



"got milk?" Goes Bananas

The only way we are going to sell more milk is to out-think and out-flank our beverage competition. Not just in our television advertising, but on the public relations and sales promotion fronts. We are, without question, embroiled in a very high stakes beverage war.

One of our strongest weapons, one which both the MilkPEP folks and ourselves employ, is co-op promotion with major food brands. The idea of co-branding "got milk?" and another brand such as Cheerios or Oreos was launched in California in late 1993. Since then it has evolved into a major part of our marketing arsenal and generated millions of dollars of free milk coupons (redeemed by our partners).

Most recently, "got milk?" stickers appeared on 100 million Dole bananas across the country – every one of them a reminder to consumers to buy and consume more milk. And because Dole believes the "got milk?" trademark adds real value and distinction to its fruit, this promotional partnership was so efficient as to be virtually free.

Looking back on 1997, it was a year of many promotional precedents and breakthrough ideas. Below is a recap of the "got milk?" 1997 promotion calendar, and some insights into these very special partnerships.

• **General Mills:** General Mills is our oldest partner. While we have fielded some terrific promotions, none matched the scope and pulling power of those in 1997. The offer, which appeared on millions of boxes of Cheerios, was for up to \$1.60 of free milk with the purchase of any two boxes of Cheerio brands. On top of this, the side panel of these special packs offered a "got milk?" T-shirt for \$8.25. Lastly, the entire back

panel was devoted to "got milk?" and "Get Cheerios." A similar promotion ran on boxes of TRIX cereal and offered our "got milk?" TRIX T-shirts for sale to millions of consumers.

• **Pillsbury Refrigerated Cookie Dough:** It is unlikely that any food drives up the demand for milk around the house like freshly baked chocolate chip cookies. (Perhaps the milk industry should market fresh baked cookie scent in aerosol form.) The promotion with Pillsbury, which ran nationally, involved a newspaper ad insert offering consumer cents off milk when they bought two packs of Cookie Dough. The goal of this promotion (beyond selling more milk) is to get consumers to eat a sweet snack vs. a salty one. Once this decision is made, the chances of milk getting consumed is dramatically increased.

• **Pillsbury Toaster Strudel:** While not as 'co-dependent' a food as chocolate chip cookies, this Pillsbury product could be crucial for the milk industry. The reason is that Toaster Strudel and the entire category of toaster pastry is stealing business from cold cereal. Our job is to make sure that people keep drinking milk, even if they desert the cereal bowl.

• **Quaker Oats:** Another cereal promotion designed to give consumers a price incentive to buy more milk. Quaker Oats brings a different and important dimension to our promotion program because their cereals tend to be more adult-oriented and skewed toward the healthy side.

• **Nabisco:** Nabisco owns and markets some of the largest, most milk-dependent brands in the world: Oreos, Snack Wells,

Honey Grahams, and Chips Ahoy. In 1997 the Nabisco corporate in-store display asked (in huge, bold type) "got milk?". Thousands of these displays were placed in supermarkets across the country, selling not only their cookies, but our milk. (It would be difficult to even guess the value of this exposure.)

We also developed partnerships with three truly miraculous 'brands':

• **Girl Scouts.** In the First Quarter of 1997 three adorable girls, dressed in green, adorned in badges and loaded down with boxes of cookies asked the big question... "got milk?". They represented the Girl Scouts of the USA and,

without question, our cutest spokespeople. This partnership worked for the milk industry in several special ways. One, it was the catalyst for an unprecedented amount of publicity. Two, it integrated local Girl Scout Councils with state and local dairy groups. And three, it reminded hundreds of millions of Americans that nothing goes with Thin Mints like milk – not Coke, not Snapple, just milk.

• **Cookie Monster.** Little did the Children's Television Workshop know that they had the world's best milk Spokesmonster. By working closely with the Workshop, we were able to translate Cookie Monster's insatiable desire for cookies into a desperate need for milk. As with Girl Scouts and all of our partners, nothing but



milk would work. That's one of the things that makes "got milk?" so special and so intensively competitive.

• **Snap Crackle & Pop.** If Cookie Monster makes us highly competitive on the sweet snack front, Kellogg's and Snap Crackle & Pop nail the cereal end of the business. But these three icons do more than say to consumers that milk is for cereal. Along with

Oreos, et al., they raise "got milk?" to a level that literally no one has ever reached before.

We are now being promoted by the best known and most powerful characters and brands in the food world. And the amazing thing about it is that we aren't buying our way in. These companies are exchanging the use of their characters (which show up on their balance sheets as assets!) for association with our advertising. What a great deal for all involved!

That's about all from Berkeley for now (or Bezerkely as my in-laws call it). As always, please feel free to call me (510-883-1085) with any and all questions or ideas related to "got milk?".