

Mazaya's high-octane solutions

Youthful energy, excitement and a contemporary feel describe Mazaya's presence in the travel retail environment. This enthusiasm and zest helped to create an environment where a pandemic has little bearing on the brand's present and future outlook

Mazaya truly exploded into global travel retail a few years back, and has been dynamically visible in the channel ever since. While the past year has been tough on everyone, this shisha company made use of its seemingly endless energy to make sales happen. While forced to liquidate some goods, Mazaya's aggressive promotions and attractive gifts with purchase combined to create an atmosphere where consumers felt compelled to buy.



Mazaya offers an attractive glass shisha as a gift with purchase; these shishas are redesigned each year to stay on trend, and they come in unique bags that make them easy to carry

"The challenge of liquidating expiring goods was particularly felt in markets where the digital tracking stamps were introduced," says Rawan Elayyan, Mazaya's Global Travel Retail Manager. "In the UAE for example, tobacco brands had to retrieve all their existing non-DTS stocks by end of 2020, but Dubai was not open to travelers during this time. A lot of brands were not able to deplete their non-DTS stocks before the deadline, and had to physically return stocks to the country of origin or sell them outside of the UAE. This process is complex and requires a lot of paperwork."

In other countries, Mazaya was able to react very quickly with promotions: "One example is replacing the state-of-the-art on-ground activations that Mazaya is known for with aggressive multi-purchase and price-off promotions," says Elayyan. "As a brand we had to take this direction to stand by our duty free partners in those difficult times even if this meant lesser profit margins."

In addition to aggressive pricing promotions, Mazaya offered its signature glass shisha as a GWP in select locations. “Mazaya glass shishas stand out. They are unique and very recognizable. Our shishas are easy to clean and do not hold flavours; they also have exceptional designs that keep changing from year to year so they never go out of trend, and they come in unique bags that make them easy to carry. We can proudly say that the Mazaya glass shisha has become a collectible item in travel retail. The premium GWP strategy helped in introducing new shoppers to shisha molasses and contributed to growing the tobacco category overall, which was very much appreciated by operators, especially during times of recovery,” says Elayyan.



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The company’s 1000g pack performs exceptionally well in duty free as it is a more economical option for the frequent smoker, and Mazaya is currently in talks with a number of operators to list more 1000g flavours

“As we are closely monitoring the market, we must continue our close collaboration with retailers and operators and allocate the needed funds to accelerate recovery; be it promotional through multi-

purchase and price-off promotions, experiential through a well-trained fleet of BAs to assist shoppers and educate them about the brand and premium GWPs, or strategic through range rationalization and listing new SKUs with high potential.”

The promotions offered by Mazaya created an environment where consumers stocked up, especially as they were concerned that another lockdown could occur at a moment’s notice — they did not want to risk running out of shisha molasses. “One interesting observation during the pandemic was the reduced time people spend in the duty free stores. Since the decision making at the shop-floor has become faster, we do feel that there’s a tendency for shopper to stick to tried-and-trusted brands. For shisha smokers in particular, we noticed that shoppers go to the extent of buying more than they need fearing that supply will get disturbed, or having to endure a second round of lockdown where they have to stay home for an extended period of time,” says Elayyan.

Positive insight

While the HORECA channel and travel both virtually disappeared overnight, Mazaya’s domestic business thrived. “We did very well in some domestic markets during the pandemic, especially markets where we have a steady supply and are well established,” says Elayyan. “In fact, Mazaya had considerable sales growth during the pandemic in some local markets, especially when consumption shifted from HORECA to in-house. While the HORECA channel was affected because of the sharing aspect of the shisha, this was in a way compensated by the rise of in-house consumption, coupled with consumers stocking up their favourite shisha molasses products.”

Elayyan says the company was excited about the change of regulation in KSA, with the Saudi government giving the go-ahead to list tobacco brands in duty free and duty paid stores. “We are very proud to announce our listing at Lagardère KSA. Now shoppers can find their favourite shisha molasses brand at Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam airports, and we are currently in talks with a number of local operators to expand our duty free presence in Saudi Arabia, where the potential for shisha molasses is huge and Mazaya enjoys a strong local presence.”

