

Everyone Loves Samples – Ten Tips

Do you enjoy free samples? Everyone is delighted to try a new product. In most cases, feedback is positive and starts the road to a purchase and a potential customer for life. Every export manager is proud of their product quality. However, many companies underinvest in sampling as an essential marketing tool. Read Export Solutions' 10 Tips for expanding your sampling program.

1. Trial/Snack/Travel Size

Do you offer a small size suitable for sampling? Options range from a specific trial size to a one-use portion of your product. Many retailers dedicate valuable cashier checkout space or travel sections for small sizes.

2. Influencer Product Seeding

Digital influencers are critical when targeting the generation glued to their phones. Stand out to influencers with a handwritten note and a sample of your best product. Engage with the influencers after sample delivery and develop a relationship versus a one-time campaign.

3. Uber Eats & Grubhub

Online food delivery services are expected to record more than \$125 billion in sales in 2021. Companies should adapt their Foodservice channel strategies to include sample sizes. The format can be a portion pack condiment, mini desert treat, or a trial size of a related product. These can be added to a meal delivery from a high profile restaurant as a gift to their customers and to strengthen their overall usage of your brand "back of house."

4. Co-Promote

Sampling may be expensive, so it's always good to co-promote with adjacent products. Partnerships with other brands from a shared distributor or through a bulk mailing from your country's food trade promotion organization represent efficient options. "Think about the entire plate, not just your product."

5. Distributor Samples

Distributors serve as your local brand ambassadors. Include ten cases of samples with every container order. Encourage the distributor to supply a case of "car stock" to each sales representative to share with store managers. Donate samples to employees' children's sports teams to build goodwill.

6. Trial Size Shippers

Retailers love these profitable display pieces as they generate profitable sales revenue versus a free giveaway. Normally, these special display units contain about 30-50 units and retail for \$1 to \$2 per unit with a profit margin of 50%. Shippers can be efficient, with no listing fees, representing a simple "in and out" trial generating promotion.



7. Subscription Boxes

Amazon offers more than 400 monthly subscription boxes. A typical box contains samples of 5-10 products. USA examples include Nom Nom and Try Treats for international snacks. Delta airlines supplied me with a tasty sample box for lunch last week.

8. Embassy Sampling

Many companies' product portfolios represents regional cuisine, a new taste overseas but highly appreciated by local expats. Request that your distributor drop off cases of product samples at your overseas embassy. Sponsor national holiday events for the expat community. Your product may even be featured at an ambassador's dinner!

9. Event Sponsorship

Everyone looks forward to the return of outdoor concerts and festivals. These fun events can be impactful places to sample beverages and indulgent products like biscuits, snacks, candy, and ice cream.

10. Sample Truck

I love the story of a European protein bar manufacturer who painted a truck with his brand colors. His team drove all around town distributing samples. The truck arrived at stores, buyers' offices, and even major trade shows. No surprise that this manufacturer gained a loyal, youthful following with this adventurous approach.

Be generous with your samples! Delight potential buyers and distributors with your wide range of innovative products. Always include a memorable gift with your company logo. Remember that no potential new distributor will sign an agreement with you until their team has tried your product and given it the "thumbs up."