



The Client	Musgrave SuperValu
The Agency	Fleishman-Hillard (Dublin, Ireland)
The Entry	SuperValu Kids in Action
The Category	Social Responsibility

Opening Summary:

SuperValu is Ireland's leading independent supermarket retailing group. It is part of the Musgrave Group which operates as Musgrave SuperValu Centra in Ireland. The Irish market has become increasingly competitive in recent years with the UK retailer Tesco particularly active.

By combining strategic thinking with experience, an in-store promotion became a highly effective, integrated communications campaign that delivered and surpassed against a range of objectives for the client.

Statement of problem/opportunity:

The challenge for all retailers in this sector is a complex combination of providing the best value, continued growth and expansion in terms of sales and outlets alongside keeping in touch and in tune with the local community and their needs.

In-store purchase related promotions are a regular part of these retailers sales activities, anything from holidays to furniture to teddy bears can be acquired through these promotions.

In June 2005 SuperValu began planning for such a promotion that would see customers receiving vouchers based on purchase that could be exchanged for sports and play equipment for use specifically in primary schools (5-12yrs). A year earlier SuperValu had entered a sponsorship agreement with the Irish Sports Council to support a programme - Buntús (Irish for 'Good Start') which provided equipment and training for primary school teachers.

The initial brief for Fleishman-Hillard was simply "Promote the promotion with as much media coverage as you can get, while supporting the advertising and direct mail campaign to primary schools."

Planning:

In developing a strategy, our experience over many years told us that there is almost no newsworthiness in in-store promotions and our initial response to the client was that PR was not the best way to build awareness and they should look to other marketing activities, e.g. advertising, POS or DM. However, we also outlined another approach that if they were prepared to accept, we believed would deliver not only extensive media coverage and awareness for the promotion, but also demonstrate SuperValu's understanding of and commitment to its customers. Our strategy, if it was to work would have to be an integrated campaign rather than just a PR programme on its own

In shaping our strategy there was an additional factor we were faced with:

Tesco intended to launch a similar nationwide promotion for sports equipment across all school age groups and sports clubs, and the likelihood was that they would launch first. Our client's inclination was to go head-to-head however on our recommendation it was agreed, no matter what Tesco did, we would hold our nerve and get our programme 100% ready before launch.

Our strategy was to create a multi-layered through-the-line programme to educate and encourage parents and their children to consider their dietary and nutritional habits as well as becoming more involved in sports and active play. The focus was on 5-12 year olds as our research indicated that this was the priority group - good habits formed at this time are critical for later years.

Our strategy involved bringing on board various credible partners within the diet/nutrition and sports/active lifestyle space. We already had the Buntús sponsorship however we envisaged a more proactive role for the Irish Sports Council in this new strategy. The Sports Council traditionally had taken a cautious approach to commercial sponsorship however they bought in completely with our approach and became active partners. The Irish Universities Nutrition Alliance (IUNA) and well-known and highly qualified nutritionist Sarah Keogh, B. Sc. (Nutrition) were recruited to make up the final part of the jigsaw.

Additionally, we also sought approval of the two Government departments involved in the primary school sector. Although as a matter of course Government departments do not offer their endorsement to projects of this nature, the Department of Health and Children provided and approved the content for the in-store nutritional programme, while the Department of Education & Science gave the programme the Department's seal of approval.

From a credibility perspective, we sought the support of two of Ireland's best known faces – Sonia O'Sullivan and Ray D'Arcy. As an athlete, and in this case more importantly the mother of two young children, Sonia gave the programme its sports and family credibility, while Ray gave it an element of fun and wider appeal to the younger 'housewife and mother'. It was then decided that the two 'faces' of the programme would also star in the supporting advertising, thus completing the circle.

The original in-store promotion concept remained in place with the additional aspect that for every €10 spent on fresh fruit and veg the customer would receive two tokens as distinct from the one token per €10 purchase for all other products.

Execution:

In terms of the programme there were three distinct audiences:

- Schools/Teachers
- Families, particularly with children in the 5-12 year old age bracket
- SuperValu Retailers

Prior to a national launch and roll out, we recommended to firstly pilot the programme - SuperValu Kids in Action in Co. Meath. This region is quite close to Dublin and has seven SuperValu stores spread around the county.

