DBA DESIGN EFFECTIVENESS AWARDS 2012

Project Title: NESTLÉ PURINA PetLife

Category: 04 Packaging

Sub-Category: 4.3 Branding - Other

Client Company: NESTLÉ PURINA

Design Consultancy: Blue Marlin Brand Design

Current date: July 2012

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nestlé Purina PetLife was developed to evolve the Australian Pet Specialty category from a functional and un-inspiring collection of products, which were difficult to navigate, into a go-to destination for pet professionals and average pet owners alike.

The challenge was significant: following its acquisition of The KraMar Pet Company in 2010, Nestlé Purina hired Blue Marlin to create a brand in this under-leveraged, disengaging category that would remind consumers of the value of pet speciality products, such as grooming, tethering and bedding.

To do so, Blue Marlin took insights from human personal care products. We developed a compelling brand image for PetLife, based around the belief that, if a consumer is going to spend above-the-breadline money on their pet, they expect the same level of quality for their pet as they would for themselves.

Blue Marlin's strategy team co-ordinated PetLife's grooming products into an innovative, easy-to-use four-step process. With PetLife as their one-stop-shop for grooming, Australian consumers, who had forgotten about the category, were reminded of how easy it could be to take care of their special pet.

Since launch overall brand growth stands at a sensational 284% compared year-on-year to KraMar sales figures. Within the six months following launch, sales of the bedding range soared upwards by 400% whilst tethering sales grew by 263% in nine months. The grooming range has seen growth of 230%, also in nine months, with 90% of retailers requesting to stock the entire selection.

Nestlé Purina PetLife has without doubt re-awakened and re-defined a dormant category, with itself as category leader.

(272 words)

PROJECT OVERVIEW

OUTLINE OF PROJECT BRIEF

The Purina brand has been dedicated for over 80 years to improving the health and lifestyle of cats and dogs through quality nutrition and care and this continues to drive everything the brand does. Purina's core belief is that a healthy pet makes for a happier home.

The challenge was to develop a new master brand for Nestlé's Purina pet division, following the 2010 acquisition of the KraMar Pet Company, with the vision of becoming category leader by entering the Pet Specialty accessories market. The task was to implement this with a recently created range of grooming, tethering and bedding products.

The starting point from the inherited KraMar range was an ex-factory value of $4.4 million AUD. The financial target was to grow this sharply and quickly, to at least double KraMar's value in a short period (6 – 9 months) by creating a new and engaging brand.

The overall design had to:

- Elevate the essentially non-branded Pet Speciality category by introducing a lifestyle and emotion-driven offering with truly branded appeal.

- Deliver a design-led platform that would give PetLife the foundation to drive Nestlé Purina's agenda across multiple categories and segments for future potential growth.

- Deliver an instantly recognisable brand expression that is versatile enough to be tailored across the entire PetLife portfolio.

- Cut through the cluttered Pet Speciality retail fixtures with an innovative packaging structure that maximise shelf stand-out.

- Develop a proprietary system that highlights Nestlé Purina PetLife's expertise in the grooming segment.

DESCRIPTION

With a diverse portfolio of pet foods, Nestlé Purina is a leading global pet care business.

The new Purina PetLife range is the company's first significant move into the Pet Specialty channel.

The Purina PetLife grooming range has been developed to cater to all grooming needs whether professional or at home. The 4-Step Grooming Process offers a complete grooming solution for both retailers and consumers and delivers a 'one-stop-shop' opportunity.

PetLife's bedding and tethering products are specially designed for pet-proof durability; their fabric is odour, tear, chew and flea resistant. In addition to exceptional functionality, the PetLife portfolio also offers more fashion-orientated accessories, for more style-conscious pets.

OVERVIEW OF MARKET

Australia is a nation of pet lovers. In 2010, Australia had the highest pet ownership statistics in the world; 53% of households own either a dog or cat. There are roughly 2.5 million cats and 4 million dogs within Australia. Although cat ownership is trending downwards, overall pet ownership is increasing year-on-year. The pet care industry adds over $3 billion AUD to the national economy.

On average, consumers shop in pet specialty stores one to two times per year. This poses the challenge to drive consumers in-store more regularly. The food offering in pet specialty stores is what tends to drive footfall. As such, accessories products rely on replacement or impulse purchase during these trips.

Shoppers don't have confidence or knowledge about grooming their own pet on a regular basis. In research, 78% of shoppers said they would be more inclined to groom their pet if they understood the process better. 82% of shoppers complained that the grooming category was confusing and that they had no idea what many of the products were for. However, 58% of people spend the same amount on grooming their dog as they do on grooming themselves, hence our investigation of the human grooming market.

