

Focus: **Gamification**

Gamification increases product panel attendance by 50%

A US retail private label team use regular product panels with their retail employees and associates to rate and compare their private label products against competing retail and national brands. These benchmark panels are essential to ensure quality and winning products.

Successful product panels rely upon good participation from interested panellists. Engagement specialists Solutions for Retail Brands (S4RB) delivered a campaign to re-brand the initiative and used the principles of 'gamification' to achieve a 20% increase in sign-up rate, and a 50% increase in product panel attendance.

Background

The private label team use benchmark product panels as an integral part of the quality management and product development process, conducting daily product panels with retail employees and associates.

Panel attendance was poor. Daily notifications were being marked as spam. Unpopular or products perceived as 'boring' experienced low turnout.

The value from the panels was reducing, with the risk to product quality and ultimately brand.



Solution

The solution implemented for the retailer by S4RB was a new 'Taste Panel Club'. Employees joined the club to earn 'Panel Points' for attending panels. Accumulating points increased the panellist's level, entitling them to perks. These perks included excess merchandise, invitations to exclusive product focus groups, and recognition as 'Product Development Heroes'.

Panel administrators were able to manipulate the points available for panels and therefore increase demand for the historically less popular products. The initiative was supported with posters, table displays and an on-going marketing campaign.



Impact

Importantly, the incentives were items that were readily available to the private label team so the initiative incurred no additional costs. Indeed focus groups are now seen as a reward, whereas once these were considered as an inconvenience and saw poor attendance.

The solution increased sign-up to panels by 20% and increased the number of relevant and appropriate attendees to panels. The Taste Panel Club also enabled improved segmentation, running panels for vegetarians or for specific tastes (such as spicy foods), increasing the relevance of panellist feedback.

It also reduced the number of no-shows, so actual panel attendance increased by 50% with an estimated saving of \$20k per month when compared to external testing.

Key facts

- Daily product taste panels
- Panellists earn points attending panels
- Est. \$20k/month saving
- 50% increase in panel attendance