

got milk?

(a brief history)

Whole Grain Summit

Portland Oregon

June 26, 2015

decades of declining consumption = a call to action

By the early nineties, milk consumption had already been declining for decades — despite consumers' knowing and believing that milk “does a body good.”

California milk processors decided to join forces to arrest that decline and go to battle with sodas and juice (the only real competition then). The only way to accomplish that legally was the formation of a commodity board overseen by the State of California.

Processors agreed to a framework of assessing themselves 3 cents for every gallon they sold in order to create a marketing fund to convince consumers to drink more milk.

The California Fluid Milk Processor Advisory Board was formed.

staying culturally relevant for over two decades

Launched in 1993, “got milk?” became one of the most loved, imitated and awarded campaigns in marketing history. More significantly, it helped arrest and reverse household-penetration and per-capita-consumption declines in California for the first time.

22 years later, household awareness of the brand remains over 95%. The brand has continued to reinvent itself to stay culturally relevant — withstanding the challenges of the ethnically diverse California consumer base, the sea of changing diets and fads, competitive beverages, shrinking households, and social antipathy towards conventional agriculture.

campaign timeline



got milk?®

1993

2005

2011

2013

2014

Deprivation

Superdrink

Defending Dairy

Bedtime

Fuels a Better Future

Familia, Amor y Leche

Superdrink

Positivity

Bedtime

Fuels a Better Future

1996

toma leche®



starting from a simple observation

The “Deprivation” strategy grew out of the simple observation that nobody thinks about milk until it’s not there. We dramatized those minor catastrophes of being without milk from the launch in 1993 through 2005.



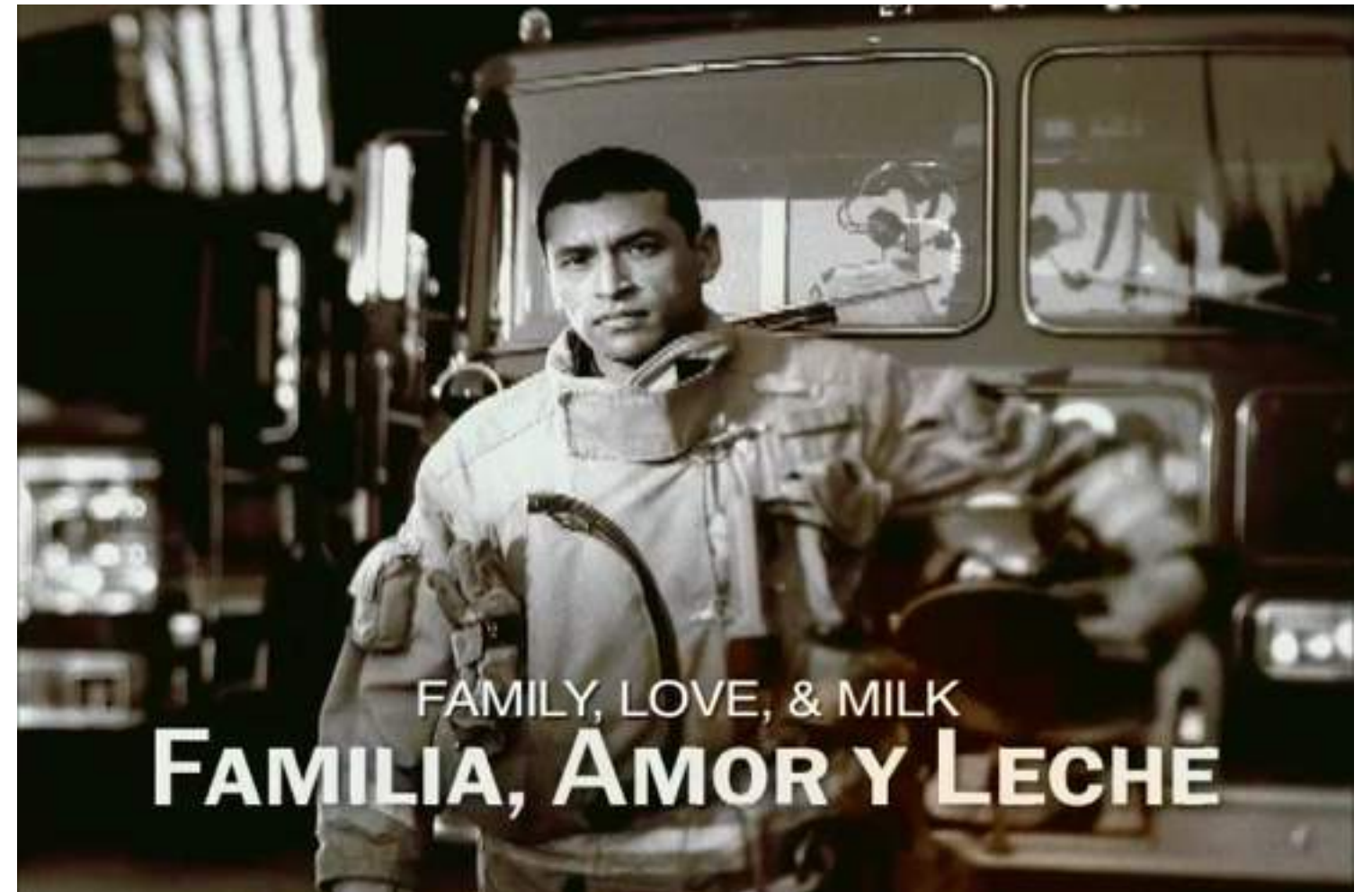
the power of partnerships

The immediate popularity of “got milk?” caused the newly-formed national board, MilkPEP, to license the “got milk?” trademark for use on its Milk Mustache campaign, starting in 1995.

