

RYMER FARM

Overview

This case study highlights how shopper insight prompted a local free-range egg producer to experiment with cost-effective promotions and social media, targeting shoppers where it matters most, at the point of purchase.



The Company

Rymer Farm is situated on the historic Euston Estate in the heart of East Anglia. With a family history of farming dating back to 1921, Toby Rush prides himself on the highest welfare standards for his flock of 32,000 hens. Rymer Farm's Unique Selling Proposition (USP) is a high quality free range egg from the heart of East Anglia. All eggs are packed on the farm, to minimise transportation and handling and ensure that his eggs are the freshest on the shelf, with a dark golden yolk that signals quality to the final consumer.

Rymer Farm has a diverse customer base, to accommodate the variation in the size of eggs produced – selling directly to the restaurant and the food service sector in trays of 30 and supplying the retail sector with large, medium and mixed weight boxes.



“We have done a good job in recent years, building a strong and loyal customer base. The challenge now is holding on to them as our USP risks becoming overshadowed by aggressive pricing from our competitors” – Toby Rush, Rymer Farm Owner

Insight

The Who Buys My Food team has been providing shopper insight to Rymer Farm since their supermarket listing was first secured in November 2013. The insight report which Toby received in November 2016, identified the potential to grow the share of Rymer Farm within the free-range egg category in East Anglia.

“The shopper insight report helped us to identify our core customers and the potential to grow our business by targeting them more effectively in store.” – Toby Rush, Rymer Farm Owner

Action

“Try Me Free” Promotion

Toby was keen to make the most of his promotional budget and decided to try an innovative and cost-effective promotional mechanic – “Try Me Free”. This is an alternative to traditional price discounting and works on the premise that an eye-catching addition to the packaging will entice customers with the offer of a risk-free trial. Shoppers then purchase the item through the till at full price and claim a full refund on-line, providing an opportunity to capture further feedback on their purchase decision. Rymer Farm free-range eggs are sold in stores throughout East Anglia through two distribution centres. This gave the opportunity to objectively evaluate the impact of the promotion, by comparing stickered products (on promotion) with non-stickered products (off promotion). The trial was run in partnership with Core2Store who managed the promotion and redemptions from start to finish.

Outcome

“Try Me Free” Trial 1

The initial trial was disappointing. Stickers were applied to 4000 medium 6 pack eggs, resulting in a small uplift in sales of 2.1% and only 11 redemptions. Moreover, after the promotion, sales returned to pre-promotion levels. Reflecting on the experience, it was identified that the impact of the promotion could have been hampered by poor visibility in store: Rymer Farm eggs are positioned on the top shelf of the egg fixture, which may have reduced the visibility of the stickers. It was also hypothesised that the habitual purchase of eggs meant that shoppers did not spend very long at the fixture so greater impact might be needed to interrupt shoppers’ habitual purchasing behaviour and capture their attention.

Store Display

A store display was scheduled in one of the top selling stores, in Chelmsford, allowing Toby to interact with shoppers while telling the Rymer Farm story. Sales in this store rose by 38% during the week in which the display took place, highlighting the importance of raising shoppers’ awareness in store.



“Try Me Free” Trial 2

A concerted effort was made to increase the visibility of the second “Try Me Free” promotion. The size of the on-pack stickers was increased, from 35mm to 40mm, and printed with a more vibrant colour. In addition, a large promotional sticker was added to the outer shelf packaging and the promotion was extended to the large 6 pack. Targeted social media (aimed at Rymer Farm’s target demographic – aged 35+) was also utilised to promote the “Try Me Free” offer in three local Norwich stores to raise awareness of the offer.



On-pack stickers for promotion 1



On-pack stickers for promotion 2

The result was a significant increase in redemptions (from 11 to 29) and a sales uplift of 11.5%, which was sustained beyond the promotional period. The Facebook advert reached 3,700 users for a cost of just £20 and in one of the Norwich stores, there was a 60% increase in sales units over the week-long period that the Facebook advert was run, indicating the potential impact from the smallest of promotional budgets. The cost-effective targeting of shoppers to raise their awareness of the Rymer Farm brand resulted in

a 15% increase in penetration and an 18% increase repeat purchase. So, the promotions served to increase sales by attracting and retaining new customers.



Next Steps

The free range egg category is dominated by own-label and big brands but Rymer Farm is committed to increasing brand awareness and building shopper loyalty to grow their market share in East Anglia. The “Try Me Free” and Facebook adverts are cost-effective ways to engage with shoppers and present economical alternatives to small suppliers like Rymer Farm.

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