MILK THEORY

by

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MILK THEORY

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ABSTRACT

Breakfast cereal has been a staple in American culture for many decades. The wide variety of options available in the cereal aisle at grocery stores can be exciting but generously lacking in essential nutrients. This thesis covers the marketing and branding behind Milk Theory, a gourmet cereal cafe that makes cereal, and other items on the menu, from real ingredients. The results of this cafe will provide a wide variety of cereals with real ingredients as well as the opportunity to mix and match your favorite bases and toppings. Milk Theory will be created by researching target market, analyzing the competition of the cereal industry as well as neighboring cafes in Austin Texas, branding guidelines, and similar business models. The final result of this process will result in a cafe branded for cereal lovers of all ages paired with a menu, a responsive website, print and social media advertisements, printed collateral, package design, social media accounts, merchandise, and a hint to the interior space.

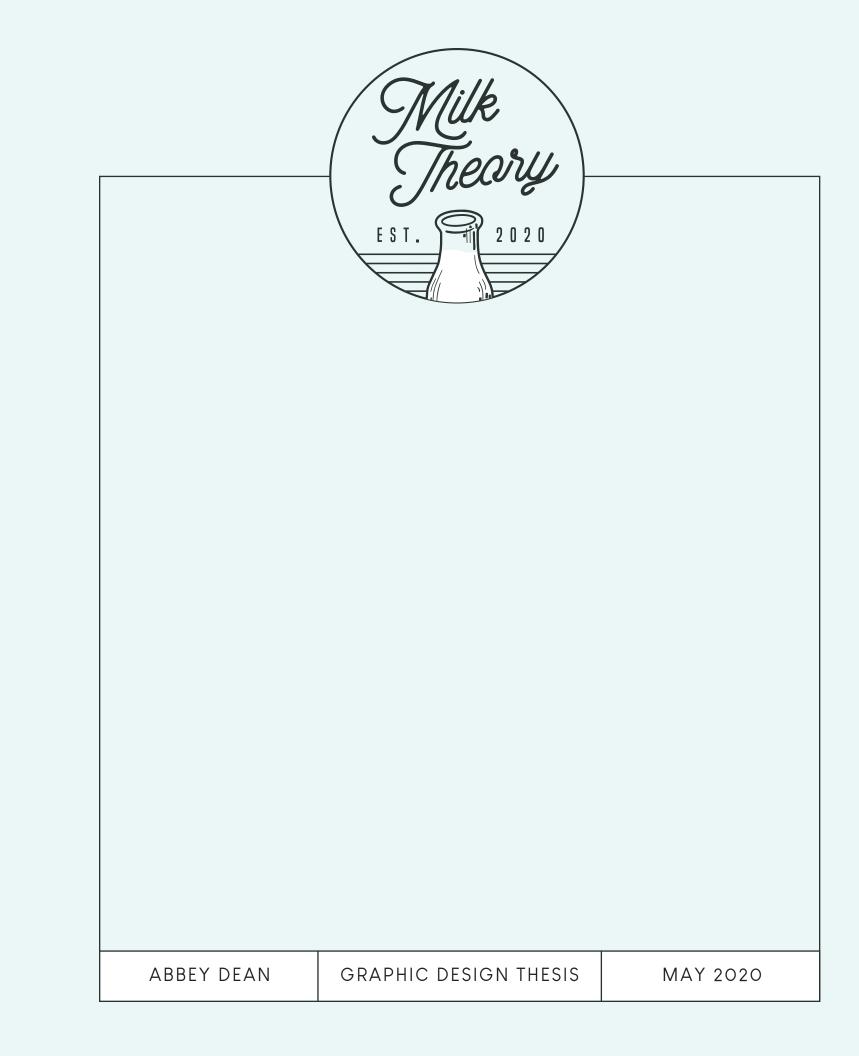


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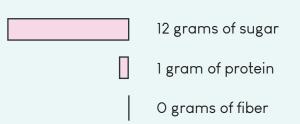


