Standard Mark for Beef & Lamb.

For more information about the Quality Standard Mark Scheme for Beef and Lamb, contact the English Beef and Lamb Executive (EBLEX):

Head Office,
Graphic House,
Ferrars Road,
Huntingdon
Cambridgeshire
PE29 3EE

0870 242 1394

or ring the scheme hotline on

0800 781 4221

Further information

Business Link

<http://www.businesslink.gov.uk>

The British Chambers of Commerce

65 Petty France
London
SW1H 9EU
020 7654 5800
<http://www.chamberonline.co.uk>

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London
SW1P 3JR

Defra Helpline 08459 33 55 77
<http://www.defra.gov.uk>

(For information on direct marketing and door drops)

Door to Door Council

<http://www.d2d.dma.org.uk/>

English Beef and Lamb Executive

Graphic House
Ferrars Road
Huntingdon
PE29 3EE

www.eblex.org.uk
www.eblexfoodservice.com

Food Standards Agency

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London WC2B 6NH

020 7276 8000
<http://www.foodstandards.gov.uk/>

Health and Safety Executive

0845 345 0055
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/>

Meat Training Council

PO Box 141,
Winterhill House,
Snowdon Drive,
Milton Keynes,
MK6 1YY

01908 231 062
<http://www.meattraining.org.uk/>

National Farmers' Retail and Markets Association

FARMA
12 Southgate Street
Winchester, SO23 9EF
0845 45 88 420
<http://www.farma.org.uk/>

National Federation of Meat and Food Traders

Registered Office
1 Belgrove
Tunbridge Wells
Kent
TN1 1YW

01892 541412
<http://www.nfmft.co.uk>

The Office of the Information Commissioner

Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
SK9 5AF

01625 545700
<http://www.ico.gov.uk/>

Regional Development Agencies in England

<http://www.englandsrdas.com>

Trading Standards Office:

<http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk>

The English Beef and Lamb Executive
Graphic House, Ferrars Road,
Huntingdon, Cambridge PE29 3EE
Tel: 0870 242 1394
www.eblex.org.uk

For further information about the Quality Standard beef and lamb Scheme contact the Hotline 0800 781 4221