



- powered by BrandSpark -

2010 Best New Product Awards

In The News...

The 7th Annual Best New Product Awards enjoyed the following publicity results:

- More than 55+ stories in media outlets across Canada
- Reaching more than 15,6 million Canadians
- 2010 winning product names were mentioned in nearly half of the articles

TELEVISION & RADIO



Calgary | Edmonton | Winnipeg

PRINT & ONLINE



cbc.ca



canada.com





Canadians trust natural over organic: poll

January 19, 2010



Canadians trust foods labelled "natural" over "organic," a new survey suggests. (Associated Press)

Almost half of Canadians believe it is more important a food be labelled natural than organic, even though organic foods are more heavily regulated, a new survey suggests.

Sixty per cent of Canadian consumers believe it's important a new product be made from "all-natural ingredients," while 45 per cent have "greater trust" in natural products than those labelled organic, the poll by BrandSpark International suggests.

The Toronto-based brand strategy firm polled 25,000 Canadians online on their eating and food-buying habits. The survey has a margin of error of plus or minus two percentage points 95 per cent of the time, the company said.

BrandSpark president Robert Levy said he was surprised at the apparent consumer disconnect in trust levels about food, given "natural" claims are not regulated. On the other hand, organic foods are regulated by several industry and government bodies.

Levy said between 60 and 70 per cent of consumers surveyed about food safety said they were most concerned about chemicals and preservatives.

"So logically, if they are concerned about chemicals and preservatives, you can fix that by buying organic," Levy said in an interview.

Yet this isn't what happens, according to the poll. And Levy said cost and trust are the main reasons.

When asked why they don't buy organic, 75 per cent of consumers surveyed cited cost, while 53 per cent said they "don't trust that all products labelled as organic are actually organic."

Forty-eight per cent of consumers in the survey said they "are confused by what the term organic actually guarantees."

"Natural always trumps organic even though organics provide the mechanism if you want to be protected from chemicals and preservatives," Levy said. "It appears that further consumer education is required in the natural versus organic debate."

Overall, Canadians also have a healthy degree of skepticism when it comes to products that make environmental claims, the survey indicates.

Eight-two per cent of those polled said they felt companies are exploiting environmentally friendly claims for marketing purposes. Last year's survey revealed a similar finding.

Packaging is one of the top environmental concerns of consumers, and 89 per cent who took part in the survey believe manufacturers have a long way to go in this area.

Sixty-nine per cent of Canadians polled said they felt a new product should be better for the environment. This compares to 76 per cent in 2009.

The study is also used to compile the Best New Product Awards, where consumers vote on 144 products in 47 product categories. This year's winners include: Astro Zer0 Superfruit Yogourt for best in show, Burt's Bees Replenishing Lip Balm with Pomegranate Oil in the health and beauty category, and Ziploc Evolve Sandwich Bags for household products.

NATIONAL POST

No Name returns to no frills

By Hollie Shaw, Financial Post | January 22, 2010

During tough economic times, back-to-basics marketing reaches a fever pitch. But at a time when most corporate marketing budgets were whittled to the extreme, a campaign from grocery giant Loblaw Cos. for its No Name line of in-house consumer goods virtually re-wrote the genre of no-frills simplicity.

When the company relaunched its No Name line one year ago in the depths of the recession -- a happy coincidence in timing for Loblaw, as it had planned the brand revival for months -- it went back to the basic, bold packaging that it used in 1978 when the line launched with just 16 products: a product name in black lower-case typeface against a lemon-yellow background. The packaging had no product shots.

The television ads from Loblaw's ad agency of record, Bensimon Byrne, is bringing that packaging to life, featuring scrolling black text against a blinding yellow backdrop to the strains of kitschy stock organ music.

"They are produced for a fraction of what a [standard] Canadian TV commercial costs," says David Rosenberg, creative director at Bensimon Byrne. "There is no film, there are no actors." Since the brand relaunch, the agency has created 19 of the No Name spots.

"We don't have a single item under \$2," the text of one recent ad reads. "We have 300." The No Name insignia appears onscreen to close out the ad. That's it.

