

HOT SPOT

By Art Snyder

Whoever contends that June, July and August are slow is overlooking a veritable treasure chest of profit-generating ideas and products for your snack bar, food-service and vending sections of your rink. Coca-Cola alone has a dozen solid new developments for your prospective use. And Red Bull, Dr Pepper and ever-wholesome milk are in the profit-picture, as well. Details are below.

Coca-Cola news

Coca-Cola has been busy with a host of new products, marketing ideas and innovations to help maximize your foodservice and vending areas. Among them:

- Freestyle machines: New high-tech, touch-screen beverage dispensers that can generate 104 different soft-drink flavors should help your fountain sales to skyrocket in the months ahead. The timetable remains in flux, and no date has been set for national rollout of Coke's

Freestyle dispensers. However, extensive testing is set for this summer and fall. Especially good news: Extremely heavy usage of Freestyle machines has been the norm in test markets. And, Freestyle beverages have a profit margin 30 percent higher than typical fountain margins. About 500 Freestyle machines are now in tests in selected retail venues in Southern California, Atlanta, Dallas and Salt Lake City. To see the latest locations, ogle the flavors and learn more, visit the Freestyle page at facebook.com/cocacolafreestyle.

- World Cup: Coca-Cola is serious about sports sponsorships, as with their

Coke has introduced a new Sprite variety, Sprite Tea. See what tea brands your Coca-Cola supplier can offer you, to freshen your rink beverage lineup heading into the fourth quarter of 2010.

- Coke Zero: Coke is looking to lend a sports aura to their popular no-calorie Coke Zero brand. Their support of NCAA basketball this year was a success to build upon, Coke says. Further, with calls to end, reduce or tax consumption of sugared beverages, Coca-Cola is determined to power their diet and low- and no-calorie brands like Coke Zero with vigorous advertising, and that should parlay into bigger profits for your rink business.

- Coke Solutions: Finally, when your beverage "idea bank" needs refreshing, Coca-Cola has turned to the Internet to introduce Coke Solutions, at cokesolutions.com. This site is packed with ideas to help retailers market the company's brands, and you should find lots of solid, helpful advice that'll work at your rink.

- Powerade: Coke's dedicated sports drink now has a global marketing campaign that encourages athletes to "Keep Playing." Further, Powerade is signing on with a top player for the Mexican National Soccer Team, and such a spokesperson should be a real plus with your Hispanic customers. Your supplier should help with signage and other promotional materials to inject some energy into rink Powerade sales.

- Innocent Drinks: They're a brand of fruit smoothie, and Coca-Cola recently gained control of the British company.

to add to rink impulse-sales by offering countertop racks of bagged-and-pegged candy as you prep for the busy fall season. Be sure to look for any licensed candy brands that key on hit movies and celebrities, and survey your staff for favorite brands of candy to stock as bagged-and-pegged candy.

In brief

- All Sport Body Quencher has signed a sponsorship agreement with baseball's Toronto Blue Jays. As the official sports drink of the team, All Sport Body Quencher has become more viable with sports-minded consumers. Consider the All Sport line at your rink, especially during hockey sessions.

- New Leaf Brands has introduced three new lemonades that should do well in your rink: Homemade, Strawberry and Black Cherry. Also, the company has developed a combo beverage that's half-iced tea and half-lemonade. Talk to your supplier for more.

- drank is a fast-growing competitor in the anti-energy, relaxed-drink category, and the beverage has signed on with NASCAR to get the word out to a fun-loving crowd. And, drank has teamed with Pepsi for some of its distribution, so give a holler to your Pepsi supplier to learn more about drank.



- Red Bull is mega-serious about sports and the company's iconic Red Bull beverage line, as they recently said that Red Bull will be introducing the company's own online TV channel, redbull.com. As major global sponsors of all types of extreme and other sports, Red Bull says that all the TV channel's offerings will center on sports promoted by Red Bull.

- Muscle Milk is going national with its TV advertising efforts, keying on NCAA basketball and other popular sports fare. The brand should prove popular with skaters this year.

- Milkdelivers.org is an online source of retail milk promotions of all sorts. See what ideas could be appealing with your customers, then stock up on milk.

- Ramona and Beezus is in theaters this summer, so look for licensed items from the popular book series from Beverly Cleary that are a good fit throughout your rink. Redemption, vending, foodservice, birthday party and other opportunities look game for Ramona and Beezus.

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Coke steps up, pegged candy means profits

support of World Cup international soccer competition. Plus, the company has new strategies to highlight their Powerade sports-drink line. Also, Coke has said that its support of this year's Summer Olympics is a marketing strategy that will continue for many years. Talk sports with your own Coca-Cola supplier to play on their sports team with extra signage, margins and other promotional tools.

- Dr Pepper Snapple: Coca-Cola has new bottling capacity in the West, thanks to a partnership with Dr Pepper Snapple. See how you can work with this knowledge by talking with your beverage suppliers to improve your rink-drink offerings as you look toward Labor Day and beyond.

- Honest Tea, Sprite Tea: Tea's the word this summer with Coke. The company is set to strengthen distribution of its sub-brand Honest Tea, and in China,

Look for smoothie-rink opportunities in the months ahead, especially as you work to bring wholesome food and drink choices to your customers.

- vitaminwater: Partnering with the monster Twilight movie franchise this summer, Coca-Cola's vitaminwater might be the beverage to feature at your rink, especially whenever Twilight fans might be at a session.

Bagged-and-pegged candy

Competition is tough these days, but you can count on bagged-and-pegged candy — perhaps on a countertop rack in your snack bar and redemption areas — to boost your profits. That's what the American Wholesale Marketers Association (AWMA) and other marketing pros are saying, as displays and sales of packaged, pegged candy have been a bright spot with this year's consumers. Be sure