The focus was kept very local and involved:

- Sourcing and working with local Gaelic Football star, Trevor Giles who acted as an ambassador for the programme and featured on the local radio advertising
- A media photocall
- Focus on the key regional publications
- In-Store Nutritional programme

The pilot programme provided an opportunity to make some small adjustments but overall it was a complete success.

The SuperValu Kids in Action programme was launched on 10th January 2006, with the promotional activity going 'live' in-store and the advertising campaign breaking on Monday, 16th January 2006.

The launch of SuperValu Kids in Action involved the following:

- § National media press conference attended by all key partners and influencers
- § National media photocall
- § Targeted media sell-in and communications programme

At this conference the full extent of the programme was unveiled:

- Dr. Sinead McCarthy of IUNA announced that SuperValu was commissioning research by her Department into the activity patterns of children in the 5 - 12 age group.
- The second strand of the programme was the launch of the SuperValu Kids in Action, in-store collector scheme for sports equipment for primary schools.
- The third strand of the programme was an extensive in-store nutrition education programme. The education programme was developed in conjunction with the well known consultant nutritionist Sarah Keogh, B. SC. (Nutrition) MINDI and approved by the Department of Health & Children.
- Another strand of the programme was SuperValu's involvement in Buntús – the Irish Sports Council's official Primary School's Sports Programme which provides a quality introduction to sports and physical activity for all primary school children, which has been proudly supported by SuperValu since May 2004.
- It was announced that Sonia O'Sullivan and Ray D'Arcy would act as Ambassadors for the SuperValu Kids in Action.
- Finally the event was attended by Mr Brian Lenihan TD, Minister of State for Children at the Department of Health and Children, who took part in the photocall and officially welcomed the initiative on behalf of the Government.

Following the initial launch phase of the programme the following activities were undertaken between February and April:

- FH organised and supported a fruit drop from each of the 172 SuperValu's stores to local schools.
- A full nutritional programme managed and implemented by Fleishman-Hillard was also rolled out to the entire store network nationwide. Each store hosted a nutritional afternoon supported by an INDI registered nutritionist. To support this leg of the programme an in-store nutritional leaflet was developed by FH in conjunction with the Department of Health & Children and INDI nutritionist Sarah Keogh, which specifically focussed on kids lunches.

Still to come.....

- The IUNA research commissioned by SuperValu is almost complete and will be released to the media in early May.

Issues Along the Way:

Commercial Free Education:

Commercial Free Education, a pressure group decided to use the SuperValu Kids in Action programme as an opportunity to raise awareness of commercialisation in Irish schools. Although they did manage to get some air time, of the twenty or so media queries received, the majority of these were headed off by simply providing journalists with the full strategic plan and approach to the project.

Where coverage ensued; 5-7 Live, Last Word and the Sunday Times, SuperValu was always given the right to reply and the pieces were balanced and well reported.

Evaluation:

- § It is too early to see the full sales impact of SuperValu Kids in Action. However, in the first six weeks of the programme SuperValu saw a 2.3% sales increase in its fresh fruit and veg sales, supported by a total sales uplift of 0.5% across the entire network. This is very significant in retail terms
- § Very importantly, SuperValu expected to gift €1m Euro's worth of sports activity equipment to the primary schools of Ireland, it looks like this target will be met and exceeded, securing €1.2m Euro's worth of sports goods for primary schools
- § SuperValu Kids in Action firmly positioned in the correct space – not just another voucher promotion.
- § Clear positioning in media of SuperValu's in support for parents in encouraging their children's nutritional and active lifestyle habits
- § This programme positioned SuperValu and its retailers at the very heart of their local community, a stated business objective of the group
- § At the outset Fleishman-Hillard provided the client with a list of the media targets that would be delivered, these were achieved and exceeded (See attached appendix)
- § 15 minutes 34 seconds of TV coverage achieved
- § Delivered clear differentiation between the SuperValu Kids In Action and the Tesco Sports for Clubs and School, which on face value could have been perceived as similar projects
- § SuperValu set a target of achieving 65% participation amongst primary schools. However:
 - In the five days following the launch 1,200 schools signed up, this was prior to any advertising campaign breaking
 - The target of 65% participation was completely smashed with 80.65% of schools participating