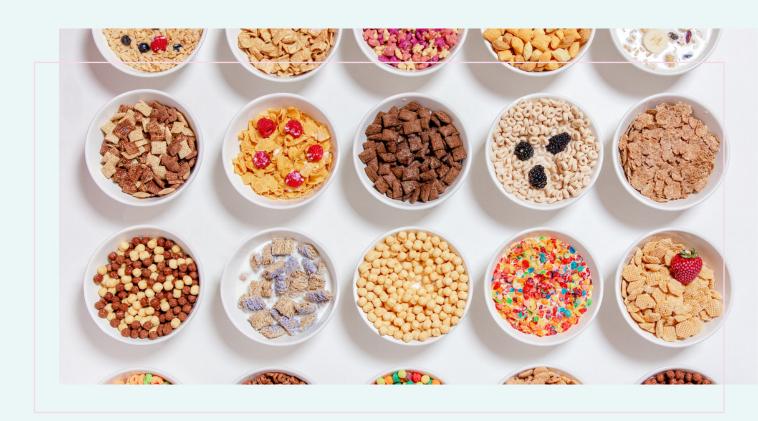
INTRODUCTION

Food is such an important part of our daily lives. We crave it, we yearn for it, we love it. It is so important that our bodies cannot function without it. When it comes to food we have all had a favorite type at different points in our lives. For some this might be a cold scoop of ice cream, a cheesy slice of pizza, or a juicy bacon cheeseburger, but for me it has always been something that satisfies my sweet-tooth. Ever since I was very young my comfort food has always been cereal. No matter the type of cereal, I craved it after a long day at school and extracurricular activities. The

mixture of dry cereal with milk is a combination that I can not live without. Even though cereal is such a large part of my diet doesn't mean that it is a healthy option for a snack or meal. "The worst offenders are sugary cereals that lack fiber and protein, which can cause a blood sugar spike and crash before lunchtime. For example, Kellogg's Frosted Flakes with Marshmallows has 12 grams of sugar, O grams of fiber and I gram of protein" (Drayer). Wouldn't it be great if we made the act of eating a bowl of cereal into an ingredient transparent experience?

FROSTED FLAKES NUTRITION FACTS





THESIS

This project involved the marketing and branding of a gourmet cereal cafe based in Austin, Texas. The results of this cafe will provide a wide variety of cereals with real ingredients as well as the opportunity to mix and match your favorite bases and toppings. Milk Theory will be created by researching target market, analyzing the competition of the cereal industry as well as neighboring cafes in Austin Texas, branding guidelines, and similar business models. The final result of this process will result in a cafe branded for cereal lovers of all ages paired with a menu, a responsive website, print and social media advertisements, printed collateral, package design, social media accounts, merchandise, and a hint to the interior space.

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive research was used in the production of this thesis topic. Descriptive research is described as a research method that magnifies the characteristics of the population or phenomenon that is being studied, such as cafes and restaurants in the United States.

Books

The Great American Cereal Book: How Breakfast Got Its Crunch by Martin Gitlin spoke on how Americans love their breakfast cereal, which is second only to milk and soda in supermarket spending.

Momofuku Milk Bar: A Cookbook by Christina Tosi gave insight to the interworking of one of the most popular milk bars and Christinas recipes to success for sweet treats.

Feed Your Mind: A Story of August Wilson by Jen Bryant tells the story of a child that learned how to read from soup cans and the back of cereal boxes.

Designing Brand Identity by Alina Wheeler guided me in my process of creating a successful brand that speaks a message for sexual violence.

Love marks by Kevin Roberts dove into the meaning of a love mark. Lovemarks is the term used for the marketing strategy that replaces the idea behind a brand.

Color Harmony by the talented Leatrice Eiseman breaks down the meaning and feelings that are tied to all colors and how they connect brands to a viewer or customer. Leatrice goes into depth into the "moods" that colors are associated with.

Thinking with Type, Second Revised and Expanded Edition: A Critical Guide for Designers, Writers, Editors, and Students by Ellen Lupton reminded me of the importance of typography as a role in visual communication.