She also professes excitement about the live TFWA event in Cannes. “This decision was eagerly anticipated by the TR community, as it is very refreshing for brands and operators to meet in person and help revive the industry. At Mazaya, we are very excited to go back to Cannes and meet up with our partners after a long wait, especially that this event is so dear to our heart.”



Rawan Elayyan, Global Travel Retail Manager, Mazaya: “One thing that sets Mazaya apart is the premium ingredients we use in our blends. We only use single-origin French tobacco leaves with pure honey and high quality glycerine.

“French tobacco leaves are the most premium in the industry and they have a high absorption quality that allows the flavour to last longer. We are also known to strictly use food-grade flavours, and our molasses have the perfect balance of tobacco strength and flavour intensity, and this is guaranteed to take the shisha smoking experience to the next level. “Our molasses is made in highly developed facilities and it goes through several stages before it is packed and ready to be shipped all over the world. We invite you to take a virtual tour at our state-of-the-art production facilities in Jordan [HERE](#). “In addition to our superior ingredients, we have a wide range of flavours that cater to different tastes and we have established a strong distribution worldwide. In fact, Mazaya’s portfolio comprises over 150 flavours and we are currently listed in 50 countries worldwide and 25 duty free shops.”

Arrivals business

According to Elayyan, one regulatory challenge currently being faced is that some countries are abolishing the tax exemption in Arrivals shops. “For example, Jordan is now in the process of applying tax in the arrivals shops on liquor and tobacco. This will make Arrivals lose its competitive edge over the domestic market, and will definitely slow down recovery, as Arrivals contribute substantially to our

sales," she says.

Additionally, most locations have a weight restriction of 1kg in Arrivals, preventing brands from listing bigger pack sizes. "In our case, the 1000g pack performs notably well wherever it is listed, as it is an economical option especially for frequent smokers," says Elayyan. "Not having this item listed in Arrivals is definitely a lost opportunity for us and the operators alike. If such governmental regulations ease up, this would do well for both brands and operators."

Moving ahead in TR

Mazaya recently refurbished its furniture across Cairo Terminal 2 and Terminal 3, Sharm el Sheikh and Hurghada airports. "These are important airports for tourists and we wanted to give our brand a facelift to welcome the influx of travelers expected to head there in Q3 and Q4 this year. Soon we will be installing new furniture in Jordan's Queen Alia International airport at both Arrivals and Departure, especially since Amman is a very strategic location for us as a Jordanian brand," says Elayyan. She adds that the company consistently expands its fleet of brand ambassadors, ensuring they are well trained on product knowledge as well as the different sales technique to assist shoppers with all their queries.

"In addition to that, we are in constant talks with our duty free partners to see how we can optimize our portfolio, discussing which flavours we should add, which SKUs should be replaced and how can we improve our operations overall, be it through achieving high forecast accuracy, streamlining our supply chain and engaging more with our end users."



مزايا

MAZAYA

تبغ فرنسي
French Tobacco

معسل بان ماسالا
Pan Masala Molasses

مزايا
MAZAYA



مزايا

MAZAYA

تبغ فرنسي

French Tobacco

معسل بان راس
Pan Raas Molasses

Mazaya is releasing two new flavours aimed at the growing South Asian market, especially given the importance of the South Asian demographic in the GCC and the UAE in particular

Especially interesting additions to the Mazaya portfolio that will start rolling out in the Travel Retail channel later this year are the Pan Masala and Pan Raas flavours. "Given the importance of the South Asian demographic in the GCC and notably the United Arab Emirates, and with shisha growing in popularity in South Asia, Mazaya has decided to launch these two flavours to cater to the South Asian smoker," says Elayyan. "True to Mazaya's superior quality, Pan Masala and Pan Raas are blended with food-grade flavours like the rest of Mazaya portfolio to offer the end user a very authentic smoking experience. These two flavours will be listed in key duty free shops when the business picks up and operators are ready to expand their offerings."