

Nescafé comedy converts consumers to coffee

BEIJING: CHINA: Nescafé is the leading coffee brand in China. It enjoys high brand awareness in top tier cities and a 75% nationwide market share. However, despite success within the coffee segment, this doesn't mean a great deal in a nation of tea drinkers.



Three cups a day... three cups a year

To put the coffee consumption in perspective, average coffee consumption in Norway is slightly more than three cups a day. Compare this amount to China where there are three cups of coffee per capita per year, and Nestlé's challenge becomes obvious: How could it excite a nation that doesn't barely know about coffee into acquiring a taste for any particular brand?

Despite the great potential of the coffee category in China, the daunting challenge had put off many coffee brands that were reluctant to invest in the category's potential for the benefit of competitors. Nescafé's challenge was to grow a coffee culture on its own with limited resources.

Sophistication, aspiration and inspiration

Nescafé's brand promise was a combination of stimulation and an emotional promise of mood enhancement. Nestlé was a brand that could promise better performance. Two places where excellent performance is most prized in Chinese society are school and the workplace.

A China media and market survey showed that even semi-regular coffee drinkers in China become category evangelists. Coffee is seen as a sophisticated drink, enjoyed by businessmen and high achievers drink. Nestlé needed to harness the power of its current and potential targets: Existing Chinese coffee drinkers are often higher income and better educated white-collar workers. A large potential market of drinkers was identified in university students. They share little in common with working professionals apart from the similar goal of delivering the best work. For white collars, the goal is to be more linked to their career. For students, the goal is to get the dream job at an inspiring workplace.

The same research revealed that frequent coffee drinkers are often career-minded and consider themselves successful; they want to stay at the top. Potential drinkers are curious about achieving success in their working life, getting recognised for their work and rise quickly through the ranks.

Online media accounts for 40% of total media consumption for both these groups. With coffee awareness high with Nescafé needed an engaging content solution to excite these trend-setting individuals into leading the nation into considering coffee as part of their beverage portfolio.

Bringing together brand understanding with the consumer insights, allowed Nestlé to develop a core brand platform, "Inspiration Works." Nescafé would literally become a presence in the workplace as a colleague and more practically inspiring consumers to deliver their best.

Content strategy

Camera Café is a widely popular TV property from France. It is reproduced in more than 20 countries and is one of the top globally licensed formats. Nestlé produced a localised adaptation that was built around inspirational characters. Storylines reflected modern Chinese office life through entertaining (and often outrageous) office situations. In addition to the laughs, Nestlé's goal was to generate empathy among the audience with the characters and the stories, knowing that viewers would mostly likely be able to relate to the common office situations that they encountered.

The video series was broadcast on the Youku video sharing network. Nestlé also launched a custom mini-site on the social messaging hub QQ. A total of 70 custom episodes were aired over three months, all of them featuring a permanent coffee station piled with Nescafé products. In terms of program branding and product integration, 25 episodes had plots inspired by different Nescafé coffees. One example of branded integration was an episode where the protagonists discover employees from another company had been stealing Nescafé from the coffee room. The message here being that Nescafé is a desired office beverage and one hopes that a company's management would provide Nescafé and do right by its employees. The program launched with strategic media placements on QQ-Live and QQ-Show driving traffic.

Audience participation

The audience were able to contribute to elements of the show through QQ as ideas for story, direction, fashion, and music were crowd-sourced through the platform. The best submissions saw fan-inspired storylines, actors, wardrobe selections, and theme music appear throughout the program.

Relative to the small media investment, Nescafé contracted a target of 17.5 million video views and 500 000 votes (similar to Facebook 'likes') surrounding a resource-heavy engagement commitment. QQ agreed the show concept was solid enough to resource and support to the platform. Performance was tracked by a third party and QQ's guarantees provided resource for supplemental advertising inventory in the event of any shortfall.

Results

Camera Café video content received more than 44 million video views, with each viewer watching an average of 5 episodes.

In terms of consumer engagement, the series received more than a million votes and 100 000 creative uploads.

Campaign research revealed that purchase intention increased 6.6%, brand favourability increased 9.3%. Purchase Intent jumped 300% after watching 3 or more episodes.

Cost per view was RMB0.07 (US\$0.01 / £0.05*) -15 times cheaper than what traditional digital media costs in this category.

A new season has been confirmed by the client and global Nescafé teams are in talks for adapting the *Camera Café* format

in other countries.

**Exchange rate at time of posting: £1=R12.62 / US\$1=R7.9.*

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