Articles

Does Anyone Actually Eat Cereal for Breakfast Anymore? published by Harling Ross discusses the shifting popularity of cereal and why it has never died as a food category.

Cereal, a Taste of Nostalgia, Looks for Its Next Chapter published by Kim Severson explores the thought that cereal brings her back to her childhood and how different cereal brands target different audiences.

Principles of Cereal Science and Technology published by Stanley P. Cauvain includes the science that goes into a grain of cereal and how grains are a very important part of our diet. Breakfast Cereal and Caffeinated Coffee: Effects on Working Memory, Attention, Mood, and Cardiovascular Function published by Andrew P. Smith, Rachel Clark and John Gallagher examine the effects that cereal and coffee have on the basic functions of the brain.

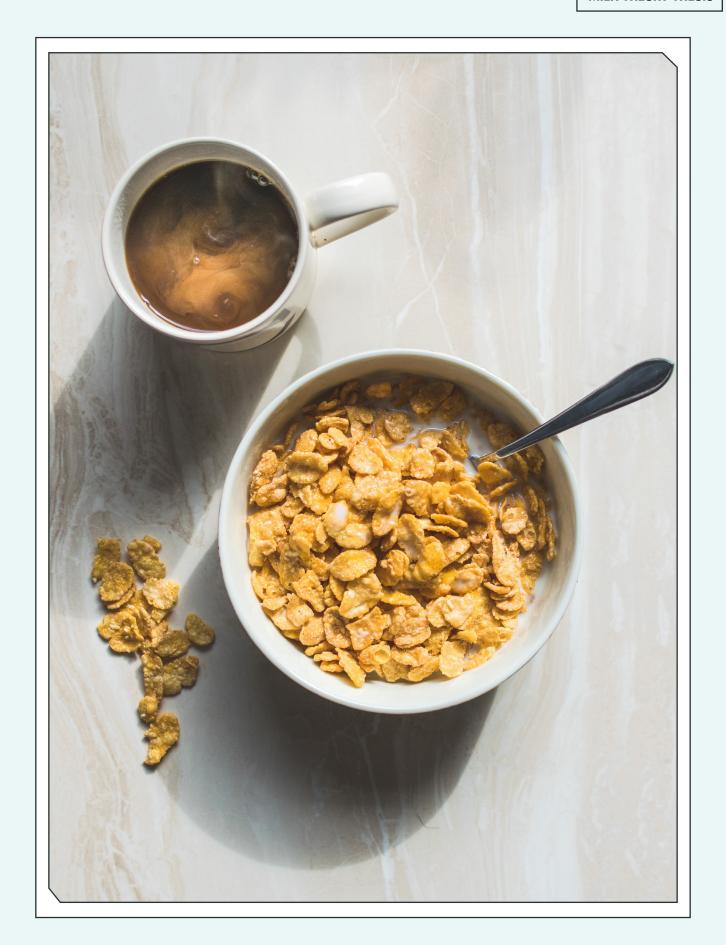
The Benefits of Breakfast Cereal Consumption:
A Systematic Review of the Evidence Base published
by Peter G. Williams dives into 232 articles with
outcomes related to nutrient intake, weight, diabetes,
cardiovascular disease, hypertension, digestive health,
dental and mental health, and cognition.

Other

Is cereal healthy? published by Lisa Drayer researches the health benefits and lack of health benefits in certain types of cereals.

From The Breakfast Table To Snacking Staple, a webpage published by Mintel Press Office, conducted studies about the popularity of breakfast cereal among different age ranges.

Brand Collaterals published by Hitesh Bhasin covered the different sections included in brand collateral and the importance of these elements for the promotion of a brand.



CASE STUDY: MENCHIES

Menchies is an example of a frozen yogurt establishment that have locations all over the United States. Their branding is marketed towards young kids between the ages of 3 to 12 years old as established with their bright colors and use of childlike iconography. One of the factors that makes them so popular is their wide range of topping

options. As stated on their website, our frozen yogurt is made with fresh milk from our California dairy, and our "smiley" California cows have not been treated with artificial growth hormones (rBST). Ingredients matter to Menchies, which sets them apart from other corporate frozen yogurt brands.

