



DOANE PET CARE

Insights and Implications

Situation: Recently acquired by Mars Corporation, Doane Pet Care is the leading private label manufacturer of pet food, serving major branded companies and providing turnkey solutions for retailers' store brands. The company's leading customer, Wal-Mart, and its leading brand of dog food, Ol' Roy, were interested in improving the brand and category management fundamentals used to manage an increasingly successful brand portfolio. Wal-Mart was achieving unprecedented success in per-store brand volume and share, and increasingly looked to Doane for strategic guidance in managing the brand on-shelf.

Engagement: Denneen & Company was retained to work with the Doane team to develop data analytics and insights that would help address growth issues and opportunities. This work included scoping and retaining industry-leading external tracking data; developing proprietary consumer research to segment the market and evaluate the brand's heavy users; and using detailed category management analytics to understand shelf performance, promotion, and pricing dynamics.

Results: Doane and Wal-Mart integrated the data analytics and category management tools into their routine business practices. The team leveraged consumer insights to rename the product portfolio and to sharpen communication of features and benefits. Insights on packaging and pricing were used to develop a competitive pricing strategy during a turbulent time in the market spurred by commodity price increases. Insights derived about the brand and its competitive set were used to support a major change in merchandising strategy focused on positioning the brand as a portfolio rather than as a compare-and-save offering.