

## SITUATION ANALYSIS

Is it possible for PEEPS® to make a “peep” beyond Easter? The answer needs to be yes, for the sake of continued growth for both the brand and Just Born Quality Confections. PEEPS® has been the leader in non-chocolate candy sales at Easter for more than 20 years, and has set its sights on making inroads in other candy-centric holidays, particularly Halloween and Christmas, to help reach its long-term goal of achieving “transformational growth.”

PEEPS® has always relied on strong “word of mouth” over marketing dollars to drive awareness, and the same approach would be crucial for success during Halloween and Christmas (for perspective, PEEPS® accounted for less than 0.05% of the \$59 million spent on Easter-related TV advertising in 2013, the most recent figures available).

So the Coyne team went to work on how to help an Easter icon make a splash in Halloween and Christmas, two very commercial, very crowded holidays.

### OBJECTIVES:

- Generate 2 billion media impressions on behalf of PEEPS® during the Halloween and Christmas seasons
- Drive traffic to and increase sales at PEEPS & COMPANY® retail website for PEEPS® during the Halloween and Christmas seasons

### RESEARCH

- Research from the brand on the target audience (moms, 25-54 years of age) revealed that these moms are considered holiday traditionalists and fun enthusiasts who want to make every occasion special for her and her family.
- Mintel research found that the brand’s target consumer use online tools to help with holiday planning, and that brands could bring value to moms through an approach that involves sharing ideas for recipes and gifts (Mintel: Winter Holiday Shopping, U.S. - August 2014).
- A brand-commissioned A&U study found that 60% of PEEPS® purchased during Easter are consumed – the remaining 40% are used for “alternate uses” such as recipes, crafts, and

decorations, which meant driving usage occasions through crafts and decorations would be crucial.

- In order to get grounded in the challenge ahead, Coyne PR set out to better understand what the brand’s competition was doing to capitalize on these holidays, and how the media was covering candy at these key time periods. Unique flavors tied to the season dominated media coverage and informed the timing of our media outreach – we needed to lead and not follow other brands in revealing seasonal flavors.
- The team also did a media audit of its own Easter coverage for PEEPS® over the past two seasons to determine which tactics had been most successful, thus identifying opportunities to duplicate those efforts for these newest holiday seasons. Finally, Coyne also surveyed the media landscape, identifying outlets that reached the target audience and the reporters and producers who traditionally cover Halloween and Christmas across the media spectrum, spanning reporters covering food, crafting, art, “family fun” and lifestyle in print, broadcast and online media. The research highlighted a key opportunity that the brand had not yet actively explored - engaging with mommy bloggers, a key resource for moms when it comes to “family fun.”

*INSIGHT: Coyne needed to leverage online tools and media to engage PEEPS® target consumers. Utilizing crafts, recipes and decorations, the team could drive purchases and awareness of other holiday confections.*

### PLANNING

Based on the research, Coyne developed the following strategies to employ during Halloween and Christmas:

- Identify opportunities to insert PEEPS® into pop culture to raise its profile in two crowded seasonal windows
- Expand the brand’s presence online by engaging with mommy bloggers and create a more integrated approach between the PR campaign and social media executions

- Capitalize on new products and flavor trends to engage food-centric media and fans
- Focus on inspiring the “alternate use” consumers with fun DIY crafts

## EXECUTION

Coyne PR’s campaign included:

- **Showcasing PEEPSONALITY®** – At Halloween, the team created custom PEEPS’O’Lantern dioramas to share across social media and deliver to top broadcast outlets and key media fans of the brand. Christmas provided an opportunity to work with Betty Crocker for two custom PEEPS® dessert recipes.
- **Expanding the online presence** – Coyne secured participation from 50 mommy bloggers for each season to craft PEEPS® recipes and activities and share their creations in blog posts and across their own social media channels. That content was then leveraged for media outreach and shared across the brand’s social media channels. The Halloween blogger program included the creation of an original PEEPS’O’Lantern diorama, while the Christmas “24 Days of PEEPSONALITY®” program highlighted 24 recipes in the countdown to Christmas. Recipes were shared with media and uploaded digitally to encourage consumers to share on Pinterest and other social channels. The team included custom coupons and discount codes for both programs to track how this initiative affected sales.
- **New products and flavors** – The team kicked the Halloween season off strong by securing an exclusive with the *Huffington Post*, ensuring that the new PEEPS® flavor for Halloween was leading flavor profile roundups, with candy corn and caramel apple flavors not far behind. Christmas capitalized on holiday favorites such as “sugar plum,” hot cocoa, red velvet and peppermint. New products and flavors were delivered to a broad base of media and bloggers, which led to engaging new “fans” of the brand and resulting media hits.
- **Pop Culture** - While “Minion” shaped PEEPS® were not new news, the team delivered movie night Minion packages to entertainment and

parenting media, with PEEPS®, the new Minion DVD, and other family fun necessities. Coyne brought a unique local event to the national forefront by sharing fun facts and stats about PEEPSFEST® - the brand’s answer to the New York City New Year’s Eve ball drop. Lastly, the team created a “Year in Review” featuring the top 10 pop culture moments from 2015 recreated with PEEPS®, reaching outlets that never before would have considered covering the brand, including *Entertainment Weekly!*

## EVALUATION

- **Drive traffic to and increase sales at PEEPS & COMPANY® retail website during the Halloween and Christmas seasons:**
  - Halloween: The blogger program contributed to a **24 percent increase** in Halloween sales over the year before, and was responsible for **generating 26 percent more revenue** from coupon purchases. More than 30 percent of all coupons redeemed throughout October were attributed to blogger program referrals
  - Christmas: More than 40 percent of total coupon sales online throughout December were attributed to the blogger program.
- **Generate 2 billion media impressions on behalf of PEEPS® during the Halloween and Christmas seasons:**

Coyne surpassed the impressions goal for Halloween, generating more than 3.3 billion media impressions, which represented a **65 percent increase** in media impressions over the previous year.

- More than **750 placements** were generated across print, broadcast and online
- More than **50 blog posts** were secured
  - Coyne surpassed the impressions goal for the Christmas season, generating more than **4.1 billion media impressions.**
- More than **502 placements** were generated across print, broadcast and online
- More than **50 blog posts** were secured