Background Information

RESEARCH RESULTS

Results of the research led to valuable information related to breakfast

cereal, advertising and promotion commonly used for promotion and

considerations for creating brand, collateral, and advertising.

awareness, the specific target market for this business model, and design

Milk and Cream is one of the most popular cereal bars located in New York City. They provide their customers with cereal treats that bring back nostalgic feelings from their childhood. One of the factors that makes Milk and Cream so popular is that they not only provide bowls of cereal, but they also provide ice cream, milkshakes, and ice cream pints. The atmosphere of this cereal bar was unique because of the mixture of pop culture and cartoons from the 1990s. They are very conscious of what their customers are expecting when stepping into

their shop because they have an mural to take pictures in front of, for the Instagram enthusiasts, as well as bar seating so that the customers can interact with the creation of their yummy treats.



Shatto Milk is a newly renowned milk company that not only makes great white milk but also milks with lots of exciting flavors. These flavors include chocolate, root beer, cookies and cream, and cotton candy. Something that I really enjoy about this milk company is that they push beyond the stereotypes of store-bought milks and branded themselves so that they stand out on the shelves. Not only do they stand out for their branding, but also with the use of colors in their milks. For example, the cotton candy milk is a cool light blue and the root beer milk is a light brown. Shatto Milk does a great job balancing the fun aspects

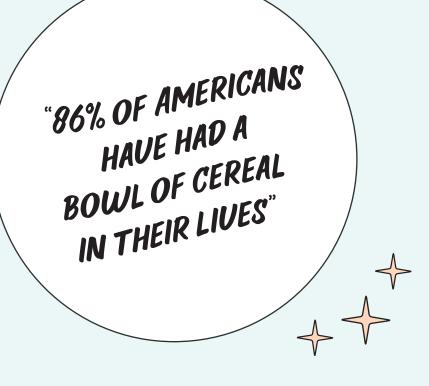
of their brand while maintaining a professional voice in the dairy world. The black and white branding on most of their products allows for their bright colored milks to stand out. Copywriting is another success of their brand because of the way that they allow their customers to trust them with their dairy production process as well as keeping them engaged with short and sweet wit.



CREAM

STUDY: MILK AND

CASE



Target Market

A study from Mintel published in 2017 showed that 86% of Americans have had a bowl of cold cereal in their lives (Mintel). The younger generations are leading the pack of cereal popularity. 56% of Millennials say that they have eaten cereal as a snack at home, while Baby Boomers come out at a 32% (Mintel). The target market for this gourmet cereal cafe includes men and women between the ages of 18–35. These people are young adults and parents with young children that have sweet tooths and love an outing on a sunny afternoon. The highest level of education they have received are high-school and undergrad degrees including Associates and Bachelors. Most of these people have had a bowl of cereal and may even have a favorite kind of dry cereal from childhood. This age range is full of foodies that enjoy going to trendy restaurants so that they can post mouth-watering photos on Instagram.

Marketing and Promotion

Just like breakfast is important for the body, marketing and promotion are the two most important aspects in a successful business, especially one that is trendy in nature. These two ideals are crucial in the adaptation of a restaurant because it established trust, recognition, and credibility. "A strong brand stands out in a densely crowded marketplace. People fall in love with brands, trust them, and believe in their superiority" (Wheeler, 2). The touchpoint of a brand, such as websites and print material, allows the consumer to interact with the brand and to understand the brands ideals and inspirations. "A brand is an intangible asset-brand identity, which includes all tangible expression from packaging to websites, upholds that value" (Wheeler, 42).

Collateral

Collateral is a crucial way to promote the brand to the market and to the consumers through printed materials. The categories of collateral that will be used are business cards, stationary sets, and menus. With the rise of technology in most consumer structures, print materials still remain crucial to the user experience. "During the point of sale and purchase, it is very important for the sales staff of the company to present something in a tangible form to the customers that highlight the company details, brand values, and the specific details of the products and services offered in the form of pictures and content" (Bhasin). The menus and business cards will be produced in order for the consumer to take something away from the experience, more than just a great bowl of cereal.

