

The Milk Processor Education Program (MilkPEP) is funded by the nation's milk processors, who are committed to increasing fluid milk consumption nationwide.

The Refuel with Chocolate Milk campaign reframed the dialogue around chocolate milk and created a new usage occasion, making positive conversations around chocolate milk increase 15.3% and moving sales from an average monthly decline of -6% to an increase of +10%.

Chocolate milk, once seen as a delicious treat for kids was coming under major scrutiny. No longer an easier, tastier way to get kids to drink more milk, it was suddenly getting a bad rap for being an unhealthy, sugary option. And it didn't stop there – the issue had found its way into schools. Around the country, the conversation was heating up on whether chocolate milk was good for our children's health. With childhood obesity on the rise, America's favorite treat, chocolate milk, had become the victim of a cultural witch hunt. Our charge was to de-villainize chocolate milk by starting a positive conversation and recalibrating perceptions to ultimately drive sales.

Goals

1 Ignite positive conversations around chocolate milk

2 Increase intent to drink chocolate milk

3 Drive sales of chocolate milk

Strategy

Changing the Conversation: MilkPep + Deutsch unearthed a few major insights that led to our Big Idea and flipped the conversation on its head. We started at the heart of the matter: ingredients. We took a good hard look at what made chocolate milk, chocolate milk – and realized that **chocolate milk had a unique nutritional profile in its ratio of proteins, carbohydrates and fats** – and a similar nutritional profile to that of post-workout beverages. We took this rich nutrition and we talked to chefs, scientists, nutritionists, trainers, athletes, influencers, and anyone who knew anything about health, fitness and nutrition to better understand habits, lifestyles and trends among the health-obsessed. **In doing this, we found that there was a previously untapped fitness occasion where chocolate milk could play.**

Once we unearthed this great potential for chocolate milk, we actually found that what seemed like new benefits to us, were actually a well-kept secret among those in the know. For years, there had been underground buzz among die hard athletes and fitness gurus about the benefits of drinking chocolate milk as a recovery drink. Recent scientific studies showed that replenishing the body within two hours after exercise helps athletes recover faster and perform better. Chocolate milk, with the perfect ratio of proteins, carbohydrates and nutrients, has the nutritional profile that enables people to recover faster and, as a result, ultimately, perform better. Our biggest weakness – our nutritional profile – was now also our greatest strength.

The Big Idea: Make Chocolate Milk a Recovery Ritual

Bringing the Big Idea to life – a three-pronged approach

Introducing “My After”: An idea that seamlessly connected chocolate milk to those reflective and personally powerful moments of the “refueling” that follows intense workouts

- 1 Galvanizing the Influencers: To establish credibility with influencers, we signed-on with the best. We forged relationships with some of the top endurance sports organizations and became the Official Recovery Beverage of Ironman, USA Swimming, USA Basketball, CAF (Challenged Athletes Foundation) and the Rock n’ Roll Marathon Series.**

We introduced three celebrity athlete spokespeople to “My After”: Ironman World Champ, Mirinda Carfrae, Ironman/CAF spokesperson, Sarah Reinertsen, and Ironman, Chris Lieto. Their print, digital and TV ads ran in ultra-targeted properties like Inside Triathlon, Competitor, Runner’s World, and the Tour de France which amped up credibility and created lifts in awareness.

We inspired potential “Refuelers” by having these elite athletes deliver long-form video content of their training.

We drove meaningful engagement on the ground. Our partnership gave us sampling opportunities at triathlons, marathons, half marathons and many other races.

- 2 Amplifying the Sentiment: Many die-hard athletes and fitness gurus were already well aware of the recovery benefits of chocolate milk. But, a large portion of the physically active population (~30+ million adults) was not. To let them in on our secret, we featured A-list athletes like NBA Star Carmelo Anthony and Olympic Medalist Dara Torres. We launched with magazine spreads, high-production-value digital video and display across high reach properties like Sports Illustrated, and ESPN.**

Reaching consumers at their “Point-of-Sweat” maximized impact even more. We infiltrated the work-out occasion through deep partnerships with MapMyFitness and Lifetime Fitness and got to our target right after their work-outs.

