

## **MozhnoEst**

### **The problem – lack of trust towards supermarket food**

Our client had a background in food retail in Russia – and a business idea to launch a new type of small food shops in St.Petersburg. The grocery market in big Russian cities is extremely saturated however. Hypermarkets, supermarkets, corner shops and open markets are all competing for the same well-off customer. There's no lack of food but there was something missing – mass-produced supermarket food was considered poor in quality. There was a full universe of open stalls and specialised kiosks to fill the need for fresh groceries. It was a hassle for people though – after buying packaged goods from a hypermarket they had to make a tour around a butcher, milkman and veggie stall – a time-consuming routine in a clogged metropolis. The other issue was sanitary – most improvised stalls were not even meeting the elementary cleanliness standards.

### **Design process – discovering a new land and people**

First we got ourselves acquainted with the Russian food retail world, touring Moscow & St.Petersburg and visiting all types of shops imaginable. Then we interviewed shoppers, right on the spot when they were leaving the premises or even approaching them between shop shelves. Learning where they get their food and what they are unhappy about.

Based on these interviews we created six different personas, different characters representing different lifestyles in a big city. From health-conscious Victor to new mom Natalia to pensioner Zoya. And then we asked ourselves, what were they missing in their local grocery shop?

We also researched data and analysis of economic trends in Russia – to find that it is a contracting consumer market.

### **The solution – farm fresh food in the big city**

The concept goes for the quality one can't find in a corner shop or hypermarket. This small space (200 m<sup>2</sup>) is a destination – the foundations of the new brand are a reliable supply of farm fresh goods and service. The selection is not too wide, rather well chosen to meet your yearning for fresh food.

We modelled the concept considering that it has to fit into very diverse real estate, mostly first floors of big dwelling houses. We had to find a balance between making it feel like more than just another grocery chain, while avoiding the elitist trap. Accessible became the key word for the service concept. MozhnoEst makes shopping for farm fresh produce easy and convenient. It combines the cosy market feel with a comfort of a delicatessen shop. The food is well laid out and accompanied by on-site communication, telling where does it come from and who exactly grew the veggies or milked the cow.

The people on the ground are not staff – they are hosts, like the shopkeepers of old. They have to know the value of their shop and be experts in the goods they are selling. They know where different products come from. To have staff like that, the brand owner set a clear target: MozhnoEst was going to become the best employer in the retail industry. This also meant that staff had to feel good and look good, with easy-to-wear shop clothes that make them look like hosts rather than warehouse workers. This was complemented with conversation 101 lessons, to make sure interaction was easy and un-forced.

The key to the concept is in the name we gave it: MozhnoEst, which means “You Can Eat This”.

### **What makes it exceptional**

The proposition is built on food selection and personal service that helps people live healthier lives. It meant building a whole new supply chain straight from farms into the heart of the big city. It changed the paradigm of food shopping in St.Petersburg – you can now buy wholesome farm food in a modern, ergonomic and enjoyable shopping space, along with a reliable advice from a shopkeeper. It combines the best bits of a market stall and a deli shop.

This is what Oleg Karzavykh, the man who initiated the concept says: “The MozhnoEst concept sets us apart from competition and creates a perfect niche for us. We've launched first six locations and witness positive dynamics, receiving good feedback from customers. That means we can expand it to at least 40 shops in St.Petersburg and Leningrad oblast (region).”