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- archives
- advertising info
 - mission statement
 - editorial outlook
 - ad specs
 - media kit (PDF)
 - special opportunities
- subscribe
- reader service
- job opportunities
- staff

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Spotlight: Housewares

Product Ventures Helps P&G Differentiate Breezier Febreze Bottle from the Surface Cleaning Category

Procter & Gamble is dedicated to improving three-dimensional equity and structural value in their brands. Peter Clarke, president of Product Ventures in Fairfield, CT, finds P&G's new package design philosophies meshing very well with his company's approach to bringing category-leading structural designs to market.

Product Ventures was integral in the original Febreze Fabric Refresher launch in the late '90s. Back then, Febreze was a new-to-the-world product. "The original package we designed had a novel, friendly squat shape and signature wave details, with a unique right facing bottle that literally turned its back on the household cleaning category," explained Clarke.

As the Febreze brand continued to evolve, Clarke and Product Ventures were again selected to evolve the structural equity of the Febreze brand. In an effort to further differentiate Febreze from cleaning products, Product Ventures developed a dramatically different structure with an aesthetic unlike your typical spray bottle. Product Ventures knew the visual language of the curves was key to conveying "natural freshness" and "letting the outdoors in." The new design includes a centered neck, soft ergonomic curves, and premium-looking structure. The proud and elegant swan-like profile adds to the package's visual appeal, making it attractive enough to leave out in the home.

According to Clarke, sculptural design should differentiate and communicate, and design itself can be leveraged as a core component in building a brand. P&G values the role of design and is dedicated to providing a superior brand experience by leveraging all elements, states Clarke. (See Cover Story). The Febreze structural package creates a tangible embodiment of the brand that is a lasting multi-sensory experience.

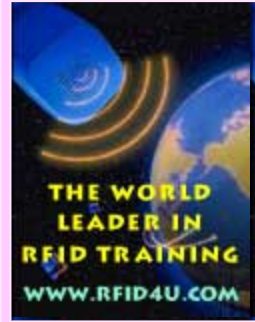
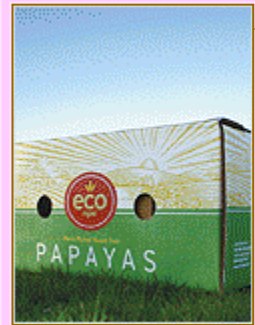
As for the 2D elements of the new package, the international design and consultancy firm Interbrand developed the latest Febreze type treatment and the stylized icon of the breeze wafting through a window, which some view as a drape being lifted by a light wind. Product Ventures collaborated with Interbrand to ensure that the bottle structure harmonized with the label and incorporated swirling contour of grooves suggesting the circulation of a revitalizing breeze. To top off the "counter worthy" premium look, an ownable blue tint was chosen, and the frosted translucent HPDE bottle communicates purity, honesty, freshness, and a sense of calm.

True to their track record for creating brand-building designs that can be manufactured, Product Ventures developed the new package with production and filling considerations securely in mind. For instance, high-speed lines tend to topple organic, curvy bottles more than squared-off structures. Product Ventures was able to keep the center of gravity and "touch points" low to avoid this concern without compromising the visual impact of the design.

Clarke explains the final effect: "The redesign clearly speaks to product function and differentiates on shelf. Because of its upscale, elegant design, Febreze is less likely to be relegated to 'out of sight' storage areas. Top of mind reinforces the brand and on-hand



Product Ventures has helped shape the Febreze identity from the start as a pioneering product with a soft side. The new bottle — even softer and more attractive — separates Febreze from the pack and encourages more frequent use.



convenience impacts frequency of use."

As part of their design philosophy, Product Ventures believes strongly in qualitative research conducted by professionally-trained researchers and designers. This way, designers observe first hand how consumers interact with the product and package in the context of their environment. The Febreze bottle is an example of a structure that fits as nicely into consumers' lives as it does in their hands.



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