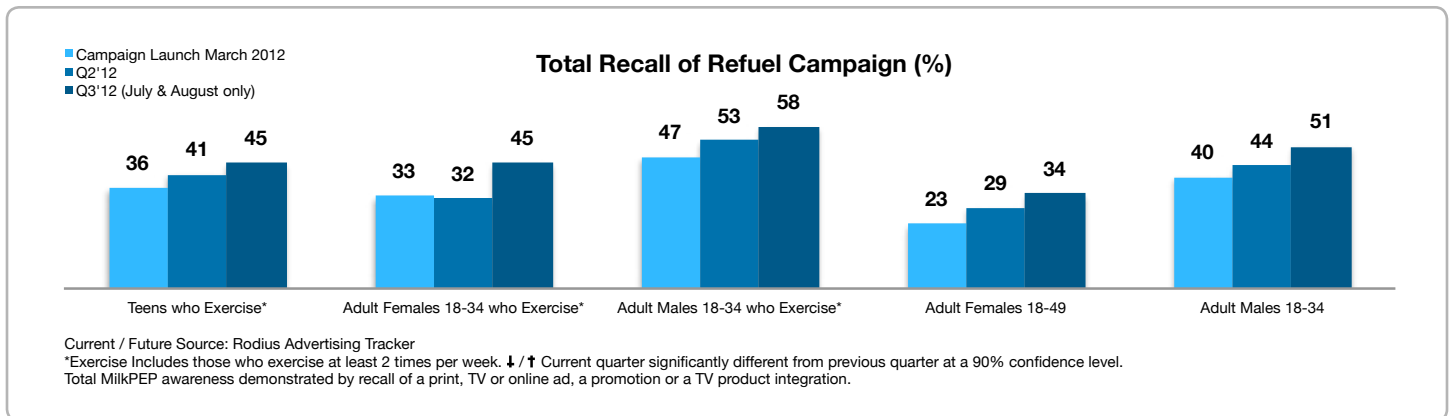
- 3 Rallying the Base: We needed to build an army of chocolate milk evangelists. Spurring peer-to-peer and influencer-to-peer advocacy was crucial to cementing chocolate milk as the best choice for recovery.**

Enter Team Refuel: Across social platforms our elite athletes were spreading the word to their fans and followers, adding validation to our science and encouraging them to join the movement. Everyday athletes of all levels and skill were invited to apply to be a member of Team Refuel. If accepted, athletes were entitled to free race entries, branded Team Refuel gear, product and advice from our expert trainers and nutritionists. Hundreds of Team Refuel members could be seen participating.

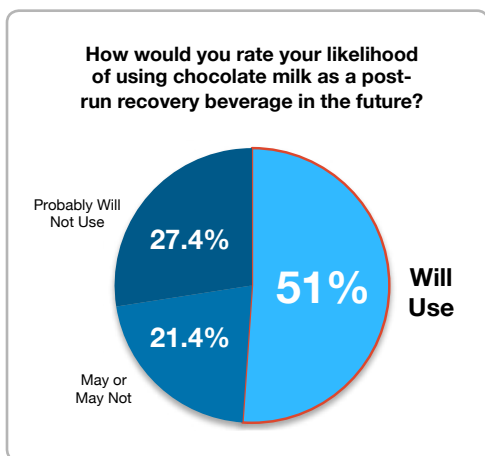
The Results

15.3% increase in positive conversations around chocolate milk and its recovery benefits.

- Facebook fans grew 314% from 17,682 to 114,287. Page engagement grew 903% vs. 2011
- Twitter followers grew 135% from 1,225 to 3,199. Organic tweets about chocolate milk and Refuel grew 577%

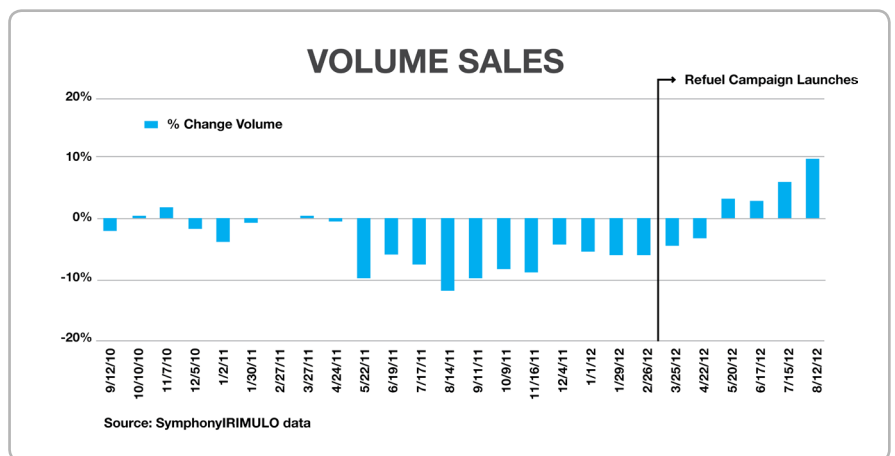


Despite a very limited budget (\$6.5MM), effective media targeting allowed the “Refuel” campaign to be recalled by over 45% of our target in less than five months.



More importantly, over half the athletes exposed to the messaging said they would use chocolate milk moving forward for recovery.

(Source: Rock n Roll & Ironman, Grassroots Athlete Surveys)



Sales moved from an average monthly decline of -6% to an increase of +10% in the first five months. The campaign helped generate \$122.3MM in incremental revenue with just a \$6.5MM dollar spend delivering, as stated before, an 18:1 ROI.

(Source: USDA Milk Monthly Sales Report, August 2012)