

Campaign Title: #WeighThis

Brand: Nestlé Lean Cuisine

Company(s) Involved: Nestlé Lean Cuisine & 360i; Secondary: MetaVision

Category: Social Media

Summary

Lean Cuisine was losing relevance as diet quickly became another four-letter word. The result – five years of sales declines. The brand needed to pivot. And fast.

Through social segmentation and brand perception analysis, we discovered Lean Cuisine conversations were functional and lacking emotional relevance. Further, we observed that while female consumers lead accomplished lives, they face a society that continues to only judge women by appearance. We tapped into the accomplishments that fuel successful lifestyles for women in a moving social campaign called #WeighThis. The centerpiece of the campaign was an emotionally powerful video featuring real women weighing their life accomplishments in lieu of their bodies. #WeighThis was an integral part of Lean Cuisine's holistic turnaround strategy and largely contributed to the brand seeing its first sales increase in six years despite a decline in media spend year-over-year.

Marketing Challenge

In 1981 (when Jane Fonda, dieting & leg warmers were popular), Lean Cuisine was a category breakthrough. Fast-forward 30 years and “diet” had become a four-letter word. The amount of Lean Cuisine product purchased by the brand’s core consumer base dropped by 70% (AC Nielsen Data, 2014). Retailers declined shelf space by -12% (AC Nielsen Data, 2014), indicating the frozen diet category was in trouble.

Lean Cuisine needed to shift its brand positioning from ‘80s-era diet and weight loss to modern health and wellness, evolve consumer perception and move product in the freezer.

As part of the rebrand, Lean Cuisine introduced new packaging and frozen entrée options. While the brand’s reformulation and updated packaging gave people a rational reason to believe it was different, we needed to give them a feeling to believe.

Methodology

Our strategy was to conduct Social Listening research including volume trend analysis, in-depth social sentiment analysis, 360i Tribe AnalysisSM, and 360i Brand CompassSM to uncover powerful insights that would inform a campaign that would resonate with the Lean Cuisine audience and new potential consumers.

Through our proprietary social segmentation research (Tribe AnalysisSM) and brand perception analysis (Brand CompassSM), we identified that the current conversation about Lean Cuisine online lacked emotional resonance. The product was consistently the butt of jokes, and cultural references about who is perceived to be the Lean Cuisine consumer pointed to a lonely single female eating dinner at home alone.

When we looked closer at Lean Cuisine's core target we saw a woman who was succeeding (high income earners, college graduates, hard workers that provide for others), but a society that continued to judge her not by her accomplishments, but rather her appearance.

Creative Execution

By identifying Lean Cuisine conversation as functional and lacking resonance, we set out to move the brand into an emotional space and promote conversation around a brand that was about more than just dieting.

We tapped into the emotional drivers and accomplishments that fuel a successful lifestyle for women in an emotionally powerful spot featuring real women weighing their accomplishments – becoming a parent, making Dean’s List as a single mother, and traveling the world – in lieu of weighing their bodies. We seeded the centerpiece video on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, and utilized paid media, PR and influencer marketing to amplify the message.

Throughout the campaign we encouraged women to share the ways in which they would like to be weighed using the hashtag #WeighThis on Lean Cuisine’s social channels, promoting an open conversation about meaningful accomplishments.

Business Results

#WeighThis was an integral part of Lean Cuisine’s holistic turnaround strategy and largely contributed to the brand seeing its first sales increase in six years despite a decline in media spend year-over-year. Right after the relaunch, the brand experienced double digit growth.

The #WeighThis video was an instant and viral success, contributing to a 33% increase in positive brand perception. Within the first week of launch, our efforts earned us the #9 spot in the Ad Age Viral Video chart and a 6.5 million reach.

Our efforts increased year-over-year conversation about Lean Cuisine by 178% across social media, and increased Lean Cuisine’s competitive share of voice by 19 percentage points during the campaign timeframe year-over-year.

The campaign resonated emotionally with consumers describing how they wanted to be weighed and commenting on others’ posts flooding into #WeighThis and Lean Cuisine’s social channels. The responses also reduced share of negative conversations around Lean Cuisine on social media to just 4%—a stark decrease from the previous year’s share of 25% negativity.

Lean Cuisine is no longer perceived as a lonely, single woman’s quick-fix dinner, but rather an advocate for female empowerment.