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Bacardi Variety Leverages Facebook, Mobile

by **Karlene Lukovitz**, Monday, April 12, 2010, 11:40 AM

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Bacardi is aggressively leveraging digital/mobile -- and Facebook, in particular -- for the launch of its new Torched Cherry infused variety, which hits shelves nationwide this month.

The integrated campaign for Torched Cherry, which combines the flavors of Barbados cherries and Torch Plant aloe, includes national print advertising (consumer and trade), public relations, on-premises and in-store promotions (including tasting strips and product sampling, where legally allowed). The creative came from the Moosylvania agency.

Facebook plays a central role in the strategy, tying in with mobile and other online elements, reports Jason Dyke, senior brand manager of Bacardi Flavored Rums.

In addition to prominent promotion on Bacardi's home site, Torched Cherry will have rich-media ad banners on Facebook and other sites popular with "urban mindset" consumers, such as Complex.com, AskMen.com, YahooSports.com, Vibe.com and Thrillist.com, says Dyke.

At the same time, on the mobile front, the new flavor is being spotlighted as part of Bacardi's free iPhone/iPod Touch Flavors Cocktail application on Apple iTunes (which includes cocktail recipes and local listings for bars, liquor stores and taxi services), and on the rumdrinks.mobi WAP site. In addition, legal-age consumers who text 65579 with the subject "TORCH" can receive a new Torched Cherry recipe each month over a 12-month period.



Meanwhile, the Torched Cherry Facebook fan page will offer fans not only recipes, videos and the mobile applications, but a way to capture and share photos taken during on-premises promotional events for the new rum offering.

During the events, consumers will be encouraged to pose in front of a green screen with friends. Their images will then be superimposed in the foreground of a Torched Cherry backdrop, placed on the flavored rum's Facebook fan page, and emailed individually to those photographed so that they can forward the photos to friends.

With Torched Cherry, Bacardi is looking to build on the success of a large and growing portfolio of infused rums offering exotic flavors at "an accessible price," including last year's successful Dragon Berry introduction, Bacardi Limón (the world's best-selling citrus-flavored rum), O, Coconut, Razz, Big Apple, Grand Melon and Peach Red. Torched Cherry is retailing for \$13.99 for a 750-ml bottle.

Infusions and rum in general are on a roll: U.S. sales of this second-largest spirits category grew 2.8% in 2008 (to 24.56 million nine-liter cases overall) in 2008, according to Beverage Information Group, which estimated that Bacardi's nine-liter case sales up by 2% for that year, to 9.4 million.

Bacardi is the world's best-selling rum, and also the world's best-selling premium spirit, according to privately held parent Bacardi Limited. Bacardi Limited, which comprises more than 200 spirits and wine brands/labels, has reported nine consecutive years of record sales (fiscal years 2001 through 2009), although it does not release specific sales data.

As recently reported in Marketing Daily, Bacardi USA also just announced a Bacardi Gold multi-year marketing and scholarship sponsorship program with the National Basketball Association.

Late last year, the overall brand launched a global, ongoing "Spirit of Bacardi" campaign, from Young & Rubicam, led off by a television commercial in which a multinational cast of more than 100 are shown arriving in small boats to converge and create their own island in a tropical body of water. That campaign is also being heavily supported by digital/mobile (including iPhone/iPod downloads, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube).

Last spring, an integrated "Eras" campaign for Bacardi rums employed the brand's first high-definition TV spot (showing a man being transported back and forth in time to experience the nearly 150-year-old brand's use in Mojitos and other classic cocktails, backed by an original theme song by Matt and Kim). The campaign included a tied-in global concert series and ample support via digital and other marketing channels.

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