Website

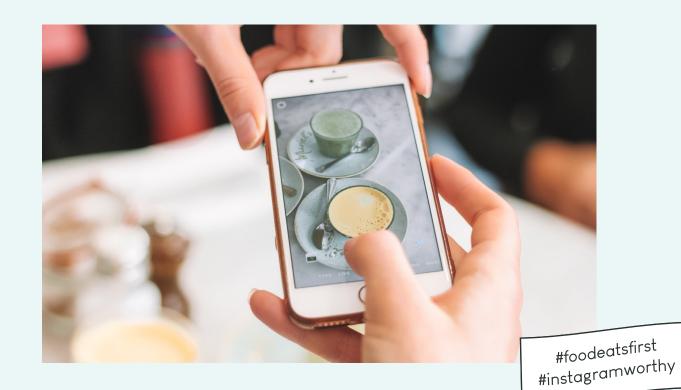
Websites are another form of marketing that is basically required for the success of a business. In today's society a consumer is most likely going to do research on a certain location they are visiting before visiting said location. Whether the consumer spends 5 minutes or 30 seconds on this topic, he or she most likely interacted with a webpage along the way. "It is very important for every brand to have a well designed website of the company showcasing all the details right from the brand

history, success stories, profile of the promoters and directors, offerings of products and services, core values of the brand, vision statement, mission statement, customer testimonials, to the contact details having company address, email addresses, and contact numbers along with the enquiry forms to generate the required leads" (Kimbarovsky). The website, just like other categories of promotional material, is a way for the consumer to understand the language of the brand before entering the space.



" IT IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR EVERY BRAND
TO HAVE A WELL DESIGNED WEBSITE OF THE
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RIGHT FROM THE BRAND HISTORY, SUCCESS
STORIES, AND CORE OF THE BRAND."

-KIMBAROVSKY



Social Media

Social media is a growing force in the marketing and promotion for restaurants all over the world. As stated by socialmedia.com, "more than a quarter of U.S. consumers have recommended a brand, product or service to a friend via social media within the last three months" (Fine). This statistic was posted in 2013, so I can only imagine how large the numbers are today with the rise of use for social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook. The term "phone eats first" is

a term that describes the moment you take a picture for social media before you actually enjoy the treat in front of you. "The best restaurants don't just sell food—they sell experiences. For many customers, social media is part of the appeal of dining out because it enables them to share their experiences with their online communities" (Fine). Not only does this act promote the individual's popularity, but it also acts as a promotion for the restaurant or cafe.

Merchandise

Merchandise can be one of the most exciting portions of promoting a brand, especially a restaurant. "Some food brands are so beloved that customers are willing to pay for a branded T-shirt, coffee mug or other swag to proclaim their brand allegiance" (Taylor). Our target market fits right into this category because of their influence on social media platforms. These individuals are loyal brand consumers that want to show their loyalty to their peers, similar to how sports fans represent their teams colors and logos on assorted merchandise.

Advertising Campaign

Advertising campaigns are one of the ways that a brand can be recognized not only for their unique branding but also their brand story. Each brand has a story and language that they want to carry across to their customers which can be achieved through an advertising campaign. "Producing campaigns with a series of touchpoints will grab someone's attention better than a single advertisement. You need to break through the clutter when promoting yourself, and marketing campaigns with incentives can do that for you" (Gilson). Striking headlines and copy can set a brand apart from its competition, which can take place in advertising campaigns that include print, social media, and web banners.

