SAMPLE PACK AND METHOD OF PROVIDING PRODUCT SAMPLES

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ABSTRACT

A sample pack and method of providing product samples are described. The sample packs include a number of product packages; and a premium package. The method includes the steps of receiving product derived from a manufacturer; packaging the product into a number of sample packs; and introducing the sample packs into product distribution channels alongside products derived from the manufacturer.
SAMPLE PACK AND METHOD OF PROVIDING PRODUCT SAMPLES

[0001] This application claims priority from Australian Application Serial No. 2009901291 filed on Mar. 25, 2009.

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0002] The present invention relates to product packaging and particularly relates to packaging of product samples and a method of providing those samples.

BACKGROUND TO THE INVENTION

[0003] In retail outlets, an ever increasing number of brands compete for recognition and adoption by customers. As the number of available brands grows, the customer is faced with a wider and wider choice and it becomes still harder for brands to stand out in a retail and consumer-facing environment. For instance, in a retail wine store there may be up to 8000 different wines for sale derived from a wide range of producers, and each producer may promote a range of brands. It is becoming increasingly difficult for one wine brand to stand out from the rest. Further, it has been found that wine consumers will tend to choose a brand that they are already familiar with. One reason for this is that a typical bottle of wine contains the volume of about six glasses of wine. If a consumer buys a bottle of a new variety of wine and then discovers that they do not like the taste of the wine, then almost the entire bottle is unwanted by the consumer and the entire cost of the bottle of wine is seen by the consumer as a waste of money.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0004] In a first aspect the present invention provides a sample pack including: a number of product packages; and a premium package.

[0005] The product packages may be drink packages, and the premium package may include one or more items that relate to the drink packages.

[0006] The premium package may include a drink pourer for dispensing drink from the drink packages.

[0007] The premium package may include a drinking vessel for use in consuming the drinks in the drink packages.

[0008] The drink packages may be wine packages.

[0009] The drink packages may be approximately cube shaped.

[0010] The sample pack may include an outer packaging.

[0011] The outer packaging may be of the form of a standard sized wine bottle box.

[0012] The contents of the premium package may not be determinable until the sample pack is opened.

[0013] In a second aspect the present invention provides a range of sample packs according to the first aspect of the invention which include various different premium packages.

[0014] In a third aspect the present invention provides a method of providing product samples including the steps of: receiving product derived from a manufacturer; packaging the product into a number of sample packs according to the first or second aspects of the invention; and introducing the sample packs into product distribution channels alongside products derived from the manufacturer.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0015] Embodiments of the present invention will now be described, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

[0016] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an embodiment of a sample pack;

[0017] FIG. 2 shows the wine packages found in the sample pack of FIG. 1;

[0018] FIG. 2B shows one of the wine packages of FIG. 1 in knife-line view; and

[0019] FIGS. 3 to 8 show examples of premium items that can be found in the sample pack of FIG. 1.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0020] Referring to FIG. 1, a sample pack 10 is shown including an outer sleeve 12 which has the same outer dimensions as a standard wine bottle box. The pack 10 includes three product packages in the form of cube-shaped wine packages 14. The three wine packages 14 are visible through an elongate window 16 provided on one side of sleeve 12. The pack 10 further includes a premium item which is stored in the upper region 18 of the pack and is not visible through window 16. The outer sleeve is formed from a glossy printed cardboard blank and constructed into a box in a known manner. The wine packages 14 are packed in carton packages such as those sold under the names Tetra Prisma Aseptic, or Tetra Brik Aseptic produced by Tetra Pak International. The wine packages have a volume of approximately between 150 ml to 250 ml.

[0021] Referring to FIG. 2, the three wine packages 14 are shown in more detail. In this case the packages 14 each include various styles of wine sold under a brand of a wine producer. The packages also display the brand and/or the name of the wine producer. The styles in this example are semillon sauvignon blanc 14A, moscato 14B and merlot 14C. Each package 14 includes a membrane portion 20 which can be pierced to gain access to the wine to pour out the wine inside the package. Also provided is a pierced vent hole 21 which may be pierced to allow air to enter the package to assist in pouring.

[0022] Referring to FIG. 2B, an example of one of the packages 14 of FIG. 1 is shown laid out in knife-line view so that all six faces of the package can be seen. The package 14 further includes identifying data 22 including sample number, date, region and winemaker.

[0023] Referring to FIG. 3, one example of a premium package is shown in the form of wine glass 24. The various wines found in packages 14 can be properly enjoyed in a glass, as by using the glass the customer can see the colour of the wine, and smell the bouquet of the wine. The customer may be motivated to subsequently purchase additional sample packs to collect a set of glasses 24.

