

CASE STUDY

CLIENT: Nuts are Good!
WEB SITE: www.nutsaregood.com
ENGAGEMENT: April 2007 – August 2008



BACKGROUND

Nuts are Good! is an independently owned roasting company that uses old-world methods to manufacture unique varieties of flavored nuts. In 1988, brothers Johnny and Danny Levy opened the company as the Fresh Roasted Almond Company. In 2007 it introduced a wildly popular new product, the “Buffalo Peanut,” which now constitutes 30 percent of the company’s total sales and jump started its expansion to peanut production. Now a major national wholesaler, the company offers a dozen flavors of fresh-roasted nuts and several other related products.

PROBLEM

Jonny and Danny had the potential to become a powerhouse in the category of flavored nuts but had never explored public relations. Their products and company had limited consumer awareness or demand, untapped distribution potential and other unrealized opportunities. Their story needed to be told to the right audiences to stimulate new distribution partners and sales, and provoke overall interest in the company.

SOLUTION

SHERMAN communications & marketing immediately developed a strategic marketing communications and public relations plan to help Nuts are Good! embark on a national media campaign. The plan outlined a brand identity, key messages, objectives, story ideas, and a comprehensive list of strategies and tactics to address building partnerships, new products, graphics, promotions and media opportunities.

The work that followed included:

- Understanding the Levys’ business: the challenges they faced due to the growing cost of raw materials, their expertise in nutrition, and the growth trajectory they envisioned for Nuts are Good!;
- Developing a fact sheet on Nuts are Good!’s history, manufacturing methods, unique flavors, and health benefits of the products, which was to be distributed to the media and published on the company’s website;
- Improving branding by introducing new packaging, working with graphic designers, and adding a newsroom and professionally taken photos to the website, www.nutsaregood.com;
- Enlisting the input of third-party analysts, who are experts in the food industry, to give testimonials on Nuts are Good!’s natural and healthy roasting methods, and the growth and marketing potential of nut snacks;
- Arming the brothers with the media training they needed to effectively communicate their compelling story of hard work and passion to the appropriate media outlets;
- Saturating the Detroit market with an aggressive public relations campaign, and then targeting national business, consumer and trade publications;
- Approaching reporters and editors with stories highlighting Nuts are Good!’s story as a growing small business finding its niche in the industry; and
- Securing positive coverage about the brothers’ challenges and accomplishments as small business entrepreneurs with the capacity to become national wholesalers/players.



CASE STUDY

RESULTS

- Secured positive coverage in a wide variety of print and broadcast media, including:
 - Two segments on FOX News, where the brothers were once featured on “Made in Michigan” and gave a cooking demonstration on Christmas morning;
 - CNBC’s “American Dream,” where Wall Street Journal Reporter Gwendolyn Bounds explained how the Levy brothers doubled their business by having the courage to move to peanut production after the price of almonds skyrocketed;
 - A six-page cover story in the *Detroit Jewish News* that generated unprecedented local business;
 - A full-page piece with photo in *Entrepreneur Magazine*; and
 - Featured stories in several local and national publications, including The Wall Street Journal, Crain’s Detroit Business, Detroit News, Oakland Press, The Macomb Daily, GMA/FPA SMARTBRIEF, Grand Rapids Press, Nightclub and Bar Magazine, Fiery Foods and BBQ, THE NIBBLE Product Review, Snackfood and Wholesale Bakery Magazine, and Taquitos Product Review.
- Forged a strategic partnership with Gourmetceuticals (www.gourmetceuticals.com), which led to a private-label deal to distribute a brand new product – a functional food / nutraceutically enhanced organic granola.
- Overall, established high consumer awareness of the product and its credibility in the food industry, increased distribution, and increased sales 30 percent during the 16-month public relations campaign.

CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

“Jason’s enthusiasm for us as a client fuels his creativity to find the parts of our company that are most interesting to our target audience and then form those parts into a cohesive story.

Jason has managed to tell our story and match us up with other individuals and companies that have resulted in wide exposure and even direct sales.

Jason’s impact on our company is substantial. Our customers have a new and improved respect for what we are doing. Prospective customers are easily willing to listen to our pitch when they find out where our story is being told. And sales of our new Buffalo Peanuts are growing. We are getting calls from all over the country and Canada.

Jason is extremely attentive to detail. His guidance in helping us do our part in this public relations effort has been invaluable. We think so highly of Jason that I would recommend a company put him on retainer now before he gets too busy to take on new clients.”

Daniel Levy, founder and president
Nuts are Good! / Fresh Roasted Almond Company (www.nutsaregood.com)