

fresh & chilled



Consumers have taken to active health and yogurt drinks in their droves. Have you?

This year Danone will spend £12m advertising its Actimel probiotic drinks brand on TV and another £5m promoting its Activa active health yogurt brand. The active health and yogurt drinks category is a dynamic and growing one, with sales of one-shot functional yogurt drinks up a massive 74.8% last year, yet c-stores are failing to tap into the high consumer demand. If they did, profit from the traditionally heavily price-promoted yogurt category would be healthier, if you'll pardon the pun.

Danone commercial director Adam Grant is keen to address that failure, and is busy putting a number of plans into place to help c-stores and independents seize their rightful share of sales. He confirms: "We

"This market is five times the size of the smoothies drinks market. The onus is on us to show c-stores how they can benefit."

Danone commercial director Adam Grant

need to help retailers in this sector unlock the potential via education and by putting into place routes to market to ensure our products get through.

"Too many retailers think that Actimel is in the domain of the multiples and will not sell in their stores. Danone plans to explode that myth and believes that the strength and penetration of the Actimel brand will allow it to sell in any outlet."

As such, the company has spent the past six months running a trial at three stores in the Leeds/Bradford area, installing funky Danone branded bottle-shaped fridges to sell Actimel as part of the exercise and to add theatre.

While each of the stores had stocked Actimel before the trial, it had been on an ad hoc basis, mainly when it was on special offer from their wholesaler. As such, the flavours stocked had been erratic, often focused on one flavour and not necessarily the one most appropriate to their customer base.

The aim, says Grant, was to show that Actimel will sell well in c-stores when it is merchandised properly and the correct range is stocked.

Sales doubled across all stores and as a result, Danone has formed a link with the Husky refrigeration company to offer



Sales of Actimel rose by 54% in the Costcutter store owned by Tim Bhullar during a special trial conducted by Danone

branded Danone fridges in a special deal to all retailers. The offer includes a planogram to help with ranging and is expected by Grant to be available from this month. He comments: "Now we are working on building distribution via van sales with Kerry Foods and working with NisaChill and Musgrave Budgens-Londis, among others. We know space is limited in the small store sector so we are also driving a project to understand the space issues and identify where that space can come from. The opportunity for c-stores is massive."

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