

Del Monte Helps Walmart Be a Healthy Snacking Destination

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Del Monte Foods built out its back-to-school program at Walmart by iterating with new collaborative partners and embracing remixed tactics. “Everything began with the shopper insight that the customer is looking for a variety of healthy, satisfying options, and the goal was to establish Walmart as the destination for healthy snacking,” says Del Monte’s Carol Vella, formerly a senior shopper marketing manager.

For the 2018 fall back-to-school season, what started as a solo program the year prior had expanded to incorporate LALA U.S.’s yogurt smoothies, Wonderful Co.’s pistachios, Musco Family Olive Co.’s olives, Kellogg Co.’s Stretch Island fruit snacks and Fujifilm. Their joint effort targeted the on-the-go Millennial mom by highlighting a variety of convenient and healthy snacking options.

The creative messaging was “Hit the Snack Spot,” and executional tactics included shelf signs across five categories, digital display ads, a walmart.com showcase, Ibotta integration as well as “WOW” sampling. For the sampling program, the partners worked with Retail Sports Marketing for a custom execution at the front of stores (near apparel racks) that started in August and offered a combination of whole- and half-sampling. Employees wore aprons branded with the “Snack Spot” message and distributed Snack Spot branded bags, while Fujifilm provided Instax cameras for a modern Polaroid shot in front of a selfie station.

“Partnership enables a cross-category presence, increased impressions without increasing investment, and reaching new shoppers via association,” Vella says. “In this case, it also allowed the campaign to deliver on shopper desire for variety.”

The program was an evolution of the post-holiday, return-to-school mini partnership in January 2018, when Del Monte had brought on Kellogg’s and LALA as its first collaborators. Execution encompassed basic endcaps in 1,800 stores, sampling, display media, Ibotta integration and sponsored Breaktime Media content, though the partners were flexible to each other’s needs and not every tactic was executed together.

The campaign garnered strong buyer support and delivered strong results, Vella says, driving incremental sales at a 33% per store, per week increase for Del Monte.

The partners had also pitched an ambitious “WOW” endcap that would include a floor cling, shelf strips and header. The ultimate goal was to have this split endcap that would serve as a Snack Spot visual and cross-merchandise a variety of items, Vella said, but Walmart wasn’t yet convinced to get on board with that final piece.

Nevertheless, Del Monte’s collaborative approach helped build successful campaigns by adding scale, cost efficiency, and more visibility with buyers for increased awareness and results like incremental display.

Adding collaborators also helped Del Monte pivot away from Walmart’s now-defunct endcap TV Smart Network. For the prior 2017 fall back-to-school season, the manufacturer had executed a solo



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program showcasing its newly launched Fruit & Chia cups. That program provided a 300% lift during the two weeks it ran and some residual lift as well, relying heavily on the Smart Network. Shelf signage, in-store sampling and national TV spots also supported.

Vella offers this learning/guidance based on the work:

- For partnerships, create clear goal alignment (who the customer is, strategy, media tactics, expectations for timely responses), check store lists for sufficient overlap, maintain clarity about who is paying the agency fee, and stay flexible regarding tactics.
- For in-store execution, consider using stickers on cases slated for display placement to help direct store employees, consider test/control stores to test different scenarios, and ask really early on for display placement.

Source:

Path to Purchase Institute