Packaging

In the world of food production, packaging is the portion of the product that pushes beyond just the yummy food inside. Packaging is used in order to promote a brand through creative dielines, witty copywriting, and design elements that speak to the story of the brand. Not only is a package created as an extension of a brand, but it can also be used in order to protect the contents of the package. Products can be damaged through shipping as well as just sitting on the shelves, so companies rely on packaging to avoid these issues. According to inc.com, "every year, 95 percent of new products fail. The reason is simple: Most customers don't have the

time or energy to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of the products in their shopping carts, so they use a shortcut to make their decision. That shortcut is your product packaging" (Conran). The importance of standing off of the shelf is crucial to the sales of your product, and this is also true in a storefront setting. When a customer visits your store, it is important to either influence the customer enough to return to the store, spread the word, or even take a tangible item with them. This item can come in the form of a product, such as dry cereal with packaging or even a printed menu. Customer experience is very important for the success of a company and brand.



Design Considerations

Other food-related companies that are already implemented in the United States, including Milk and Cream, use hues of blue as their primary color on materials such as primary logos and pattern elements. Color theory is very important to consider when brainstorming for this topic. According to arttherapy.com, "color may also influence a person's mental or physical state. For example, studies have shown that some people looking at the color red resulted in an increased heart rate, which then led to additional adrenaline being pumped into the blood stream" (Deborah). Through studying the psychology of colors, cool colors paired with black and white seem to be the most inviting and logical hues for this category. For example, the color white is seen as giving off "light, goodness, innocence, and purity. It is considered to be the color of perfection" (Deborah). Black and white are also representative of dairy products because of cow imagery with black and white spots.

Imagery and typography are important to a campaign because of the way that these effect the viewers opinion of the topic. Mouthwatering imagery of food in trendy environments can carry the brand further than just copywriting alone. This can be achieved through photography of different types of cereal, the products that the store provides, interior space, and the customers. For typography, words are very compelling for consumers of these products because it provides the context of where the ingredients come from and why they are being used.



"GOOD DESIGN'S NOT ABOUT WHAT
MEDIUM YOU'RE WORKING IN. IT'S
ABOUT THINKING HARD ABOUT WHAT
YOU WANT TO DO AND WHAT YOU
HAVE TO WORK WITH
BEFORE YOU START."

-SUSAN KARE

ACTIONS TAKEN

Brand Identity

There are two main ingredients in a classic bowl of cereal: cereal and milk. One of the items that sets this restaurant apart from others in the industry is the wide variety of milk options on the menu. The word theory has many meanings but the one that applies to this use is "the general or abstract principles of a body of fact, a science, or an art" such as music theory. The mixing of cereal and milk is an act of art that goes back for many decades, so the words milk and theory were combined to emphasize the wide possibilities that a bowl of cereal could have.

A mono-line script typeface was chosen for the primary logo because of the playfulness as well as sophistication of the brand. Aaleyah is a typeface that has similarities to vintage type in the 1950s such as milk bottle caps. The break in strokes in each letterform is a stylistic choice that



modernizes the type as well as gives it personality. A circle emblem was chosen for the primary logo lockup because of the reference to a bowl. The stylistic elements such as the milk bottle, secondary typeface, and line work were inspired by vintage milk cartons and caps in the 1950s.

The bubbly and pastel color palette incorporates the two most important colors for the brand, white and a tone of black representing a cow's spots, as well as a variety of pastel swatches. The pastel swatches were obtained from popular breakfast cereal imagery, such as Lucky Charms, and then reduced in saturation to establish the mature nature of the brand. Milk Theory's competition, such as Milk & Cream, uses white and black in their color palette as well as very bold swatches which seem to compete in certain instances.

SECONDARY







Collateral

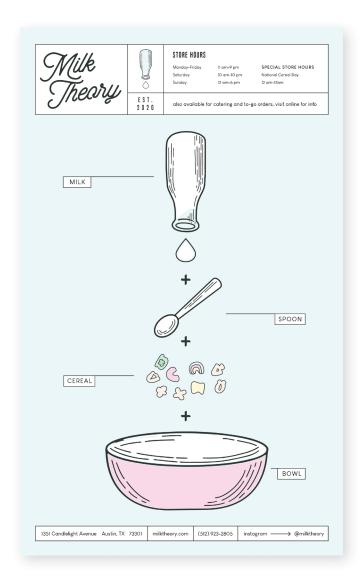
The collateral, specifically the letterhead and menu, designed for Milk Theory includes a variety of stylistic elements from the brand. These stylistic elements include grid structures, halftone screen photography, iconography, and typography. The business cards are meant to represent the culture of the brand with the lively nature of iconography with the hint to each employee's favorite cereal sold at Milk Theory.







