

[Sample post: Loyalty Programs]



Power Your Grocery Loyalty Program Five Ways Using Entertainment Properties

Southeastern Grocers' recent Go Wild loyalty program targeting kids created a lot of attention. ([Here's a link to my recent post about it, in case you missed it.](#)) It attracted shoppers and encouraged them to spend more by rewarding them with free trading cards. Shoppers involved with the program were motivated to collect all 54 trading cards before the end of the program.

But the program could have been even better.

...Yes, kids got **excited** about **collecting**, even just simple **trading cards**.

...And yes, parents loved how this turned the trip to the grocery store into a fun, family activity.

But the program could have been **better**, possibly *much* better, if it **featured a well-known property**.

A look at supermarket shelves provides an excellent case study. In a recent trip to my local grocery store, 11 out of the 15 aisles had products featuring an *entertainment property*: Sesame Street, Angry Birds, Scooby Doo, SpongeBob, Disney's Frozen, Mickey Mouse, and Cars, just to name a few.

CPG companies have known for decades that *featuring a well-loved property* on their product is a very effective way to **drive sales**.

Had Southeastern Grocers used a known property, instead of generic animal cards, their program could have created even **more excitement** resulting in a more **significant sales increase**. Here are 5 reasons why:

- 1 **Enthusiastic Fans** - When working with an entertainment property, you tap into an existing fan base. Of course picking the right property is important. When you do, the *property already has a following of loyal fans* eager for more engagement with the property. These fans will be attracted to your store, even if they usually shop elsewhere.
- 2 **Awareness** - You benefit from all the other activities going on with the property, which serve to create more awareness and “buzz.” This can come in many forms. For example, if it’s an animated property, you benefit from a show’s broadcast (TV and/or streaming). There will be plenty of merchandise in the market and possibly other promotions, such as a tie-in with a fast food restaurant.
- 3 **Marketing** – Any activity promoting the property creates a “halo effect” that all other licensees and partners benefit from. This can come in the form of media backed promotions and products, such as advertised toys. If your program features a theatrical release, you would benefit from the multi-million dollar campaign promoting it. Just imagine if your store had been running an exclusive loyalty campaign tying into the release of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* or *The Minions*?
- 4 **Merchandise** – A store running a campaign with an entertainment property can get added value by creating a special section in the store selling the property’s other merchandise. You’ll get the margin on the sales of those items, in addition to the sales lift across your entire store from your well-designed loyalty program.
- 5 **Leveraging the Property’s Assets** – In many cases licensors will have other activities going on that you can tie into to create an even more robust program. There are many ways to do this and it will be unique for each property. Some examples include promoting your in-store campaign through the licensor’s social media, tags in TV programs, or including special offers through one of the licensor’s partners, such as a DreamWorks program including a sweepstakes to win a DreamWorks Royal Caribbean cruise.

Keeping within the same animal theme, the Southeastern Grocers program could have been powered up by working with National Geographic or Discovery’s Animal Planet. Taping into the equity of either of these properties could have turned a good program into an even better, more impactful event.

There is a real opportunity here for retailers to leverage entertainment properties beyond simply carrying product on their shelves.

Have your kids gotten excited about an entertainment property promotion? Or do you remember something similar from when you were a kid? I'd love to hear about it in the comments section below.