

## The Sweet Music of Quality Branding

*How DMX Music has helped Woolworths to perfect the fine art of changing retail stores into havens of enjoyable experience where consumers enjoy spending time.*

Uncompromising quality. That's the brand promise that has made Woolworths the retail brand to beat. Delivery on that promise is what has made Woolworths a local legend. Founded in Cape Town in 1931, Woolworths is today recognised as South Africa's leading retail brand. A household name throughout Southern Africa, Woolworths sells a wide range of products including food, clothing, beauty, homeware and more under its own label in some 300 stores nationwide as well as through franchise partners in Africa and the Middle East.

As it has grown, evolved and adapted to the changing world around it, Woolworths has always remained true to its core values of quality, integrity, value and innovation and has continually strived to make a difference in the lives of its customers. Known by generations of South Africans affectionately as "Woolies," it has grown to become part of the very fabric of South African society, a benchmark for excellence and an icon of quality.

The concept of quality is not limited to the food, clothing, beauty and homeware it sells, but Woolworths has understood the value of experience branding and how creating an enviable in-store ambience relates to customer loyalty and satisfaction. Customers enjoy the quality of experience in-store. A cornerstone of creating this experience is music and an understanding of how audio branding can help recreate a store as a place where people want to spend time. "The need for the right kind of music in any retail environment is essential," says Errol Solomon, Store Design & Visual

Merchandising Executive for Woolworths. Woolworths needed to create more of an atmosphere and theatre in the retail space, and introduced music accordingly.

"It's all about the feel good factor, which creates a distinctive atmosphere and creates a more enriching experience for the consumer - the retail world is essentially all about creating a multi-sensory experience" says Solomon.

Music is strongly cognitive and research shows that it has a powerful impact on business environments. Music can be used to enhance brand memorability, augment brand loyalty, increase the amount of time that consumers spend in store, and strongly influence the experience they have. More importantly music can influence consumer behaviour, improve staff service and attract new customers to stores. A Vision One research survey, shows that music can increase gross retail sales by close on forty percent (1), while nine out of ten managers say that music directly creates a positive and motivated work environment (2).

"Sound has a powerful connection with customers who are loyal to music because it is a part of their lives, and because of how it makes people feel," says Craig Cerman, CEO of DMX Music South Africa. "The cognitive and emotional power of music makes it a strong brand driver and gives music the ability to influence consumer perceptions of a brand. When sonic branding is astutely and strategically managed

in a researched and targeted manner in a way that makes it relevant to customers it has a determining effect on the brand. It is not a matter of playing music, but playing the right music. That is a research driven science which at DMX is done by some of the best music programmers in the world. The result is an experience which can dramatically uplift the consumer retail experience, have a positive impact on the equity of the brand and contribute significantly to an increase in turnover," says Cesman. Researchers at Leicester University discovered that brands with music that match their brand identity are 96% more likely to be recalled than those with non-fit music or no music at all. Further respondents to research showed that they are 24% more likely to buy a product with music that they recall, like, and understand compared with 8% where the opposite applies. "The power of music brings people and lifestyles together, motivates action, and even inspires cultures," explains Cesman. "The consistent application of music genres, that are brand specific, makes an unbelievable difference in stores, hotels, restaurants, or gyms and helps retail spaces become comfortable yet unique. Our equipment is designed specifically for commercial environments, so it is robust and reliable. It features hands-off operation, with the guarantee of management control, making the delivery of music consistent in all Woolworths outlets nationwide. Further to this, the system is highly flexible, allowing for the repositioning and formatting of different music at any given time. DMX is the ideal partner to provide the right music for retailers. With over 35 years experience, DMX delivers an unparalleled music assortment that is tailored to leading brand's desired goals, and has worked with many of the largest world-wide brands to drive people to buy more,

stay longer, enjoy more, and remember more. DMX provides both satellite and on-site music service offerings fusing the best technology with the widest range of licensed music to deliver the best available audio experience. With offices around the globe, DMX leverages both the very latest and the traditional hits in virtually every music discipline imaginable with one of the largest music libraries in the world."

Why does music have such a strong influence? Think about the role that music plays in your own experience, and the sound track to your life. Music touches the heart and soul. It unites, inspires and moves people to action. "In the food and restaurant sections, our objective is to play music that creates a feel-good and inspirational atmosphere, as if someone has come home from work after a busy day, pours a glass of wine and gets ready to cook up a great meal. We tend to augment and position the music according to our peak and off-peak times trading times: Off peak, we tend to play a predominantly instrumental collection of laid back contemporary compositions from well known singers and film tracks. During peak trading times, a rich mix of adult orientated pop and classics from the best loved crooners, creates a traditional yet warm and familiar feel. Since a vastly different demographic exists between the food and clothing customer it is essential that the music in both of these areas differs. In our textiles area, we play a mix of timeless pop, soul and ballads from a broad period, in order to produce a light, familiar atmosphere. During Christmas we like to play modern Christmas music such as Natalie Cole, definitely not reggae and no screaming music. The objective is to bring the brand essence of Woolworths to life through the correct choice

of music. So, when we play the latest hits, they are chosen to specifically exude a high quality/premium in-store atmosphere," explains Woolworths' Solomon.

"For Woolworths, it's all about the customers and making sure they enjoy the shopping experience. We play the right type of music to create a specific mood that reflects our brand and helps us achieve our objective of entertaining the customer and turning their in-store experience into a delight"