menu





The menu leaves out the portion of halftone screen photography and mainly focuses on iconography and typography to speak for the products. These vertically-aligned menus are meant to be on a wall in the storefront as well as printed front and back for a hand-held material. Milk Theory's purpose is to create a space that people can come to enjoy cereal in different forms and expand their pallets with an assortment of toppings that they can find on the menu.

postcard

The final portion of collateral designed for Milk Theory was a postcard and stamps. These items are another form of printed material that can be shipped individually to customers announcing new menu items and more.



MILK THEORY THESIS

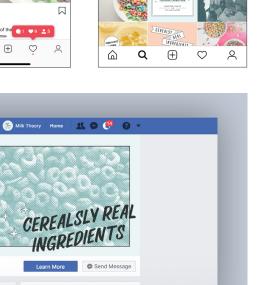
Social Media

Two forms of social media were created for Milk Theory, Facebook and Instagram. These social media outlets were chosen because they are the most

interactive apps used by the target market. The Facebook account will be used to promote new items on the menu, store hours, and a place for customers to post reviews. The Instagram account will be used to post items on the menu, highlight employees and customers, and post Instagram stories to interact with the customers such as "mixology" and "our team".

f





Milk Theory

Website

A responsive website was created in order for customers to have another point of contact with the brand as well as to learn more about the menu and story. Each responsive screen represents different portions of the website including the landing page, menu, about section, and merchadise shopping. Different styles of iconography and photography are used in order to represent the products as well as the grid layouts to give hierarchy to the typography. The customers can view this website while at home or on the go.





Packaging

Cereal boxes were designed for the packaging category of Milk Theory's deliverables. Each cereal box has the same grid style, but each flavor of cereal has a unique twist on the original name and a hint to what the cereal looks like inside the box. This tactic is similar to popular cereal brands today, such as Honey Nut Cherrios, because of the large name at the top and product photography towards the bottom. These cereal boxes were created in order to be displayed as design elements in the store as well as take-aways for the customers. They are available for purchase in the store under the to-go option of the menu.

The other forms of packaging created and designed for Milk Theory is a carton of milk and a canvas tote. The carton of milk is an item on the take away portion on the menu and this specific example is showcasing their special menu item, cereal milk. The canvas tote serves as a brand moment because they will be used by customers to carry their purchased products out of the store for people of Austin to see.









Interior

This photo captures a brand moment that is in Milk Theory's storefront. The slogan "cerealsly real ingredients" was turned into "cerealsly good vibes" to give the phrase a presence in the space.

Advertising

Advertising is important for this brand because it establishes credibility with the viewer. A playful take on the phrase "a match made in heaven" was used to emphasize the mixture of ingredients that goes into each item on Milk Theory's menu. Iconography and mono-line illustration styles were used to represent each ingredient, which is similar to the personality established on other items in Milk Theory's deliverables. The print and outdoor advertising highlight the same mixture of ingredients, while the social media advertising highlights an array of mixtures and describes the mixes in the bottom right corner. These advertisements were designed as a way to excite the viewer for the many options on Milk Theory's menu and to hint to popular mixes that previous customers have enjoyed.





outdoor advertisement



MILK THEORY THESIS

instagram story advertisements







facebook post advertisements







CONCLUSION

Through careful research and understanding,
Milk Theory was created for the people who want to
enjoy a fun snack with an abundance of nutrients.
People love food, especially Instagram—worthy food.
Breakfast cereal is a small niche that is a great fit for
the food culture in Austin, Texas because Milk Theory
brings together friends and family with endless options
of enjoying a classic snack.

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CEREAL SLY REAL (CEREALS)