"[Loblaw] was looking to get back to [a message conveying] no gimmicks, no fakery -- just high-quality products at the lowest price possible," Mr. Rosenberg said. Another spot highlights Loblaw's money-back guarantee on No Name, aimed at encouraging customers to try the generic offering rather than a national brand alternative, and return the No Name version for a refund if they think it is sub-par. The ad jokes that the guarantee itself does not have a name -- "you just get your money back."



2010 Best New Product Awards: *IN THE NEWS...*

Loblaw's stripped-down branding is a departure from how the line was marketed in recent years. As No Name grew over the years from 16 staples to more than 2,900 products today, the line began to take on a look that resembled its flashier private-label sister, President's Choice. It featured pictures on the packaging, and while the bright yellow backdrop was usually present, the text was less obtrusive and featured other colours in addition to black.

"Two years ago it was spectacular packaging, similar in many cases to what the national brands were offering," says Ian Gordon, senior vice-president of grocery at Loblaw.

But blending in was exactly what Loblaw needed to guard against -- with the bold packaging muted, the generic brand looked too much like its higher-priced rivals. "When you went into the frozen pizza aisle, you would have to hunt for [No Name pizza]," he said. Sold at a 25% lower price tag than comparative national brands, the brand appeals to consumers watching their wallets, but "the real impetus for this was about restoring the in-store distinctiveness of the packaging," Mr. Gordon said.

While No Name may be bread-and-butter basic, the desire to return it to its roots came from the top echelons of Loblaw. President Allan Leighton, the company president, distinctly recalls coming into Loblaw's stores 20 years ago, looking down the aisles and being impressed with the clarity of the yellow-and-black No Name brand, which made it stand out against the other products, Mr. Gordon said. "That distinctiveness allows the consumer an easier shop as they can readily identify the No Name brand."

Last advertised in 1990, the No Name relaunch comes at a time when consumers are returning to generic brands in droves. A survey out this week from Toronto-based marketing firm BrandSpark International said 61% of Canadians believe private-label brands are just as good as brand-name products, and 47% of Canadians said they have purchased an increased number of private-label products in the past year. In addition, rival retailers Sobeys and Metro have completely revamped their in-house brands in the past two years, offering a wide array of new products in eye-catching packaging.

"More Canadians are still buying private label versus premium brands as they perceive they offer extremely good value for money," said Robert Levy, the president of BrandSpark.

JoAnn Hines, a packaging consultant who specializes in consumer-product branding trends, said No Name's classic packaging reaches consumers "because [Loblaw] simplified the message: no bells and whistles, no complicated decision-making."

In the recession, she added, "we have seen a lot of people going back to their old standbys of comfort food, going back to the very basic, generic package that they associated with their childhood.

"It looks as though Loblaw really knows who the core shopper is for that line and they really understand that customer. The packaging meets what the consumer is expecting."

So is the brand retrofit working? "Any time you change packaging you get people who love it and people who don't love it much," Mr. Gordon said. "But the majority of customers believe the new packaging, whether they like it or not, really reflects what the brand is all about." And while he would not release specific sales figures, he said the retailer is "confident" the changes are making a "difference with customers, and we have research that would indicate it."

Bensimon Byrne executes all of Loblaw's ads, including the pop-art fashion pieces of Joe Fresh clothing line and those featuring Galen Weston, the executive chairman, as corporate pitchman, who extols the virtues of Loblaw initiatives and President's Choice products.

Mr. Rosenberg said while consumers may be more likely to turn to private-label goods when times are tough, fresh marketing ensures the message is relevant. "We have some research that shows that there has been a value shift in society, one that isn't as temporal as the recession, which has caused us to change our consumer-purchase patterns based on value, a focus on high quality for the best price possible."

And when it comes to private-brand marketing, "whether it's No Name or President's Choice, it's incredibly important to never rest on your laurels. That's the only way you stay a leader, especially with increased competition," he said.

This NATIONAL POST article also appeared in the following:

canada.com

 **OTTAWA
CITIZEN**

The Gazette

THE VANCOUVER SUN

TIMES COLONIST

 **CALGARY HERALD**

EDMONTON JOURNAL
EDMONTON'S NEWSPAPER SINCE 1858

**The StarPhoenix
LEADER-POST**



strategy

Post Recession, Canadians Changing Attitudes, Behaviours – Study

January 20, 2010 | By Carey Toane



Canadians are eating more at home, buying more private label products and are less concerned about the environment than they were a year ago, according to the seventh annual BrandSpark

Canadian Shopper Study released yesterday.

