

FreshDirect Sales Boosted as a Result of 'Healthy Mondays'

By AMY SUNG

NEW YORK — FreshDirect here has reported significant sales increases as a result of its partnership with the Healthy Monday Movement, a nonprofit organization that dedicates Mondays to increasing health awareness and encouraging shoppers to take action and eat healthier foods.

"The average increase in sales for products that we feature on Monday in our weekly Healthy Monday campaign is about 300%, but we have seen increases up to 1,200%," said Eileen Vider, corporate nutritionist, FreshDirect. Vider runs FreshDirect's Healthy Monday program.

FreshDirect and the Healthy Monday Movement have been working together for about 18 months, according to Rick Bodge, executive

director of The Monday Campaigns, New York.

"Our only stake in this thing is that we're nonprofit — we're associated with Johns Hopkins — so we're kind of like the marketing guys, at work with the folks there to bring health communications and marketing together," said Bodge of the organization's role.

"Our only real desire is to get other folks to include this aspect of Monday in their marketing and use Monday as a day to regroup and think about doing healthy things. So, we don't charge any fees; we're not getting any money or licensing on this."

FreshDirect and the Healthy Monday Movement held initial meetings to understand the mission of the organization. The rest was up to FreshDirect as to how they wanted to

promote health awareness and action on Mondays.

Every Monday, FreshDirect features one better-for-you product on its website. Ads are also placed over the entrance to the Queens Midtown Tunnel and other places to draw attention to special offers for healthy foods.

"When choosing the products to feature, I pick healthy items that we think are truly great products in terms of quality, taste and nutrition," Vider said.

"We have used Healthy Mondays to introduce new products that we make or carry, and we've also used [them] to feature interesting foods that customers may enjoy but haven't yet tried, like tatsoi or pluots. I find that convenience items, like our premade salads, four-minute meals and cut veggies, do really well.

Seafood and fruit also do really well."

Each Monday, FreshDi-

Campaigns created: Meatless Mondays. Meatless Mondays is another Johns

"It benefits our customers, in that they get to try really great, nutritious products at discounted prices."

Eileen Vider
corporate nutritionist, FreshDirect

rect features one item as its Healthy Monday item and offers a special discounted price. Vider also writes a nutrition note about the product on the company's website, describing the nutritional benefits, ideas for combining the product with other foods or simple tips for quickly and easily preparing it.

"We promote the item through banner ads on our website and on the product page for the chosen product," Vider told SN.

Mondays are already very high-traffic days for FreshDirect in terms of orders placed, according to Vider.

"This is great, because we get to reach a good number of people with the Healthy Monday campaign."

FreshDirect has also done other things with the campaign, such as tying it to different "health months," including American Heart Month, National Breast Cancer Awareness Month and National Nutrition Month. For example, during American Heart Month, Vider chose to feature all products that had heart-health benefits and focused her nutrition tips around the theme. During National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, FreshDirect donated a portion of the revenue from the sales of the featured products to the American Cancer Society.

The Healthy Monday Movement was actually an offshoot of another program The Monday

Hopkins project that is more specifically targeted at reducing the amount of saturated fat in the average American consumer's diet.

"It's not vegetarian and it's not anti-meat, it's just saying that an easy way to do this healthy practice is just one day a week, don't have meat or high-fat dairy. And, to help you do that, here's our week's suggested recipe," Bodge said.

"Healthy Monday is a broader platform. Certainly Meatless Monday fits within that — you can call that a nutritional aspect of it — but really, Healthy Monday is about exercising, quitting smoking, and promoting healthy habits. We have [the] American Legacy [Foundation] who participates with us, the American Heart Association, and American Diabetes. They all agree that what we're trying to do is a great way to help enhance overall messaging."

The Monday Campaign has also initiated contact with Whole Foods Market; however, no relationship has been established yet.

FreshDirect will also be launching a new line of nutritious vegetarian products at the end of this month and is looking forward to featuring them on Healthy Monday, Vider said.

"We love that it's a win-win situation — it benefits our customers, in that they get to try really great, nutritious products at discounted prices, and we also benefit from increased sales of the featured products."

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