

issue 04 Successful brands anticipate trends. By drawing on our global insight resources each month, Added Value identifies & voices opinion on a key emerging trend.



Honesty points to Healthier Returns

Obesity is reaching pandemic levels. Consumers, government, NGOs, manufacturers et al are looking for answers. We believe it is time that marketing faced up to its role in obesity, with a Marketing Diet of its own.

Our diet should be based on truth, transparency and honesty – the three pillars which we believe are essential to restoring trust and re-building consumer confidence in many of the brands at the heart of the obesity debate. From years of experience with many of the world's leading manufacturers, our Marketing Industry Diet is based on five guiding principles:

Step 1 – Positioning: fads and falsehoods

False promises, fad diets, stretching the meaning of 'healthy' – what the consumer needs are truth and authenticity to make an informed choice. Obesity has made people question not only where their food comes from, but also what's in it, how it is grown, distributed, sold and consumed. Brand positioning must hinge on the real, the honest and the human.

Step 2 – Product: the real deal

Consumers want everyday, accessible food that tastes good. We can't expect children (or adults) to change their diets over night, but it is possible to provide foods that are better. The hidden content of our food is a real issue. Preservatives, colourings, flavourings,

plus the appropriate amounts of ingredients such as fat, salt and sugar content are creating confusion. It is time to get back to basics and understand what is actually healthy?

Step 3 – Packaging: learning from Ronseal

Labelling and packaging needs to be held accountable. Especially wrong when people turn to 'healthier' alternatives or 'diet' products or indeed, any food that styles itself on a healthy/ healthier message when in fact it's packed with salt, fat and calories. We're not realistically going to read every label for every product we buy. We use logical short cuts to help us make those choices; 'low fat' 'low calorie' etc. but consumers are often misled. This makes it harder for people to make informed choices about what they eat. Improved packaging holds the answer.

Step 4 – Promotion – reach your target

Understanding your target audience goes without saying. But understanding their obesity risk is essential. Sensible targeted activity is key using occasion marketing.

Step 5 – Price: shed the pounds

It is no longer a question of price versus volume. Portion size must be addressed. At the root of this is offering consumer choice - why don't we offer people as many opportunities to go small instead of large? Bulk buy should be discouraged.

Are we facing a fat future?

Brands must face obesity head on. They have a opportunity to address these issues, not provide counter arguments or defer blame to individuals, parents or the education system. People want honest, transparent and human relationships with brands. Ignoring this is a guaranteed way to create distrust, distance and a shrinking customer base. Are we facing a fat future? Not if we can help it.

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