

LIMITED EDITIONS

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awareness and encourage consumer trial," she explains, adding Lindt works with retailers to present these products through displays, signage and shelf promotions alongside the permanent Lindt portfolio.

"In addition, we support them out of store by leveraging retailer circulars, website promotions and the like. Communicating that the product is available for a limited time only is a key part of the messaging to assert product uniqueness and drive immediate purchase."

Ferrero presents limited editions to buyers a year ahead of the launch, and Midura says historically they do well in channels that can support them in terms of display and promotional scale as well as grocery accounts with broad assortments because "the shoppers are more willing to try something new." He notes convenience stores were the largest channel for the Summer Ice Pop Tic Tacs.

Van Clief says Euro-American Brands announces upcoming releases and provides samples to buyers at the Sweets & Snacks Expo and at specific points throughout the year.

BUILDING THE BUZZ

In addition to keeping buyers in the loop about upcoming releases, igniting consumer anticipation requires paying close attention to even the smallest details in planning and execution.

Euro-American invests in building brand identity among consumers to the point that they watch for short-term releases on displays. "Displays do a lot for us," Van Clief tells **Candy & Snack TODAY**. "They're an important vehicle; they differentiate us and grab attention. In addition, our wire racks and sleeves on shelves enhance our presence."

In store, Ferrero uses prepacked shippers with eye-catching graphics and a low price point

to woo shoppers, who are often on autopilot, according to Midura. "For channels with clean-aisle policies, we work to make something that stands out on the shelves and find a way to put them into a seasonal context as part of special displays." Typically, he says, Ferrero doesn't pitch limited items at the cash stand, reserving that valuable real estate for top proven SKUs.

Moreover, Midura says, promotions for limited edition items are best served by social and digital media, which are more nimble and require limited investment. However, Ferrero also leveraged television advertising to promote Summer Ice Pop Tic Tacs using an existing commercial redefined by incorporating new video images of the short-run item.

Noting success is driven by the choice of channels, Maher says limited-run products do exceptionally well in club and c-stores. She agrees with Madura that digital and in-store promotions are best suited to limited-time items, but notes an exception in those tied to movie releases, such as Bazooka's 2013 *Despicable Me 2* program that included Minion-themed versions of its brands in wrappers featuring characters from the film, a temporary flavor re-launch and movie tie-ins.

"Those are big partnerships," Maher says, adding: "Promotions tied to movie releases really need to take a more traditional route, such as television and in-store in addition to online and social media. They can be national and extend across all channels."

In the end, many limited editions run their course and either fade into memory or, if they are highly successful, remain in the company's promotional arsenal for future use. However, Midura says, they also can serve as a testing lab: "There's less risk involved — it's a limited run — so why not roll it out? We did an apple-grape mix in the spring; now we're launching grape Tic Tacs in Walmart this fall." **CST**

'Ideally, a product should be on the market for at least a few months to ensure there's enough time to build awareness, drive initial trial and allow repeat purchases.'

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