

Mondelez WTR interview: Betting on tested and trusted brands



Jaya Singh, Managing Director, Mondelez World Travel Retail

Stronger Together



Mondelez WTR's plans have been adapted in order to emerge stronger together and accelerate recovery in the channel, says Jaya Singh

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That's the view of Jaya Singh, Managing Director, Mondelez World Travel Retail, who discussed the confectionery category post-pandemic in this interview with *Duty Free & Travel Retailing Magazine*.

Duty Free & Travel Retailing Magazine: How will the new hygiene measures and smaller customer base impact sales of confectionery?

Jaya Singh: Mondelez World Travel Retail (Mondelez WTR) is reviewing the emphases and mechanisms for all touchpoints to respond to new health and safety measures as well as travelers' demand for improved shopping convenience. Our Delighting Travelers vision for confectionery that was built on the three pillars of more shoppers, more spend, more often continues to provide the ultimate direction in this process.

As international travel resumes, confectionery will need to remain exposed and visible to travelers to leverage its universal appeal, highly impulse nature and potential to generate cross-category purchases. In addition, we are collaborating with our retail partners on new display and merchandising arrangements that can allow for better distancing of shoppers while maintaining the ease of navigating what is on offer and making purchase decisions.

Robust omnichannel approach

DF&TRM: Is confectionery a category you feel will bounce back quicker than others? What do you foresee for its future?

JS: Confectionery has an incredible amount to offer to travel retail. As the most universal category,

our brands continue to play a key role in the overall appeal of the channel to travelers. Confectionery draws people in-store, provides travelers with accessible gift options, drives impulse purchases and prompts purchases in other categories. Most of all, though, it remains timeless – our brands are tried, tested and deeply embedded in the hearts of shoppers.

Mondelez WTR is in the fortunate position to leverage globally recognized brands including Toblerone, the channel's #1 chocolate brand, as well as diverse experience, skills and insights to help our retail partners optimize the visibility of the category, as international travel resumes.

DF&TRM: With the reopening of some airports especially in Asia, what type of consumer behavior are you seeing? Are there any specific innovations? How will chocolate sampling be affected?

JS: Travelers might perceive some physical engagement and promotional activities to be of higher risk than others, and we are prioritizing those that rely on less physical interaction. We have individually wrapped pieces of chocolate that enable our loved consumers to sample and taste in a very safe environment. Trusted brands like ours are very reassuring; a detail that should not to be overlooked in such uncertain times.

We also have a holistic digital strategy based on e-commerce and online communications beyond in-store engagement. When travelers resume their journeys, they will return with a fervor to connect and to engage in unique and memorable experiences. Our award-winning digital team and robust omnichannel approach will help us deliver the exciting digital engagement solutions that can substitute for physical touchpoints.

Evolving consumer preferences

DF&TRM: What type of offerings should confectionery companies make available post-COVID-19 crisis?

JS: Mondelez International has been successful in the domestic markets despite the crisis. This is the result of the changes in our operating environment that we have noticed over the last couple of months; demand has been heavily concentrated on trusted, top-selling products.

At Mondelez WTR, we believe that every crisis comes with an opportunity. We are transferring our insights from the domestic market into travel retail to continue being successful and adjust the confectionery offer to what counts once international travel recommences: brands consumers love, products consumers know and value consumers appreciate.

Our plans have been adapted to seize the opportunities to emerge stronger together and accelerate recovery in the channel. The collaborative work with our commercial partners is starting now to streamline the confectionery portfolio to build an offering that is aligned with the evolving consumer preferences and their readjusted value equations.

DF&TRM: What are some of Mondelez's new initiatives for post-pandemic?

JS: Despite the challenges that we're currently facing, our product launch plans are on track with a fine-tuned timeline to help the channel's recovery. Our new products are the result of bold, research-driven experiments with new sub-categories and flavors to give traveling consumers exactly what they are looking for. Along with our strong existing portfolio from beloved global brands Toblerone, Cadbury, Milka and Oreo, we are confident that the new additions will play an instrumental role in helping both our partners and us to re-establish the category as an industry growth driver.

The latest travel retail exclusive flavor innovation from Toblerone – Gingery Orange – offers a unique and delicious twist for travelers, combining signature Toblerone milk chocolate with honey and almond nougat with natural orange peels dusted in ginger. The flavor delivers an unexpected sweet-and-spicy taste experience as well as an unconventional texture combination, with almond nougat meeting soft oranges. Gingery Orange is available in the shareable Tiny bag format in mono or mixed flavor, as well as in the iconic 360g bar.

Strong relationships

DF&TRM: Is there any other information that would be interesting to our readers regarding the confectionery segment?

JS: In 2019, we sustained solid growth on the already high base that we've established through continuous year-on-year growth over the last few years. In the last 12 months, we have been recognized by the industry across various platforms and business principles on more occasions than ever before.

We entered 2020 with great momentum, a solid position as confectionery category leader, our enduring dedication to our partners and the winning spirit of our resilient team to ensure that we're prepared to seize every opportunity to get the category back on the growth trajectory as swiftly as possible.

We're closely monitoring developments across the globe and remain steadfastly committed to our retail and distribution partners as well as our traveling consumers, by resuming operations when and wherever possible. We're in this business to delight travelers and contribute to the growth of a very special and dynamic channel through strong and collaborative relationships. The COVID-19 crisis has not changed that; in fact, as major crises often do, it has only placed that which is important into even sharper focus – firmly cementing that we are stronger together



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