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## Why Partnership Brand Marketing Makes Sense (and Makes Both Brands More Money)

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As consumers, we know what we like. And we know what we want. We surround ourselves with a select group of brands that encompass and define who we are and—of equal importance—define our lifestyles.

People place a great importance on style, fashion, performance, sports, luxury, the outdoors, family, convenience, price, and other factors that make up their everyday lifestyle patterns. Much can be said that the brands to which we gravitate (and trust) are the very brands we rely on to deliver promises and benefits. And when the brands deliver, we want more. In fact, we are open to experiencing new products and services, new brand extensions, and new opportunities from the companies and brands we believe in.

And that is where partnership brand marketing comes in.

By bringing two or more companies together to create value, we not only enhance the customer buying process, but we also enhance the benefits of the partnering brands as well.

For a true strategic partnership brand marketing program to work, both brands must complement each other and deliver similar customer profiles. Even more importantly, the partnership must sit within the lifestyle and user experience of the customer.



To create such a program, businesses must have a sound strategy and planning. There needs

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to be a clear understanding of what each brand and company could bring to the partnership and how to create “the new frontier.”

## What Do We Mean by the New Frontier?

The program must have a built-in opportunity to reach new customers in new markets, industries, and channels with new products. Plus, the program must provide something new for the customer to experience. The end goal creates a competitive advantage for the participating companies and brands, and it offers an opportunity to further differentiate them from the competition.

Though that goal is a lofty challenge, it can be accomplished by bringing together brands that fit and make sense to the customer while creating a stronger lifestyle connection and emotional relationship for that same customer. By forming an alliance with the single goal of cross-marketing, cross-merchandising, and cross-branding each business in a number of new and alternative channels of distribution, partnerships have the potential to evolve in new areas and gain new audiences.

It's crucial to identify the right partner companies and brands for aligning company and customer profiles that will ultimately shape a company's brand positioning and overall image. Another important component is to create a brand asset list for the company, showcasing tangible and intangible assets that would be of value to partner companies.

Understanding the strategic value in creating such partnerships can then enhance the overall brand and company portfolio, and provide increased benefits to the customer, consumer, and end user.

## An Example of Partnership Brand Marketing



As an example, we recently created a Partnership Brand Marketing and Channel Innovation program for Dole Packaged Foods, which identified a new industry and channel in which to gain distribution for the Dole brand and its new innovative fruit snacks portfolio—all within a retail sales category in which it does not compete.

We identified the movie theater industry channel for Dole, achieving a 10-week test market program within a global industry leading top three movie theater chain. The program was designed to introduce a new product Dole Real Fruit Bites to a leading global movie theater chain as a healthier snacking alternative to enhance the consumer experience. The program successfully resulted in penetration within three regions throughout the country.

The ability to think creatively and open new channels to blend customer demographics allows for great lifestyle brands to come together and create significant new value for each partner company. Companies and brands aligned together significantly benefit from new strategic alliance opportunities—delivering more potential customers in channels and business industries where each does not compete and tapping into each partners' existing marketing programs.

In today's economic climate, cost reduction strategies can breed opportunities. Leveraging

A screenshot of a Facebook social plugin. It features a blue Like button with a thumbs-up icon and the text "Like". To the right of the button is a "Confirm" link. Below the button, it says "48,838 people like MarketingProfs. 48,837 people like MarketingProfs." There are three small profile picture avatars below the text. At the bottom left of the plugin is the Facebook logo and the text "Facebook social plugin".

A screenshot of an RSS Feeds section. It contains three buttons: a blue "Google" button with a plus sign, a blue "MY YAHOO!" button with a plus sign, and a green "Technorati" button with a plus sign. Below the buttons is a small logo that says "BY FEEDBURNER".

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two strategic partners' assets can drive growth cost-effectively. By enhancing value, partnership brand marketing programs generate revenue growth for both partners, open new channels of distribution, share both partners' budgets cost-efficiently, and create more integration and more marketing fusion.

And who doesn't want that?

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