

MOOD: MEDIA

# GETTING YOUR GROCERY MUSIC RIGHT

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The critical role of background music in grocery stores hasn't changed much over the years. Your music should engage your shoppers on an emotional level and create an upbeat atmosphere that encourages them to deliberately peruse the aisles.

What has changed is the fact that music is much more important to your customers today than ever before. We repeat:

## **MUSIC IS MUCH MORE IMPORTANT TO YOUR CUSTOMERS TODAY THAN EVER BEFORE.**

You can find a plethora of stats to further support this truth, but here are two of the most notable ones from one of our **recent studies**:

- + Nearly 80% of customers like hearing music while shopping in-store
- + 65% of shoppers will relate to a store's brand if the store is playing music that the shopper enjoys

The former may be a no-brainer, but the latter is especially significant in today's saturated grocery industry. As we talk about in **Elevating the Grocery Experience with In-Store Media**, effective use of in-store music will create an experience that your customers will want to repeat. An experience that strengthens their bond with your brand and makes your brand theirs.

So how do you leverage music to generate greater loyalty with today's customers? And what are the essentials for implementing an effective in-store music solution across your footprint? We explain everything you need to know, below.

### **#1: KNOW THE BRAND EXPERIENCE THAT YOU'RE TRYING TO CREATE**

While you want to play music that your customers enjoy, it's paramount to play music that creates an experience that customers would expect of your brand. Consider how you want your customers to feel in your stores. Should they feel relaxed or excited? Pensive or decisive? At home or at a party? Make note of this before you meet with your provider.

Remember - you can use music to enhance different emotions during different times of day, or use it to inspire contrasting feelings to the benefit of the customer. For example, you can play smooth jazz during the evening rush to create a calming vibe for harried customers, or play tropical-themed music in the morning to give shoppers a fun and upbeat start to their day. This practice is a great example of **dayparting**, which will go a long way towards engaging your customers on an emotional level.

### **#2: KNOW YOUR CLIENTELE AT EACH LOCATION - AND WHEN THEY SHOP**

You also need to know your customer demographics at each location before partnering with a music provider. While we can't give away our science on music branding, we can say that effective grocery music strikes a delicate balance between your shoppers' unique preferences and your brand values.

When working with a qualified music provider, they'll use those demographics to help guide them in their music selection and

curation process. That said, the better you know who shops in your stores, the better you'll be able to connect with them through music.

You'll also want to know what times of day each group of customers shop so that you can schedule the right music for the right times. For example, if you have a specific day set aside where you offer senior citizen discounts, you probably want to adapt your music content strategy at that time. This practice is another solid example of **dayparting**.

### **#3: KEEP IT FRESH**

Music may not have an expiration date, but you better believe that your sound can spoil faster than bagged romaine if you don't pay attention to your programming. For starters, aim to vary and switch up your programs from day to day so that your customers don't hear the same exact songs on every visit. While your customers want an experience worth repeating, they also don't want a run to the supermarket to feel like groundhog's day.

Additionally, make sure that the music provider you choose proactively updates their music programming at least once a month. Every day thousands of new tracks become available for commercial use, and your provider should be actively seeking out those songs and weaving them into your programming. By the same token, every song needs to be rested for a few weeks every now and then, and your provider should be removing those that have played in the rotation for a while.

## #4: HUMAN CURATION MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

Music that truly connects with your customers and expresses your brand is the product of professional curation. It's created by true music branding professionals who:

- + Love music
- + Have a deep understanding of the experience you're trying to achieve
- + Know exactly what tracks your unique clientele wants to hear
- + Handpick your music and curate your programs, track-by-track

It's important to look for these qualities when choosing a music solution. Technology and the latest platforms matter, but they can't account for the power of human curation, executed by professional music designers who have a deep understanding for the symbiotic relationship between music, brand and your desired shopping experience. Having professional designers and consultants is especially important for larger, multi-location brands who may require a higher level of content management across their broader footprint.

## OTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR GROCERY MUSIC

### A. ENSURE THAT IT'S RELIABLE - AND DESIGNED FOR BUSINESS

With media delivery platforms evolving every day, it's important to understand your options and choose a solution that offers the most reliable technology - one that is designed specifically for business use.

For example, device-less streaming solutions seem like the latest and greatest these days. They're based on the same technology as consumer streaming apps, which can be convenient for some business users. However, that perceived convenience comes with risk, as the playback quality is entirely dependent upon a) your internet connection, b) the strength and reliability of the provider's feed, and c) whether or not you have other devices on your network fighting for bandwidth.

As a result, most device-less streaming solutions are especially prone to skips and periods of silence - which simply isn't acceptable in a business setting. Additionally, device-less solutions don't offer the ability to remotely manage content for multiple locations.

Make sure you go with a reliable, trusted provider that offers a **commercial-grade, enterprise-level software platform and device for music playback**. And if you choose a lower-cost streaming-only solution that doesn't use a device, it's even more important to go with an experienced provider that has a quality feed and robust technology in place.

### B. MAKE SURE THE CONTENT IS BUSINESS-APPROPRIATE

This point may seem like a given, but it's worth emphasizing. While you want to include music that resonates with today's younger generations, you can't afford to play any unsavory content that isn't fit for a family-friendly setting. Make sure the music you use comes from a professional background music provider that proactively filters their tracks for potential lyrics and subject matter that may be inappropriate for business use.

### C. LICENSED FOR BUSINESS

Federal copyright law requires that the music you play in your stores be fully licensed for business use. It's enforced by performing rights agents, who travel the country visiting businesses of all sizes to make sure that their background music solution is licensed for commercial use.

If they catch you playing unlicensed music, you could be penalized \$750-\$150,000 in fines for each song you use illegally. If you want to keep it legal, you can work directly with performing rights agencies to acquire licensing rights for your music. However, the most practical, affordable and efficient option is to work with a music provider that acquires those rights on your behalf.

Remember - using a consumer-based streaming app, your personal collection or a local radio station for overhead audio are practices that violate federal copyright laws, since these mediums aren't licensed for business use. You can learn more by visiting our **Music Licensing Page at <https://us.moodmedia.com/sound/music-licensing/>**.

### D. SIMPLE CONTENT MANAGEMENT

Having access to an intuitive, yet robust online content management system (CMS) is key - especially if you have a regional or national footprint. You want a user-friendly platform that doesn't require advanced tech skills, so that your various users can quickly and easily manage, schedule and monitor your music.



Speaking of users, the right online CMS will also enable you to set varying levels of permission, so that you can a) have corporate users manage content for all store locations, b) allow store managers to manage content for their location (if desired), or c) both. There should also be an option d), in which the provider manages and schedules the content on your behalf.

Always ask to see a demo of the content management system before you sign up for the solution. Additionally, you'll also want to make sure that the provider offers responsive 24x7 telephone support and on-site service in the event that you need assistance.

### **E. THE PROVIDER'S SERVICE SCOPE**

Speaking of support, no two providers are the same when it comes to service capabilities and scope. If you have a regional or national footprint, make sure that your provider can offer installation and repair services at each and every one of your locations. There's tremendous peace of mind in knowing that you can count on fast and reliable on-site support no matter where in the country your stores are located.

### **F. VALUE-ADDED CAPABILITIES**

As important as grocery music may be, it's just one element of your entire in-store sensory experience. You can reduce costs, leverage economies of scale and further enhance the shopping experience when you work with a provider that also offers solutions such as Digital Signage, Voice Messaging, Scent Marketing and AV Systems.

**Contact us today** if you have any questions or want to learn more about in-store media solutions for grocery stores. Our experts will walk you through everything you need to know about creating a memorable shopping experience that enhances customer loyalty.