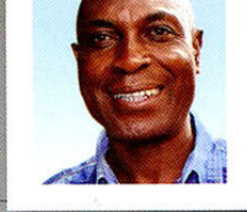


Why this man can't stop innovating



< Inventor and entrepreneur Moses Kizza Musaazi

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The Magazine for Growing Companies

Norm Brodsky: WHEN EMPLOYEES STEAL

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From Concept to Company

HOW TO NAIL A START-UP

Three little words: *listen, learn, adapt*

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+
The ADHD CEO
"What made me not do well in school has actually been very beneficial in business."
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ADVENTURES IN TECH

HOT. NOT HOT. NOW WHAT?

A former Next Big Thing fights for a second shot

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ROCK ON
Billy Chasen (left) and Seth Goldstein of the music site Turntable.fm

May 2012 — \$5.99 U.S./Canada

Design Swapping healthy for convenient

A packaged-food maker goes all in and changes everything

Keith Lauver never thought much about packaging. He didn't have to. His company, The Healthy Pantry, was a mail-order service that sold all-natural, quick-to-fix boxed meals to subscribers—and mail-order consumers don't have to be enticed by a flashy package. But in 2010, Lauver, who is based in Red Lodge, Montana, decided that the best way to expand his company was to get his products into grocery stores—and it became clear that he could not succeed without an entirely new brand identity. So he hired the Boston-based marketing firm Marlo Marketing/Communications to craft a box that could sit comfortably beside products such as Hamburger Helper and Rice-A-Roni. The new brand debuted at the Natural Products Expo in March 2011. —*Issie Lapowsky*

BEFORE

THE LOGO

Before launching The Healthy Pantry, Lauver was prediabetic and 40 pounds overweight. Because his own transition to a healthier diet inspired him to start the business, he wanted the logo to scream *health*. He posted a request for a logo on CrowdSpring, an online marketplace for crowdsourced designs, and paid \$400 for this one. "We felt it really spoke to a healthier you," Lauver says. "But, it turns out, most consumers assume healthy food doesn't taste good, so it pigeonholed us."

THE BOX

In the early days, Lauver designed the labels on his home computer and placed them by hand on plain white boxes. It wasn't until Lauver began pitching grocery stores that he began to worry about how the product looked. In one meeting, a grocery store manager said, "Keith, you've got the ugliest box I've ever seen," Lauver says. That's when he started hunting for a designer.

THE IMAGERY

Initially, Lauver marketed The Healthy Pantry by throwing at-home cooking parties. The events generated strong word of mouth, which became the basis for the mail-order business. Because neither parties nor mail-order meals require compelling packaging, Lauver was able to get away with using images from iStockphoto.com that looked similar to his recipes.



EXPERT OPINION



Where is the logo?

The new design is an improvement, but I think they've degraded brand awareness. They have information immediately above and immediately below the logo. That's a big no-no. The package needs to create awareness for the brand from 20 feet away. This doesn't do that, but if you

cover the very top of the box, suddenly the logo jumps out much more powerfully.

R.J. Murray, principal, Murray Brand Communications, San Francisco



Manufactured, not homey

On the original, the food looks more tasty. On the new package, the food looks simple and convenient—but they lost the sense of tastiness. The fact that the overwhelming color is almost fluorescent doesn't say *natural* and *homey*; it says *manufactured*. Food looks more delicious

when it looks real and a bit messier. Giving the photos a sense of place, like someone's kitchen, would make a big difference.

Debbie Millman, president, Sterling Brands, New York City

AFTER



THE BRAND

During in-store demonstrations of The Healthy Pantry's products, Lauver found that most consumers valued convenience more than health. So he and Marlo Fogelman, whose Boston marketing agency focuses on consumer products, decided to undertake a complete makeover. The two brainstormed words and phrases associated with convenience, eventually agreeing on the name *cooksimple*. The logo is very similar to *Real Simple* magazine's, but Lauver's lawyer said the odds were low that the magazine would take action.

Q&A

A General Mills brand guru on the art of selling food

Elizabeth Nientimp is the director of brand design for General Mills, where she oversees packaging for household names such as Hamburger Helper, Green Giant, and Progresso.

Q: How is design for food different from that for other consumer goods?

A: Food elicits visceral human responses—hunger, craving, enjoyment. Food packaging needs to deliver on all of these fronts.

Q: What are the most important considerations when designing food packaging?

A: Three things. First, make it simple. Resist the urge to tell consumers everything about your brand on the front of the package. Second, make it special. Understand what makes your brand unique, and own it. Finally, make it personal. Know your key consumers and what motivates them; let them see themselves in your brand.

Q: What can marketers of non-food products learn by studying a box of Hamburger Helper?

A: They can learn the importance of telling a story. Hamburger Helper is all about helping families create great meals. The sense of place, tone, presentation of the food, even the character Lefty, all do their part to tell the story. By leveraging design to tell a richer story, rather than filling a basic need, a brand can focus on being valued and delighting its customers.

THE DIRECTIONS

To make the recipes look as simple as possible, Lauver and Fogelman included photos of all the additional ingredients people need to complete the recipes. "It's shocking how few people know how to cook anymore," Lauver says. "As silly as it may seem to put a picture of a pot on the box, I wanted to make it look easy enough that my 7-year-old could do it."

THE BOX

Lauver and Fogelman toyed with the idea of using a can, a pouch, or a round canister, reminiscent of Quaker Oats. But in the interest of simplicity, they returned to the box. *cooksimple*'s goal is to present an alternative to items like Hamburger Helper. "We wanted it to be mainstream," Fogelman says.

THE IMAGERY

The photo on the box, Fogelman says, is "the money shot. No one's going to buy this because it's called *cooksimple*. They'll buy it because it looks tasty." Fogelman, who took on the project in exchange for equity in the company, insisted on hiring a food stylist and food photographer, who worked for three days shooting seven entrées.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Before the redesign, The Healthy Pantry had 35 grocery customers, most of them small natural-food stores. Since *cooksimple* debuted in stores in April 2011, that number has grown to 1,600, including 675 Safeway and 26 Whole Foods locations, and average sales per store have been growing nearly 3 percent a week. Mail order now makes up less than 5 percent of revenue.



It looks like a '70s cookbook

When you look at the logo on its own, it's great, although it does remind me a bit of *Real Simple*'s. Against a white background, they could have this beautiful, contemporary, Lean Cuisine-esque presentation. Instead, it looks like a '70s cookbook. If they had made the box

as simple as the logo, they could have upgraded to a high-quality, new, relevant product.

Ian McLean, president, McLean Design, Walnut Creek, California



A bit bright

I think the brand refresh was a success. The messaging on the previous package was all over the place. This one is easy to read. The directions on the back are clear and concise. But I don't agree with the color palette they used. The photography takes up two-thirds of the packaging,

so it's the main speaker, but the bright colors on the boxes take away from that. They might want to explore more neutral colors.

Ed Johnson, principal, BIG Design, Fremont, California