

SPARKLING
ICE®



Case Study:
Sparkling Ice®

i|M insights in marketing
Connecting people to brands.



SITUATION:

THE SPARKLING ICE® BRAND has enjoyed a meteoric rise to popularity in recent years. However, while growth is strong, a significant threat to that growth rises within the marketplace. A number of new products are entering the category, backed by some of the biggest brands in the beverage industry. The brand team felt there was an opportunity to capitalize on its strong connection with consumers beyond the functional benefits it had been communicating to date. Both of these market factors led to a larger strategic question.

HOW TO UNCOVER AND DRIVE A LONGER TERM, EMOTIONALLY DRIVEN CONNECTION TO THE BRAND?

THE CHALLENGE

The challenge, at its core, was simple; to understand how **Sparkling Ice's®** core users perceived and connected with the brand personally. What was their emotional connection to the brand and how did the brand personality manifest itself? Once their current relationship and perceptions were uncovered, the challenge then became to develop positioning platforms and relevant messaging that built on the core experience to bring in new users.



RESEARCH SOLUTIONS

To better understand the brand essence and drivers among Sparkling Ice® core users, a number of in-depth in-home interviews and shop-a-longs were conducted within desired target segments. From that work, the Team learned...

- *The Sparkling Ice® brand has **a strong tone and personality that conveys fun**, irreverence and unabashed happiness.*
- *The product is seen as a "better for you" alternative to soda, but a **more flavorful option than bottled water**.*
- ***Four positioning directions were unearthed** for the ad agency, in conjunction with the brand team, to begin to messaging territories to explore.*



To help understand the language and relevance of the positioning territories and to build the creative brief, six focus groups were conducted with consumers who were either users or aware non-triers of Sparkling Ice®. From that work, the Team learned ...

- *No one territory was superior. Rather, all the territories provided rich and insightful feedback of what the brand was, what it can become, what is relevant to consumers and what is not.*
- *Distinct pieces of each territory could be used to connect and create a bond with consumers.*



From all the previous work, a creative brief was created which resulted in two campaign directions. Further testing was needed to identify how consumers connected to the experience, emotion, and tone of the campaigns, understanding uniqueness and fit to the Sparkling Ice® brand. Four in-person focus groups were conducted within the general population to provide the information needed.

- *All the messaging created for both campaigns was seen as fun, vibrant and unique.*
- *One campaign was clearly superior than the other, however, the work identified parts of the campaign that needed work to fully communicate the intended message.*



KEY INSIGHTS

1 Shopping for water is habitual, with most consumers **picking up what they know** without even considering other options.

2 **Convenience stores** present a unique opportunity for beverages in general, especially among younger consumers.

3 **The "Be Not Bland" campaign** conveyed a feeling of fun and whimsy and was very well received. There were a few areas of opportunity in the work, but those were easily adjusted moving forward.

4 **Visual imagery** showcasing the use of fresh fruit, bold flavors and healthy content of the drink resonated with consumers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Proceed with the 'Be Not Bland' campaign **WITH REFINEMENTS** that arose during the qualitative.
- Continue using fruit imagery to reinforce the Sparkling Ice® equity and **COMMUNICATE GREAT TASTE.**



The **'Be Not Bland'** campaign was launched in January of 2017 with print, TV and digital as part of a \$37mm marketing campaign. The campaign's fun yet quirky attitude as well as the tag line all worked to bring the personality and emotional benefits to consumers.

**IF YOU HAVE MORE QUESTIONS,
WE WOULD BE HAPPY TO HELP!**

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