

Crazy Combinations – Starbucks & Starbooze

by Robert Kriegel

Did you hear you can now get a vino with your cappuccino. Yep that's right, Starbucks is starting to sell wine and beer, sorry no Mojitos, in one of their Washington stores. Why! Well they figured that you come in the morning for a wake me up and mid afternoon for a pick me up, why not a keep me up after work by chilling with a chardonnay? They're trying to get you coming and going.

More and more companies these days are breaking out of the old traditional categories and not being restricted by old labels. Like Starbucks, with its mugs, tee shirts, music and now booze, companies of all types are adopting new products to their line in order to sell more 'stuff' to their existing customers.

Remember when Amazon just sold books. Now they're peddling everything from diapers for your kids to clutch plates for your car. Books now represent less than 20% of their sales. And today books are just one thing that book stores peddle which includes music, coffee, food, movies, lectures and trips with well known authors. Maybe they should consider a new moniker. Send in your ideas.

If you've been travelling you know that airlines now sell food, phone, Wi-Fi, and have a magazine full of mail order goodies. Europe's Ryan Air sells 350 million dollars worth of golf balls, perfumes, sunglasses, insurance and airport parking. And if you stayed in a great hotel you probably luxuriated in the plush robes, comforters and pillows. Well now hotels like Westin, Hilton and Marriott will sell them to you.

So throw out that old tired label that describes what you do and start making some 'crazy combinations'. Get into the heads of your customers and discover what they want and when, where and how they want it. And then surprise 'em.moving when that next wave arrives.