[0024] Referring to FIGS. 4A, 4B the premium package may include a wine pourer 26. The wine pourer may include a protective cap 28 to cover the sharp piercing point 30 when not in use. Referring to FIG. 5, operation of pourer 26 is illustrated. Piercing point 30 is pushed through membrane portion 20 of one of packs 14 to enable pouring of the wine contained therein. The pourer 26 may be provided inside glass 24 in the package.
[0025] Referring to FIG. 6, the premium package may include one or more wine charms 32 for use in attaching to the stem of a wine glass or wine related premiums. The charms are of different colors and allow a number of guests at a party or gathering to identify their own wine glass by remembering the color of their wine charm. An alternative embodiment of wine charms 34 are shown in FIG. 7. Referring to FIG. 8, the premium package may include a finger food cocktail tray 36 or other novelty item that can be used in conjunction with wine.

[0026] The various premium items enhance enjoyment of the wine sample packs. Further, elements of the premium package may vary between sample packs. The premium package is not visible to the customer at the time of purchase, therefore there is an element of mystery and surprise for the customer to see what item is in the premium package. Customers can collect the various items thereby encouraging repeat purchases.

[0027] It is intended that sample packs 10 be sold at a price that is similar to, or less than, a bottle of similar wine. By purchasing a sample pack 10, a consumer can "try before they buy" and try out three wines for the price of buying one bottle of wine. The consumer may then decide whether they like any or all of the wines, and may later purchase a full bottle of one or more of the wines on their next visit to the wine store.

[0028] By producing sleeve 12 to be the size of a standard wine bottle box, the sample packs 10 can be easily integrated into existing wine distribution channels with existing shelving and handling facilities sized to suit existing wine boxes.

[0029] To produce the sample packs, a wine producer arranges delivery of large bulk containers of their wine to a packaging plant. The wine is packaged into the sample packs, and the sample packs are delivered back into the distribution network used by the wine manufacturer. Thus, the sample packs may then be distributed and offered for sale alongside the regular full size wine products.

[0030] Although the invention has been described above with reference to packaging of wine samples, it can be used in relation to other types of products. For instance, the sample packs can contain cosmetics, cooking oils, sauces, condiments, soups and the like. Similarly, the premium packages offered alongside the samples can vary to be relevant to the sample products. For instance, a sample pack containing condiments may include serving utensils or small serving dishes of the like.

[0031] The invention has been described with reference to a sample pack containing three approximately cube sized packages. In other embodiments, the sample pack may contain a lesser or greater number of sample packs, which may not be cube shaped.

[0032] In the embodiment described above, the outer packaging included a window through which the samples can be seen. In other embodiments there is no window, and information relating to the samples may be printed on the outside of the outer sleeve.

[0033] In the embodiment described above, the sample packs had a volume of approximately 200 ml or so. In other embodiments the sample packs may be of different volumes, and may contain equivalent or greater volumes and measures for food stuffs.

[0034] It can be seen that embodiments of the invention have at least one of the following advantages:

[0035] Consumer need not buy an entire bottle of wine that they are unfamiliar with, only to find that it is not to their taste.

[0036] Consumers need not consume an entire bottle of wine in one sitting.

[0037] Wine producers product stands out in a store against a backdrop of numerous traditional wine bottles.

[0038] An element of mystery and surprise arouses interest in the purchaser.

[0039] Purchaser may collect premium items.

[0040] Any reference to prior art contained herein is not to be taken as an admission that the information is common general knowledge, unless otherwise indicated.

[0041] Finally, it is to be appreciated that various alterations or additions may be made to the parts previously described without departing from the spirit or ambit of the present invention.

1. A sample pack including:
   a. a number of product packages; and
   b. a premium package.

2. A sample pack according to claim 1 wherein the product packages are drink packages, and the premium package includes one or more items that relate to the drink packages.

3. A sample pack according to claim 2 wherein the premium package includes a drink pourer for dispensing drink from the drink packages.

4. A sample pack according to claim 2 wherein the premium package includes a drinking vessel for use in consuming the drinks in the drink packages.

5. A sample pack according to claim 2 wherein the drink packages are wine packages.

6. A sample pack according to claim 5 wherein the drink packages are approximately cube shaped.

7. A sample pack according to claim 1 wherein the sample pack includes an outer packaging.

8. A sample pack according to claim 7 wherein the outer packaging is of the form of a standard sized wine bottle box.

9. A sample pack according to claim 1 wherein the contents of the premium package cannot be determined until the sample pack is opened.

10. A range of sample packs according to claim 9 which include various different premium packages.

11. A method of providing product samples including the steps of:
    a. receiving product derived from a manufacturer;
    b. packaging the product into a number of sample packs according to claim 1; and
    c. introducing the sample packs into product distribution channels alongside products derived from the manufacturer.

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