

MITR hails success of first ever airport ad campaign

Mars International Travel Retail (MITR) has highlighted the success of its global ad campaign for its confectionery brand M&M's across seven airports.



The ad campaign broke earlier this year for four weeks in airports in Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

Speaking to the media at a press conference during the TFWA World Exhibition, MITR Category Director Raghav Rekhi said it was the first ad campaign the company had ever staged in travel retail.

The campaign was supported by disruptive displays in-store and was seen by 25m travelers globally.

“Sales performance really exceeded our expectations,” said Rekhi. Sales grew by +33%, and up to +88% in some airports.

Rekhi said the campaign would be “bigger and better” in 2020 and MITR wanted to replicate the success of the campaign in other airports.

Discussing macro trends, Rekhi noted the fluid, always-on-the-go lives of today's consumers. According to research, 28% of people in travel retail said they looked for on the-go snacks.

Passengers now come from different demographic groups: some want experiences, and all are looking for value. They are also seeking healthier snack options and look at the impact of their buying decisions on communities and the planet.

In addition, travelers are getting younger, and 36% are in the millennial age group. Rekhi observed that, according to research, passengers who take low-cost carriers spend 32% less than those on full-service airlines.

All this means that conversion is a challenge, he continued, but MITR had found three keys to unlocking growth and conversion: fun; value for all, and on the-go snacking.

Bringing fun to the tablet segment

MITR Sales Director Christophe Bouye introduced the new M&M's Block, a brand-new tablet format, with the aim of bringing fun to the tablet segment. The travel exclusive product has specially designed packaging for the channel.

He also highlighted the importance of limited editions and product newness, citing the popularity of the M&M's salted caramel flavor, now available in 100 airports. The product has spurred a 42% upswing in core pouch sales.

In its bid to provide value for all, MITR will also be introducing packs below €8 (US\$8.80) on all key brands, he revealed.

To cater to on-the-go snacking, MITR has designed a merchandising solution for the cash till point, which it describes as a €1 billion (US\$1.1 billion) opportunity in travel retail. The solution has a full offer comprising refreshment with gum/mint, chocolate bars, and bite-sized confections.



Sustainability focus

MITR General Manager Gary Clarke said MITR was expanding its portfolio of treats and snacks to meet the changing needs of travelers and spoke of a “challenging time for the industry”.

MITR’s sustainability initiatives include investing in reducing plastic and carbon dioxide emissions, and turning its attention to the 1m people in its supply chain, who are often small farmers.

He also said the company would focus on producing relevant products that inspire the industry in its bid to be the industry leader.