It also allowed us to partner with national brands and products that were perfect accompaniments with milk, leveraging their larger national budgets to achieve a mutual marketing goal.

Familia, Amor y Leche (1996-2005)

Well in advance of the eye-opening 2000 Census, we recognized the importance of our largest and fastest-growing demographic, and launched our original Spanish-language campaign, Familia, Amor y Leche (Family, Love and Milk).



from “deprivation” to “superdrink”

After 12 years of the “Deprivation” campaign, “got milk?” had become a part of everyday vernacular, but milk as a product was running into the steamroller of the low-carb diet craze, which demonized many of the foods that were milk’s natural match.

Our “Superdrink” strategy was born. The goal was to reaffirm milk’s nutritional powerhouse.

performance enhancement (2005)

The impetus for this campaign was to build off major league baseball's steroids scandal.

We positioned milk as nature's original performance enhancing substance.



aliens (2006)

This campaign used the health-challenged alien planet, Brittleactica, to dramatically pay off the superpowers of milk. The aliens were in awe of cows and their ability to provide milk, which helped relieve Earth's "worker beings" of their broken bones, brittle hair, sallow skin and PMS. An expedition was sent to bring the "Supreme One" — Da Iry, as they called her — back to Brittleactica to cure its ailing population.



toma leche (2006-present)

The Familia, Amor y Leche campaign was replaced in 2006, in order to better align the English and Spanish language work. The Toma Leche work used humor as a vehicle for touting the multiple functional benefits of milk.



get the glass (2007)

With “Get the Glass”, we created a world where the last glass of milk left on Earth was kept in a fortress, luring a bumbling and undernourished family to break in and steal the Superdrink that would cure them of their ills.

It was our first interactive campaign, one that encouraged users to visit an online board game to learn about milk in a fun way, enhancing their engagement with the brand.



white gold (2008)

Research showed that milk consumption drops off among teens when they are no longer forced to drink milk by their parents and are pulled by peer pressure towards “cooler” beverage choices, so we went after them directly.

We created a fictional rockstar named White Gold, who, with the help of his dairy-filled guitar, headlined as a spokesman for milk in a way that would appeal to the younger generation and make drinking milk seem “cool”.



milkquarrious (2009)

The Milkquarrious campaign was a continuation of the previous year's campaign and built off of the success of White Gold.

After posting White Gold's 21-minute Rock Opera on YouTube, we invited high school students to reinterpret scenes from it or make their own. Ten winners were chosen from public high schools across the state, with prizes ranging from \$2,500 to \$20,000 that were designated for the school's art programs.



mootopia (2010)

The Mootopia campaign made consumers aware of the health benefits of milk by focusing on the mythical land of Mootopia, whose inhabitants are all affected by the overabundance of milk and its positive benefits.



mucho mas que leche (much more than milk) (2010)

The “mucho mas que leche” campaign used the element of surprise to highlight the health benefits of milk.

Viewers initially would assume they were watching a Nike or Gatorade commercial, only to find out the real hero was milk.



positivity (2011-2012)

Research showed us that the Hispanic consumer is more hopeful and aspirational, less jaded than the General Market consumer. That insight led us to create a mythical character we called “The Master of the Glass Half-Full”. His mission was to evangelize for the power of milk to create a more positive life.

Our thought was: if Coca Cola could appropriate “Happiness”, it was both credible and powerful for Milk to own “Positivity”. Hispanic consumers loved it.



defending dairy (2011)

The goal of the Defending Dairy platform was to drive a wedge between real milk and the imitators by exposing fakery so people could return to what's real.

These commercials poked fun at the sketchy logic behind alternative milks. We made the consumer aware that real milk is the simple, smart and authentic choice.



the science of imitation milk (2012)

This campaign highlighted the multitude of unfamiliar ingredients and additives in artificial milks.



the bedtime drink (2013)

People were eating less breakfast and eating dinner at home less often, so we focused on a moment that would drive consumption at a time of day when people were near their refrigerators.

This campaign played off of milk's long and storied reputation as the "bedtime drink" by reminding viewers of the dreams they could be having with milk. If someone chose to have a glass of milk before they went to sleep, their dreams could take them to fantastical places.



milk fuels a better future (2014)

“Champion” took a fantastical approach to showing the difference milk can make when you drink it as a child, illustrating the great things that are possible.

“Brave” focused on the unique relationship families have with milk, highlighting that the things you say with a glass of milk last forever.

Both spots sparked connections and conversations between children and parents, celebrating the future.



the fight goes on...

After 22 years and more than \$2 billion of marketing support, per capita consumption continues to decline. It's impossible to guess — let alone calculate — how much steeper that decline would be in the absence of the “got milk?” campaign.

What I do know is that abandoning the battlefield and leaving consumers to the enemy — the deep-pocketed junk food marketers, the milk and ag haters, the science deniers — would be an abdication of our responsibility to public health and nutrition literacy.

the challenge — and opportunity — for whole grain

Embrace the good fight for the hearts and minds — and stomachs — of the American public. Your product is wholesome and nutritious and versatile and I think it's safe to say it has stood the test of time!

I encourage you to work within your industry, with government and academia, to create the powerful public voice whole grain deserves. (<http://www.ams.usda.gov/>)

It will take leadership, creativity, and money. But most of all, courage.

So this would be my parting advice (to borrow a phrase from another brand that has become part of the vernacular) ...

just do it

thank you

Steve James

Executive Director, California Milk Processor Board

CEO, James & James Consulting, LLC

stevejames@gotmilk.com