What you can learn about marketing from food trucks

You've heard of (or perhaps eaten from) the food trucks? While it may be a fad, it is a huge trend right now, spawning its very own Cooking Channel show: Eat Street. I admit, watching this show is a guilty pleasure for me. And, it seems, most of the really cool trucks are in places no where near me like Vancouver, Portland or San Francisco, making me really really want to visit!

Food trucks are popular because of three main reasons:

1. Mobility—bringing the food to you;
2. Accessibility: making cutting edge food cheaper/more accessible
3. Specialization: they concentrate on one thing such as fried food, cheese, lobster, sauce, ethnic, etc.

That last one is key—food trucks are specialists. You know what they offer right off the bat. Perhaps you love Philipino food? There is a truck for that in San Francisco! Grilled cheese your thing? Then head over to the grilled cheese truck in Los Angeles.

I was watching Eat Street the other day and daydreaming about a visit to the Pacific Northwest to have fish and chips or great soup or something, when the show focused on a truck that made pockets (some people would call them empanadas). They make savory and sweet pockets. Great. And then, the truck owner says he also makes burgers. What??? Why? What do burgers have to do with pockets?

Pockets and burgers are not related. One does not add anything to the other. In the competitive food truck business, you stand out by doing one thing really well. People will go to your truck because you have great lobster or mac and cheese or

tacos. Or because you have great Indian or Korean or Mexican.

Pick a specialty, get really good at it and don’t dilute it. Don’t be the pocket-burger truck.