

Seven Sisters Kombucha

Emma Jones

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

Dr. Hocheol Yang

March 20, 2023

I am taking the opportunity to create an innovative, fictitious local kombucha brand as a capstone project. I chose this project to use all of the skills I have learned in graphic communication over my four years here at Cal Poly. The company will be called Seven Sisters (named after the mountain range in San Luis Obispo) and imitate a small local business. By focusing my project on creating a brand, I will utilize graphic communication skills including marketing, graphic design, branding, logo and product design, packaging, and social media. Additionally, I will be able to work with my favorite drink, kombucha, and base it in San Luis Obispo as an homage to my final months here as a student. Further, kombucha is an intriguing product for me to work with because it is a relevant and new market with room for innovation. Even though the kombucha market is under 20 years old, its market size and brand variety are quickly growing (Kim & Adhikari, 2020, 2). The kombucha market is one of the fastest-growing segments in the food market especially because consumers want “healthy” food and beverages. With this in mind, my goals for this project include establishing a brand that can be realistically launched as well as using innovation in order to set it apart from competition. Deliverables will include packaging mockups, thorough brand design (logos, color palette, distinct identity), an instagram account, and marketing items (promotional posters and graphics). Although other kombucha companies in San Luis Obispo exist, I want to be set apart through brand ideation and use of marketing theories to draw customers to my product.

A vital goal of Seven Sisters is to peak customers’ interests and encourage them to purchase the products. I used tactics to appeal to customers emotions and not only help them notice the product, but remember it. The Theory of Emotional Marketing is based on the fact that people rely on their emotions to make decisions, and tapping into those emotions can be a

powerful tool to sway decision making regarding a brand (Lerner et al., 2015, 2). Emotions play a major role in consumer behavior that reflect not only their current feelings, but call in emotions they have felt in the past (Sharma et al., 2021). There are six fundamental emotions: happy, surprised, afraid, disgusted, angry, and sad. If a brand is able to identify one emotion they want to elicit, there are certain steps to make a consumer feel and act in a way that is intentionally planned. However, brands must dig deeper than wanting a customer to feel just “sad.” Beyond sadness, there are more complex emotions such as remorse and pensiveness. It is important to choose an emotion that can be defined precisely instead of targeting the general feeling of “sadness.” These deeper emotions elicit acts. If a brand is targeting the feeling of sadness, but more precisely guilt, the consumer will have increased empathy. With this new emotion, people will be inspired to act, and then they will predictably make fiscal and physical donations if the marketing is done correctly.

In the scope of Seven Sisters, the Theory of Emotional Marketing was used by making choices that aimed to elicit emotions and therefore acts from the hypothetical consumers. Understanding which emotion I wanted to target was based on market research. The Santa Barbara/San Luis Obispo region showed the fifth most interest in kombucha in the United States (*The Rising Popularity of Kombucha*, 2020). Knowing that there is a market to work with here in San Luis Obispo, I targeted a young, academic demographic from the age 18–29. As for current emotions of Americans under 30, 52% reported feelings of depression or hopelessness (59% of those being women and 44% are men) (*Harvard Youth Poll*, 2022). With this in mind, the emotion I will be targeted for is happiness, and the deeper emotions from that are joyfulness and serenity.

I aimed to target these emotions using certain tools, the first of which being color. Color is a powerful way to produce physiological reactions that manifest in emotional experiences, outward focus, and overt action (Elliot, 2015). The two main colors of Seven Sisters brand are pink and blue. Pink elicits feelings of tranquility, peace, and playfulness. Blue creates soothing feelings, encourages intellectual activity, and is associated with freedom. By focusing on pink and blue in the branding, I will be reaching to target those emotions with customers. The second utilization of Emotional Marketing is the trend of brand culture. Brand Culture is based on the fact that consumers are highly concerned with supporting brands that agree with their morals. In a time where there are more options than ever, consumers want to support a brand that not only matches their values, but one that they could feel a part of. Brands are driven by culture, but simultaneously drive this culture (Maden, 2013, 2). Therefore, brands influence culture and culture is influenced by brands. Using this knowledge, Seven Sisters' brand needs to have values that are translated easily to the consumer and are actually real. Seven Sisters values quality, community, and innovativeness. I am targeting customers with the same values as Seven Sisters to encourage purchasing and to build loyalty through advertising and clear indication of these values. They will be easily seen on social media and a mission statement on the packaging.

In a similar vein, one last element of Emotional Marketing I utilized was creating a community feeling with consumers. Especially with the use of social media, the ability to create a loyal community of supporters of a brand has been a recent trend. By using community building, consumers will create feel-good relationships where they not only trust a brand, but use purchasing it as a form of self identity (Hsu & Li, 2022). One's identity will influence them to choose one product over another. With Seven Sisters, if a consumer identifies as someone who is environmentally conscious and supportive of local businesses, they are going to choose Seven