The study by BrandSpark International gauges the attitudes, habits and trends of over 25,000 Canadian shoppers (more than twice the number surveyed in previous years) on timely topics such as environmental accountability and health.

Overall, Canadians (28%) are more confident about the economy than Americans (7%), and are more concerned about the environment than our southern neighbours (69% vs. 62% of Americans). The top purchase factor for Canadians in Food & Beverage was “taste” before “price,” while “price” ruled in Health & Beauty and “effectiveness” ranked top in Household Products.

As the recession compelled people to seek more value for their money, 47% of Canadians have purchased more private label goods in the past year. However, the number of people who “think that private label or in-store brand products are just as good as brand name products” fell from 65% in 2009 to 61%. But private label brands still rank among Canadians’ top five trusted brands, which are, in order: Kraft, President’s Choice, Tide, Campbell’s and Procter & Gamble.

With financial concerns top of mind, the number of Canadians who feel “it is important that a new product is better for the environment” dropped from 76% in 2009 to 69% in 2010. Suspicions of greenwashing are still alive and well, with 82% holding the belief that companies exploit green-friendly claims, and packaging is still a villain, as 89% assert that companies “still have a long way to go” to reduce the amount of waste in their products.

More Canadians are enjoying cooking at home more often (73%), and 83% “want products that offer healthier options.” The survey states that Canadians are more confident in food safety, as 72% said they were “more concerned” about this issue vs. 81% in 2009.

When it comes to organics, 45% feel that “it is more important to me that a product is natural than organic,” while among those who don’t buy organic, 53% don’t believe organic claims and 47% are still confused as to what the term really means.

On the new product front, the Top 2010 Best New Product Award winners are Astro Zer0 Superfruit Yogurt, Burt’s Bees Replenishing Lip Balm with Pomegranate Oil and Ziploc Evolve sandwich bags. A full list of winning products is available at Bestnewproducts.ca.

MARKETING

[Best New Products Survey Sheds Light On Shifting Consumer Trends]

January 20, 2010 | By Kristin Laird

Canadians are looking for healthier food options, as well as ways to save money and the environment, according to a study from **BrandSpark International**.

The Toronto-based strategy firm polled 25,000 Canadians online in the areas of environmental accountability, healthier options in food and beverage and private label versus premium brands.

The survey was conducted for the **Best New Product Awards**. Now in its seventh year, this year’s Best New Product Awards survey saw consumers vote on 144 products in 47 product categories.

This year’s winners include: **Astro Zero Superfruit Yogourt** for best in show, **Burt’s Bees Replenishing Lip Balm with Pomegranate Oil** in the health and beauty category, and **Ziploc Evolve Sandwich Bags** for household products.

“The survey not only provides us with valuable insights about current products and innovations but also larger movements and shifts in Canadians’ viewpoints and approaches toward what they purchase, and more importantly why,” said **Robert Levy**, president of BrandSpark International, in a release.

For instance, the study suggests people have made a big shift to eat at home more and as a result are spending more time and money in the grocery store.

Of those surveyed, 65% like trying new products, while 73% say they enjoy cooking for themselves and their family.

Canadians also want more bang for their buck, and as a result have turned to private label or in-store brands. Though consumer perception of private label quality has decreased slightly over the last year, 64% of consumers believe these brands offer good value for their money. Nearly half, (47%) of Canadians surveyed have purchased more private label products in the past 12 months.

“Finding new products that really deliver is more important than ever, especially with shoppers demanding greater value for money,” said Levy.

Healthy living is also a priority for Canadians, with 60% saying it’s important a new product be made from “all-natural ingredients,” while 45% say they have “greater trust” in natural products than those labeled organic.

Since beginning the survey, environmental accountability has grown to become a primary concern for Canadian consumers, said Levy, however 82% of those polled said they felt companies are exploiting environmentally friendly claims for marketing purposes, and 69% say it’s important a new product is better for the environment.

Packaging is one of the top environmental concerns, with 89% saying manufacturers have a long way to go.

“Consumers are demanding companies to be more accountable in terms of their environmental claims and they are willing to pay for products with realistic and tangible claims such as reduced packaging,” he said.

