THE BRAND CHALLENGE

A ready-to-serve consumer brand was experiencing slower retail growth even though they had recently extended the brand with new lines and additional flavor varieties. If they could get consumers to try the product, loyalty was strong, but an ever-increasing number of competitive SKUs had caught up to the brand. With more options came less first-time buyers.

THE CAMPAIGN

The brand engaged a PortMA agency partner to execute over 900 retail sampling events in seven markets. Sampling was to take place at different times of day, in five different grocery chains. The program needed to hit the sampling targets but onsite sales and return-on-investment (ROI) were to be monitored closely as the brand was in flux on how much each marketing channel would be funded. If the program couldn't prove its value than it would be cut, and funds moved to the marketing channels that could demonstrate the necessary impact.

THE MEASUREMENT STRATEGY

PortMA was asked to define a measurement and reporting strategy that allowed the agency account team to monitor performance across all 900 events, 7 markets, and 5 retail chains. A program ROI model was needed to monitor and report on performance, but the account team didn't want to be surprised. If the overall return was going to be negative, they wanted to know well in advance of the recap so they could take corrective action before it was too late.

After meeting with the account team and sitting in on initial Client launch calls, PortMA developed a data collection strategy that used the current field staff data collection system but adjusted the metrics being tracked. In addition, a simple onsite survey was implemented to collect consumer feedback on just a few variables:

- Experience with the brand
- Future purchase intent (both immediately and down the road)

Existing program field staff were trained by PortMA in these data collection techniques and the needed technology programmed and deployed. PortMA managed all aspects of this deployment and delivered continuous analysis and reporting to the agency account team all under the agency's branding so they could share with their client as needed.

RESULTS

While sampling rates were average for retail (roughly 17 consumers per hour), initial consumer targeting was off. After PortMA completed an analysis of program reach and impact by time of day, adjustments were made to reach a higher percentage of the target consumer.

This along with other real-time program adjustments based on PortMA's analysis and reporting led to an overall program return-on-investment (ROI) of 160.9%. At the market level, ROI ranged from 136.6% to 684.9%. PortMA's approach identified and reported on best practices at the market level to identify what was delivering the greatest return.

The ability to clearly measure and report on the program's success led to expansion: the original 7 markets grew to 18 total markets plus a mobile tour team. The original four-month program extended to multiple years. PortMA's findings (delivered under the Agency's brand) built confidence with the brand team that led directly to the program expansion. The analysis and reporting provided by PortMA was credited as a key driver of this ongoing business for the agency and success for the brand.