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# How Data-Driven Linear TV Helped Harry & David Connect Families on Mother's Day During COVID





The pandemic presented a challenging boundary for families attempting to celebrate Mother's Day. Between travel restrictions, social distancing and strict visitor rules on hospitals and nursing homes, those lucky enough to still have mothers in their lives needed to get creative with how to show their appreciation. For these reasons, gourmet food brand Harry & David wanted to spread its message to help connect more families than ever before on this special occasion.

"I saw your commercial on TV and with all that is going on in the world, it looked like the perfect gift," wrote a customer named Erin on the Harry & David site. Erin, like hundreds of thousands of other customers separated from their moms, had been moved by one of their creatives.

"I ordered the box for my mother. She LOVED it! She was still bragging about it this morning," she added, having ordered their famous pears and salty peanuts.

Harry & David pears are a symbol of the company's rich history. In 1910, a hotel owner traded his prized property for over 200 prime acres of pears in Oregon's Rogue River Valley. His two sons, Harry and David, grew the business through strategic marketing and product specialization, naming their fruit the Royal Riviera® Pears.

After the Great Depression, the brothers needed to expand and find new buyers, so they pioneered selling their pears by mail. In 1936, they came up with the idea of Fruit-of-the-Month Club which allows customers—to this day—to automatically send or receive fruit gifts throughout the year, paving the way for modern direct-to-consumer gourmet gifting.

Harry & David has been a beloved brand for a century and counting because of its unmatched quality and customer service. And just like its gourmet fruit, its marketing team doesn't settle for just "OK." If a channel isn't cutting it, it won't make it in the media mix basket.

Today, the company sells primarily online and, while it still mails out millions of catalogs, its marketing focus is predominantly digital. Recently Harry & David added to their marketing tool kit by turning to Simulmedia's data-driven linear TV platform to reach more customers like Erin for Mother's Day.

Robert Tas, Chief Growth Officer of 1-800-FLOWERS.COM, Inc., the parent company of Harry & David, was drawn to the organization in February for its ability to help people connect, express gratitude, and celebrate each other. Tas has a deep background in managing digital and TV for top companies, including Chase and McKinsey. His strong suit is utilizing measurement and attribution to understand the efficacy of media investments.



Robert Tas, Chief Growth Officer of 1-800-FLOWERS.COM, Inc.



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**—Erin (VERIFIED BUYER, 5/16/20)**



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“We believed there was a significant opportunity to expand our video channels and tell our brand story to connect with a broader set of customers,” says Tas.

When scouting out a TV provider for its Mother’s Day campaign, Tas had a few non-negotiables.

“It was very important that a partner helped us use our customer data efficiently and gave us the ultimate value for our budget, while still being surgical to the right audience,” Tas says. “They needed to ensure we had the impact we’d hoped for and were able to optimize in a digital-like fashion.”

In a nutshell, this is what Simulmedia’s platform does. It channels the massive scale of national linear TV into precise, digital-like targeting, execution, and measurement. Our platform makes this easy by enabling brands and agencies to utilize the customer insights they already possess when building their strategic TV plans. In this way, Harry & David was able to build a custom target audience based on its current customers and more that looked just like them.

Then, using patented machine learning, Simulmedia’s platform identifies what these customers watch on TV and predicts where and when that audience will watch in the future.

Here’s what makes the platform beneficial for marketers looking to stretch their budgets: it can optimize either for pure performance or, in Harry & David’s case, for cost-effective reach so it’s always seeking out untapped members of your target audience, at the lowest costs possible. The platform is then able to measure how ad exposure impacts customer behavior, including digital usage, and shows you the impact your spots have in real-time through a performance dashboard.

“The dashboard was invaluable in helping our team think about the execution of the campaign, even how it was working and what we could prescriptively do to optimize our budget across our marketing programs,” says Tas.

As the industry’s only independent, end-to-end, audience-focused advertising platform for linear TV, Tas was confident Simulmedia could deliver all three of his specific goals for the campaign: attributable revenue, converting a specific number of new customers, and understanding the lasting impact of what a linear TV video campaign could have over the course of an occasion-based holiday.



Simulmedia and Harry & David both take measurement accuracy seriously, so the brand was pleased to know that Simulmedia's short-term attribution methodology only takes credit for website visitors that have arrived within 5 to 15 minutes after a spot airs. That way, they can prove with statistical significance that these individuals are visiting thanks to TV exposure.

Plus, through their performance dashboard, they could see which networks, dayparts, day of week and creatives performed best.

"We saw a strong return on investment and were able to drive significant new customers to the brand because of it," says Tas. "We learned a lot of things that made us smarter through the process and set ourselves up for moving forward with our planning for the rest of the year and the upcoming holiday season."

"What it continues to reaffirm is that you cannot look at marketing in a siloed channel; you have to look at things in totality, and you need to look at how you get leverage of your marketing spend across the board," says Tas.

"Being able to tie audience data and multiple channel data together is the secret sauce and is a core capability that we need to continue to refine and get better at. We think Simulmedia can be a key part of that."

But Tas admits this is hard work. "The ecosystems and all of the different platforms out there make it difficult for us to connect the dots, which is why we invest in the data side. It allows us to reach our customers where, when and how they want to be reached," he said. As they continue to learn more about their customer journey and make impactful connections, the difficult decisions become all the more worthwhile.

"When someone sees a commercial that tells our story, they get engaged with it and get some awareness consideration," said Tas. "That's a big moment for us, that micro-moment is critical and part of the journey as much as it is when you want to press the buy button to a basket. Both moments are important, what we need to do is understand how they work together and if they connect with our customers in the appropriate way."

"That's what's great about our business—we're in the job of helping people express, connect and celebrate, and that's such a privilege. The Harry & David brand is so trusted by people and we're thankful that we were able to help people connect more than ever this Mother's Day."



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# SIMULMEDIA®

Want to learn more about how Simulmedia's end-to-end platform can drive scaled performance for your agency or brand by combining the premium scale of linear TV with the speed and precision of digital?

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