

HOT SPOT

By Art Snyder

This summer is shaping up to be a biggie. With all the news about new beverages and top brands, such as Monster and Mountain Dew, your rink profit margins should really improve. Plus, developments with The Avengers and other Hollywood blockbusters spell nothing but good news for your rink. All the news is in detail, below.

Coconut water

Beverage producers are always on the hunt for the next “big thing.” That’s where excitement and profits blast off like Fourth-of-July rockets. For the past year, many beverage companies have touted coconut water as the latest taste-and-hydration craze to hit the industry, and news bolsters that contention. Professional beach volleyball star Erin Gray, for example, has been named the latest celebrity spokeswoman for O.N.E. Coconut Water. She joins LaShawn Merritt, a defending Olympic champion sprinter, as well as Brazilian jiu-jitsu master Renner Gracie and yoga instructor Alex Crow, as O.N.E. Coconut Water ambassadors. Further, PowerCoco coconut water has added NBA star Carmelo Anthony, of the New York Knicks, to the company’s sponsorship of the brand, which they’re calling The Next Generation Sports Drink®. Altogether, this collective sports star power should pay off, and your rink, too, needs to find that brand of coconut water that meets your customers’ taste preferences. There are dozens of brands of coconut water, so to start, check with your primary beverage supplier to see what’s available. Also check with your staff and other trusted sources for recommended brands. One advisory: Whatever you consider, run a taste test. I’ve sampled a few brands, and they all lacked distinctive, appealing taste.

PowerCoco

Formulated for sports enthusiasts, PowerCoco offers coconut water and hydration electrolytes in a range of

new flavors. Among them are Lemon Lime, Tangerine, Tropical Berry (pink fruit punch) and Grape PowerCoco. The company markets its all-natural drinks

Monster, Mountain Dew, coconut water in the spotlight

specifically for the sports world. Youth, school and hockey sessions seem ideal for in-rink promotions and discounts of PowerCoco, so see how the brand stacks up against competitors.

SuperFRUITAS™

Genesis Today has launched Renacer SuperFRUITAS™, a “superfruit” juice developed specifically for the Hispanic market. As part of their marketing, the Austin, Texas-based company has enlisted Telemundo, a top broadcast, cable and satellite TV channel that serves the national Hispanic market. If your rink has a considerable Mexican, Puerto Rican or other Hispanic customer base, be sure to ask your beverage supplier about the availability of Renacer SuperFRUITAS™. And don’t be shy about requesting discounts, signage and other marketing incentives.

Mountain Dew partners with ‘The Dark Knight Rises’

Pepsi’s Mountain Dew has teamed up with Warner Bros. Pictures and their expected summer blockbuster, The Dark Knight Rises. The Batman-based film is set for release on July 20, and Mountain Dew has several Dark Knight marketing strategies to go with that debut. One calls for the introduction of Mountain Dew Dark Berry, a limited-edition flavor said to be inspired by the Batman character. Others include the debut of DEWGothamCity.com, to enhance fan

experience with the new film; big-money advertising on cable and network TV, radio and digital venues; and a partnership with Dale Earnhardt Jr., a Diet Mountain Dew driver whose legendary #88 race car will be painted in Dark Knight colors chosen online by fans of the movie, at dewcrew.com. Additionally, this is a good time to talk with your beverage and vending suppliers about the whole Mountain Dew family. This includes original Mountain Dew, Diet Mountain Dew, Mountain Dew Code Red, Mountain Dew LiveWire, Mountain Dew Throwback, Mountain Dew Voltage and Mountain Dew White Out. Signage, sales incentives, the works — all should be available to you.

Cheez-It Snack Mixes

Kellogg’s has introduced new packaging for its top-selling Cheez-It line of snacks. The packaging graphics are said to be more eye-catching and

a no-sugar, no-calorie formulation; and Mixxd, a tasty, grape-flavored energy drink. Three tea-based Monster varieties are Monster Rehab Protean + Energy, which also has coconut water as an ingredient; Rojo, a mix of red and black teas, as well as cranberry juice, coconut water and several energy ingredients; and Monster Rehab Tea + Orangeade + Energy, whose name clearly tells you what’s to be expected with flavor. Overall, Monster has a solid, sales-proven group of energy drinks, and certainly at least a few should be a perfect fit with your customers. You might try rotating a new variety or two every few weeks, to generate sales demand and excitement. And just maybe find that Monster variety that’s top dog at your rink.

Best new beverages of 2011

The 2011 figures are in. According to SymphonyIRI’s New Products Pacesetters beverage report, beverages that were introduced last year and topped the sales charts were Folgers Gourmet Selections K-Cups (coffee); Dr Pepper Snapple’s Sun Drop; and Coca-Cola’s Gold Peak Chilled Tea. Coffee may not be a major category for most rinks, but the Dr Pepper and Coca-Cola drinks look great. See if your beverage supplier can help launch or boost sales of any (or all) of these newer, successful brands.

Capri Sun news

Kraft Foods has introduced Big Pouch, the Capri Sun juice drink with a multifaceted marketing strategy that includes Facebook and other contemporary venues. The company is targeting consumers from 13 to 15. Part of Big Pouch advertising includes sports-centered activities, such as hot-air balloon-

contemporary, which should boost rink sales via vending machines and counter-display racks alike. All five Cheez-It flavors will have the new packaging this summer.

Monster news

The Monster Energy Drink family continues to expand and dominate the



energy sales category with the under-25 set. In the Monster lineup for potential rink use are Lo-Carb Monster, a lower-calorie flavor; Assault, a tart and dark variety that sports camo design elements with its packaging; Khaos, a multi-juice, nectar-like drink; M-80, an 80-percent juice beverage with a pineapple flavor; Absolutely Zero, with

ing and skateboarding. Capri Sun Big Pouch is available in three flavors: Fruit Punch, Maui Cooler and Strawberry Kiwi. Indications are that until sales figures are tabulated, Capri Sun Big Pouch may be available through only the summer. Act fast to get this warm-weather sports refresher into your rink snack, vending and foodservice areas.