



LEO J. SHAPIRO & ASSOCIATES LLC.

**SOCIAL MEDIA BUZZ SINKS TROPICANA “SQUEEZE”
RESEARCH FINDINGS**

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Background and Methodology

In early January 2009, Tropicana Products, Inc. replaced its traditional packaging for its line of Pure Premium orange juice with a new “Squeeze” packaging.



Tropicana unit sales decreased by 20% after they implemented the packaging change.¹ Neil Campbell, president of Tropicana Products, Inc., explained that the company received a number of passionate outcries regarding the change in packaging. He stated that although the complaints came from “a fraction of a percent of the people who buy [Tropicana],” they were from the brand’s “most loyal consumers.”² Consequently, after less than two months on the market, Tropicana announced it was pulling its new “Squeeze” packaging.

The recent attention regarding the change in Tropicana’s packaging highlights Social Media as a powerful consumer driven tool in product branding. To assess the impact of Social Media in Tropicana’s product branding, in March 2009, LJS conducted a quantitative survey with a national probability sample of 1000 households employing both telephone and online methodologies. This report summarizes that research and its findings regarding Tropicana customers and their use of Social Media.

¹ Zmuda, Natalie. “Tropicana Line’s Sales Plunge 20% Post-Rebranding.” *Advertising Age*, April 2, 2009. http://adage.com/article?article_id=135735.

² Elliot, Stuart. “Tropicana Discovers Some Buyers Are Passionate About Packaging.” *The New York Times*, February 22, 2009. <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/23/business/media/23adcol.html?pagewanted=1>.

Key Findings

Social Media played a critical role in enabling a small group of loyal Tropicana customers to overturn Tropicana's introduction of the "Squeeze" packaging for its iconic orange juice brand.

When examined using macro-marketing measures, the Tropicana "Squeeze" introduction was met with both positive and negative reaction.

- One in five (20%) consumers noticed the change in the packaging, and their reactions were evenly split among those who felt negatively (27%), neutrally (32%), or positively (32%) about the new packaging.
- Such a finding suggests a highly polarized reaction to the packaging without offering any significant improvement... a warning of potential problems.

These macro measurements understate the impact of the small (1%) but vocal minority of consumers who reported that they also expressed their opinions about the "Squeeze" packaging on various social media websites. Much of the consumer generated content (CGC) about the new Tropicana packaging was negative, with the most common reasons being:

- Looks plain/generic
- Not eye-catching
- Prefer old design
- Cheap looking
- Hard to tell the differences amongst the different types (pulp/no pulp)
- Doesn't fit image/not for orange juice

While 1 percent may seem small, CGC is becoming increasingly influential in consumer purchase decisions.

- A prior study by LJS³ revealed that nearly half of all US consumers used Social Media in the past year to help them make a purchase decision.
- Roughly 20 percent of all consumers have contributed CGC to Social Media in the past year.

³ See under separate cover "Exploring the Impact of Consumer Generated Media on Purchase Decisions and Behavior," October 2008, Leo J. Shapiro & Associates.

- Social media content is rated three times more influential than traditional media, such as television advertising, in driving final purchase decisions.
- Among the youngest adults (18-34), Social Media is actually rated higher than professional reviews in terms of purchase influence.

Closing Thought

Traditionally, the “mass market” held the greatest influence over consumer and business decisions. This mass marketing approach was followed by more sophisticated targeting and segmentation of markets. Today, marketers increasingly target their products to individuals. Social Media facilitates listening to these individuals. In this latest evolution, Social Media amplifies the voice of the individual, and the negative often looms larger than the positive. The most outspoken consumers have a platform to influence other consumers and impact business decisions.

About LJS

Leo J. Shapiro & Associates (LJS) is one of the nation’s premier market research companies. Our professional staff is trained in the social and behavioral sciences, humanities, and business. We combine traditional and innovative techniques in original research drawing on decades of experience across a wide range of industries.

LJS has developed tools to monitor and measure the usage and impact of Social Media. For more information, please contact Jessica Ellington at jessicae@ljs.com or (312)321-8117 or visit our website at www.ljs.com.