Traditionally the pet specialty channel is an overcrowded category with many variants and sub-brands within a segment. This makes the consumer purchasing decision in-store extremely difficult. Increased urbanisation means more dogs are sleeping indoors and owners are looking for indoor-friendly bedding solutions. 2 out of 3 pet owners consider bedding a 'must have', which means that retailers have an opportunity to drive sales with the remaining third of the audience.

Increasingly, pet owners are looking to spoil and indulge their pets. 85% of pet owners feel their pet is part of the family, in some cases a 'brother or sister' to their children, or a child-substitute itself.

PROJECT LAUNCH DATE

The new Purina PetLife grooming and tethering ranges were launched in July 2011, bedding in October 2011.

SIZE OF DESIGN BUDGET

Master brand grooming and tethering $150K AUD, bedding $70k AUD; the project included brand naming, identity and packaging plus point of sale design.

OUTLINE OF DESIGN SOLUTION

Blue Marlin set out to create a strategic framework that would establish Nestlé Purina PetLife as a premium brand, whilst being flexible enough to encompass PetLife's broad portfolio under one brand proposition. The new brand had to include aspects of functional, stylish, effective and comfort-driven products. Purina PetLife was created and positioned to step-change the Pet Specialty and Accessories category. Purina PetLife needed to elevate the category in terms of lifestyle appeal and talk directly to the consumer, whilst demonstrating a certain level of care for their pet.

Blue Marlin picked a sophisticated grey hero colour for the master brand to represent a premium quality and motivating look, which resonated in consumer research. Strong and bold typography was used to create an identifiable architecture for the range.

Blue Marlin also brought the concept of the 4-step grooming range to life, which is manifested in point of sale presentations and popular with many retailers, who recognised the impact this could have on consumer purchasing behaviour. Up to now, the Pet Grooming and Accessories category had not existed as a branded category, so the opportunity here was to drive impact and ownership as a new brand entity.

Clear feedback from consumer research and retailers and now from actual sales results shows that the purchasing hierarchy has delivered a contemporary look and feel for a category often under-considered. By borrowing the same language from the human personal grooming market, this was able to create an innovative cut-through design for the pet-grooming category, using new and motivating language.

The bedding range posed a separate challenge. Merchandising using swing tags was the norm. Blue Marlin developed a packaging solution which broke category convention and delivered stronger brand recognition and impact on-shelf, whilst providing consumers with the necessary information to make a more informed purchasing decision.

The overarching identity for the bedding range used the nose shape from the brand marque to create the dream bubbles idea. There were unique offers to communicate under the comfort and hygiene umbrella. The Purina PetLife bedding system delivers to a high functionality proposition via fabric construction and fashion and style image.

(363 words)

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

BEST PAWS FORWARD

Without the help of any alternative marketing spend, PetLife sales have well exceeded forecasts since launch. The grooming range has increased its sales by 230% within nine months, with the tethering range growing by 263%, also in nine months. The bedding range saw an increase of 400% within six months. This growth is directly comparable year-on-year with the inherited product range from The KraMar Company, with the Purina PetLife grooming and tethering ranges launching in July 2011 and bedding in October 2011. Most importantly, Purina PetLife had effectively to build its own brand proposition from scratch in a new and unfamiliar category.

The overall brand growth in this very short time period is a significant 284%.

Overall, their return of investment of their $220,000 AUD resulted in a sensational 3,581% return, something to be truly proud of.

LAPPING IT UP

An increase in retailer uptake of the Purina PetLife grooming range has contributed to the success of the launch. Since June 2011, 90% of retailers including the four major accounts (PetBarn, CityFarmers, Best Friends, PetStock) and independents have purchased the entire range of Purina PetLife grooming products and implemented the Purina merchandising end cap solution.

Retailers have embraced the Purina PetLife bedding range and its easy-to-navigate choice solutions, as the following before and after pictures illustrate:

BEFORE

AFTER

AS FOR THE NEW 4-STEP GROOMING LOOK:

ONLY THE NEW LOOK WAS BARKING...

There was no advertising budget to support this major new range launch, just a new look and great retailer uptake. The 4-step grooming system is the key here to help consumers know where to look and what to choose. It also prompts multiple purchases.

CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

"I really wanted to build a strong Purina Pet Specialty Accessories Team. Not only has Blue Marlin been an integral part in the launch of Purina PetLife from a brand creation and packaging design perspective, but has become an integral key strategic planning partner also. Unlike many agencies, Blue Marlin has immersed themselves in the categories in which we participate and as such, we would now consider them 'Pet Accessory Experts."
Mark Harris, Marketing Manager, Pet Specialty

RESEARCH RESOURCES

Pets Australia www.petsaustralia.org
Companion Animals in the community   www.ccac.net.au
Client internal sales data
Australian Companion Animal Council 2010
AC Nielsen Scan Data

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AC Nielsen Scan Data