How does a brand find its way into Retail?

Launching hive into retail

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British Gas needed help in defining its retail proposition for its brand new product, Hive Active Heating™. Our brief was to launch this product into retail as the first in its Connected Homes category through innovative packaging, impactful POS and an amazing out-of-the-box experience.
Once we had refined and developed the brand, we set about the packaging brief. The resulting designs have proved so popular they prompted the buyers at Apple to remark that it was the killer combination of the packaging design along with the product innovation that won HIVE a much-coveted space on their retail shelves. The packaging was designed to be extremely tactile, almost like unwrapping a present. The cube comprises four drawers, contained by a cardboard outer sleeve across one axis, and wrapped in an APET sleeve across the other axis, offering a further texture and extra protection. Once the APET sleeve is removed the four drawers can slide out with ease, revealing the content within. The strong use of a vibrant accent colour palette complements the clean white simplicity and matt soft touch finish of the packaging, giving it a premium and standout quality. As a finishing touch – tactile, blind embossing of the logo on the top of the outer cardboard sleeve adds to the confidence of the identity and premium feel of the pack. The draws themselves deliver a unique customer experience. They all hold a product with clear, easy-to-read text intuitive colour-coded tabs. Each draw/product can be accessed individually allowing the customer time to digest product features one by one.

STRATEGY
Working closely with British Gas and its ATL agency, we set about developing the brand and our retail messaging. Key to this was communicating Hive’s cutting-edge technology and forward-thinking ethos to bring the brand to life as a true customer experience, ensuring it was simple to understand and easy to use.

PACKAGING
With British Gas and Scottish Gas versions of each of our two product variants, we needed to include a unique, personalised code in every box. These then needed to be silver latexed to ensure complete security.

With an important awareness and consideration of its environmental reputation and responsibility, British Gas needed the packaging to be environmentally friendly. Therefore, our finished box is fully recyclable due to the use of a soft touch coating over lamination. It is printed entirely with vegetable inks and carries an environmental statement on the base.

Once the packaging was complete, the next stage was to bring the product to life in store with a seeing is believing live customer demonstration. Working closely with Dixons Store Group, we created an interactive display giving customers the opportunity to trial the technology by using the Hive iPhone app to instantly see the thermostat temperature change. Using store Wi-Fi and Ethernet connections back to the British Gas servers, we were able to demonstrate to customers how they can control their heating and hot water remotely. Built-in LED lights guide the customers through the set up from the Hive app to hub, receiver and, finally, the thermostat.
The initial trial has proved so successful we are now rolling out modified displays to 200 Dixons stores, 50 Maplin stores and across all John Lewis real estate.

The in-store PoS roll out is ongoing but work to date has proved extremely positive and new retailers and etailers, including Amazon and Argos, continue to come on board as we expand our customer reach.
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