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Revitalizing a Classic A Fridge Door Fit That's a Family Hit

Fairfield, CT (February 1, 2007) – Heinz Ketchup, “America’s Favorite”, has long been a fixture in kitchens & restaurants across the country and has practically become a food group in many homes. Despite such iconic status, retail sales were flat for the ketchup giant, prompting Heinz to look for new ways to create growth in a potentially satiated market.

“Multi-tasking lifestyles and ever-increasing demands on people’s attention have caused us to expand the way we market beyond just traditional advertising,” said Wendy Joyce, Marketing Director at Heinz. “As a way to break through the clutter and ultimately increase Ketchup consumption, we turned to packaging innovation as the core basis of our marketing strategy.” She approached Product Ventures, a renowned resource for packaging innovation, to design and develop a new package that would enhance the total Heinz product experience and differentiate Heinz from the competition.

“Packaging has historically been viewed as an expense, not an investment. It has been used for protection or display, and not adequately leveraged as the marketing landscape it truly is,” explains Peter Clarke, CEO of Product Ventures. “Heinz understands this, and seeks to promote packaging as a major force in their marketing efforts.”

Guided by consumer ethnography that called for versatility, the ergonomic “Fridge Door Fit” pack was designed to accommodate even the youngest users with its easy-squeeze, non-slip grip. The compact and smartly proportioned package is perfect for fridge door shelves to support easy access, and can be stored upright or upside down.

“Our observational studies revealed strong feelings Heinz consumers have about their ketchup experience,” said Clarke. “They were very specific about what would please and displease them both on shelf and during in home use. We wanted to address both their desires and concerns when using a larger-sized bottle to maximize their entire experience.” This market insight, along with the firm’s deep expertise in industrial design and manufacturing technology, guided the consumer-approved, actionable innovation.

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“Ketchup abides by the laws of expandable consumption – the more ketchup on hand, the more it is used,” explained Joyce. “High ketchup consumption households were buying multiple small bottles instead of a large one because the larger bottle design wasn’t as functionally convenient, so by improving the design of the larger bottle, we enhanced consumers ability to have more Ketchup on hand and use more of it at all times. Fridge Fit met a clear consumer need, and Heinz has seen a marked increase in retail consumption as a result.”

In fact, when families switched from the 24 oz. size bottle to the 46 oz. size, they consumed 78% more ketchup. Now category dollars are up across all classes of trade and Heinz is selling less plastic and more ketchup, which is good for business, the consumer and the environment. “Q2 results confirm the category has rebounded,” said Joyce. “Category sales are up 4% in retail and 22% at club stores.”

The new bottle maintains classic brand equities, such as octagonal facets and neckband, and the classic Heinz keystone appears in the bottle’s silhouette and snap back closure. “The outstanding package solution is a reflection of the productive collaboration between Product Ventures and Heinz’s cross-functional team,” adds Clarke. “We worked hard to create a new delivery system that added value for consumers and improved their experience, while at the same time reinforced the attributes of a much loved brand.”

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High resolution imagery available upon request.