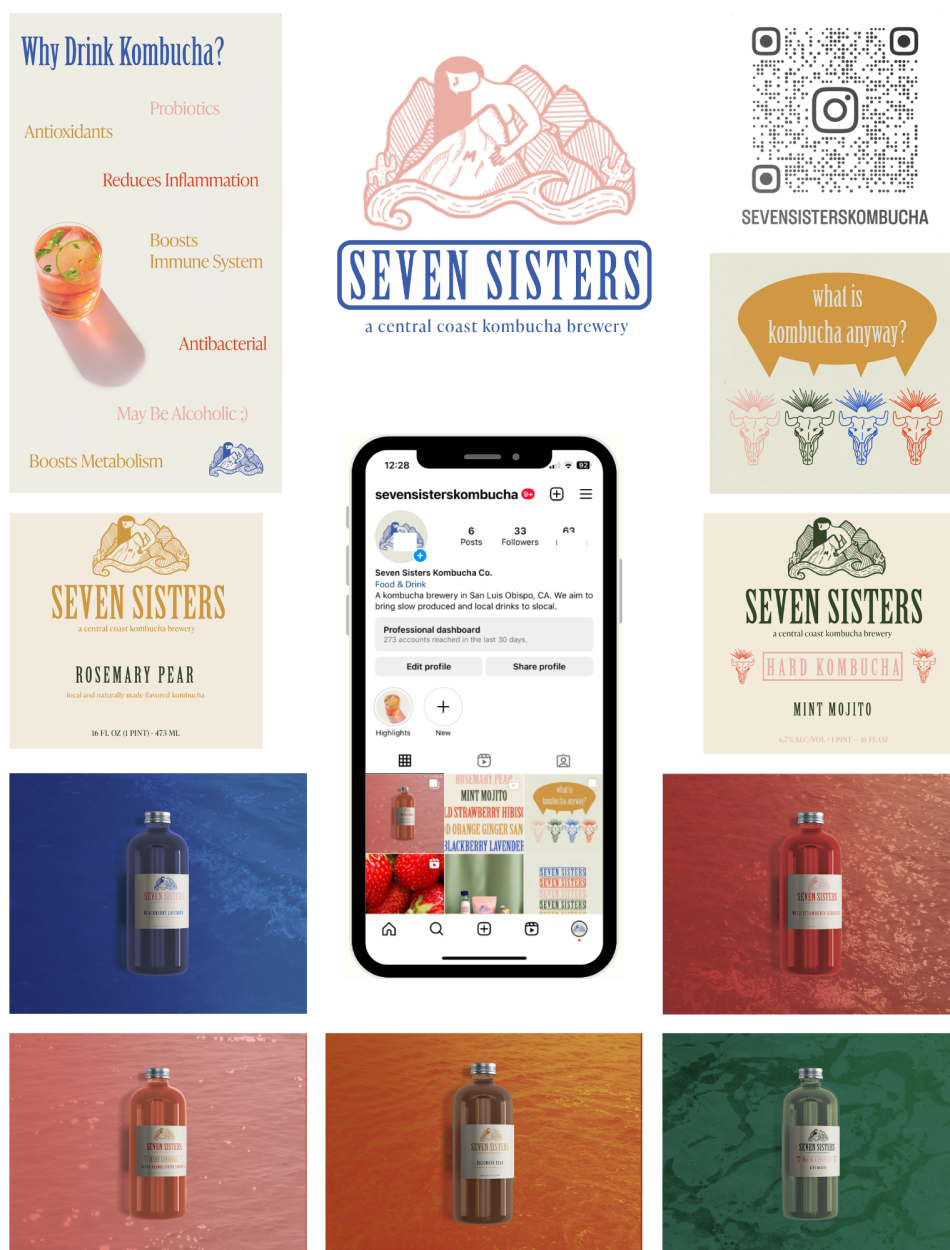
Sisters over a nationwide kombucha company owned by a major corporation. Utilizing this further, the use of social media can promote this image of environmental consciousness and build a community of those who feel similarly and would also choose Seven Sisters.

The execution of the project followed a pre-planned schedule. Starting in week one I defined my project and its goals. From there, I began conducting research. This included what typical kombucha brands are like, marketing strategies like the Theory of Emotional Marketing, and what makes a successful kombucha brand. At this point in week 4 I then honed down on the brand's name and logo and created a mood board for the aesthetic of the brand, as well as nailed down a color palette and fonts that are consistently used throughout the project. From there, during week 7, I started packaging developments. Meanwhile, an instagram account was created for the brand and posts and promotions began. I then created virtual mockups of the bottles and finished the final touches of the brand and graphics. Below is my schedule:

week 1	week 2	week 3	week 4	week 5	week 6	week 7	week 8	week 9	week 10	
defining project and goals										
	conduct research (product, competitors, etc)								finished product!	
		begin brand ideation				final graphic design work				
			logo and name creation			brand adjustments and final touches				
			packaging development							
						mockup creation				
				social media account and posts						

I believe the execution of my project was successful. I finished my project in line with the schedule and was able to achieve the goals I had set for myself. The only drawback I believe I faced was the scope of the project. My initial plan included utilizing recycled glass bottles for bottling the kombucha, however planning the execution on this was too time consuming and strenuous. I decided that it did not take away from the final goal of the project, which was to create a realistic and complete brand, to take away this aspect. By reducing the scope in this

regard, I was able to focus more on the mockup creation. This was the most time consuming part of creating Seven Sisters. However, making the mockups challenged me, and I am pleased with the way they came out. Below are some sample images of what I did for my project, as well as a QR code linking to the instagram account, where there are graphics and IG Reels. I am very pleased with the outcome of the project and learned a lot about self-discipline, using new software (such as ESKO studio builder), marketing theories, and how to garner and put to use what I have learned as a graphic communication student.



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