

case 1-429-252
August 1, 2012

GoodBelly: Using Statistics to Justify the Marketing Expense

GoodBelly was a new line of probiotic juice products produced by Colorado-based NextFoods Inc. NextFoods was founded by Steve Demos, the founder of WhiteWave Inc., and Todd Beckman, a former vice president at WhiteWave Foods Company—the US's largest producer of soy-based products, including Silk Soymilk. Since its first product launch in January of 2008, GoodBelly products were now on the shelves of nationwide retailers such as Whole Foods Market Inc. and Safeway Inc.

Probiotics are live bacteria that are beneficial to the host organism. Probiotics and other pathogens enter the bloodstream through the stomach lining. Over 100 trillion bacteria and other microorganisms live in the intestines, and the influx of good bacteria can aid digestion and support the immune system. By 2008, the global market for probiotic and prebiotic food and beverages was substantial, at \$15.4 billion, and still growing. Probiotic products grew between 5% and 30% in 2008—exceptional growth considering that the overall food market grew only 1-2%. There were hundreds of probiotic products on the market, from yogurt to pizza to chocolate. Perhaps the most notable brand was Activia, a family of yogurts produced by The Dannon Company Inc. Activia contained a proprietary strain of Bifidobacterium called Bifidobacterium animalis DN 173 010, which sparked an increase in probiotic awareness in the US.



GoodBelly products were organic juice-based drinks (see **Figure 1**). While most probiotic products were dairy-based, GoodBelly's products were dairy-free, soy-free, and vegan. All GoodBelly products used live and active cultures of a proprietary probiotic strain called Lactobacillus plantarum299v (Lp299v), which had been used in Europe for more than 15 years and thoroughly tested in over 17 research trials.

Published by WDI Publishing, a division of the William Davidson Institute (WDI) at the University of Michigan.

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