

Savvy switching

C3 Collaborating for Health hosted a discussion event, ‘Savvy switching: nudging consumers towards healthier choices’ on 12 November 2009, co-hosted by the MRC Human Nutrition Research and with support from PepsiCo UK. The 20+ participants included representatives of NGOs, government, academics and the food industry. The event was chaired by C3’s director, Christine Hancock, and the speakers were:

- Theresa Marteau – Professor of Health Psychology, King’s College London; director of the Centre for the Study of Incentives in Health
- Tal Gilbert – Head of R&D, PruHealth
- Jack Winkler – Director, Nutrition Policy Unit, London Metropolitan University
- Andrew Cooper – Co-founder and Strategic Director of Populus

Summary

The Savvy Switching event had four basic aims, all of which were addressed during the discussion:

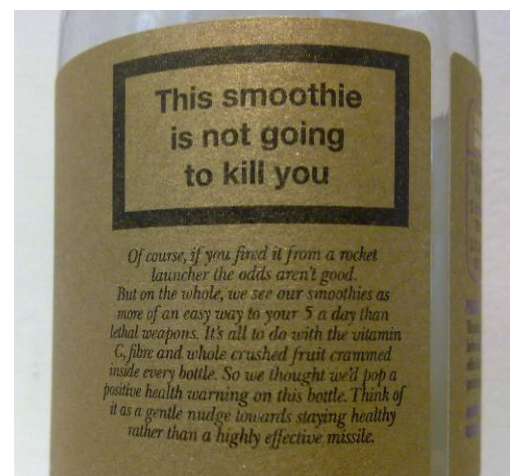
- 1) Identify the barriers to behaviour change, and the tactics and strategies likely to be most successful – including looking at evidence from behavioural economics, psychology and consumer insights.
- 2) Identify some cases of best practice in moving consumers to healthier products as a way of addressing public health.
- 3) Identify practical steps that food and drink companies and/or retailers can take to help consumers to make the switch.
- 4) Work to widen the network of companies and organisations that are committed to taking steps to help consumers choose healthier options.



McVitie’s product reformulation

Areas of discussion included:

- behavioural science, and how best to align ‘habitual’ behaviour (impulsive choices) with ‘reflective’ decisions;
- positive incentives for healthy eating, particularly the case study of the insurance company Discovery in South Africa;
- reformulation efforts;
- consumer attitudes and social norms;
- finding the balance between obtrusive and unobtrusive labelling of products;
- the quantity of available food, particularly in terms of price promotions;
- measuring progress.



Packaging message on Innocent smoothie

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Working with the Oxford Health Alliance

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There were two key areas in which it was felt that further exploration and joint working could be particularly fruitful:

1. Identifying the key metrics that could be consistently used to measure manufacturers' and retailers' efforts in encouraging switching, and the impact of these efforts on consumer choices over time.
2. Further work, involving manufacturers, retailers, insurers and academics, to identify the most effective positive incentives to encourage consumers to switch to healthier options.