



BEYOND PRICE CUTS:

THE 3 PILLARS

EVERY BRAND MANAGER
NEEDS TO BUILD BRANDS
THAT STICK



INTRODUCTION

What Today's Brand Manager Is Really Up Against

Walk down any grocery aisle and you can feel the pressure. Private labels are growing faster than branded goods, with half of shoppers saying they're buying more own-label products. Price promotions are everywhere, yet 46% of all promotions are loss making. Meanwhile, consumers have become more discerning: they make 76% of purchase decisions at the point of sale and form impressions in just twelve seconds. They also want brands to stand for something - **82% of consumers prefer a brand who's values align with their own**, underscoring the need for brands to express their purpose clearly through storytelling, emotional engagement and distinctive value propositions.

If you're a brand manager, your remit isn't simply to fill the pipeline with new products. You need to protect brand equity, deliver margin, tell a compelling story and still hit short-term sales targets. Traditional levers: price cuts, BOGOFs, basic gift-with-purchase, are blunt instruments in a category where private labels copy your innovations in weeks. It's time to adopt a new framework that aligns with how today's consumers think and shop. TLC Worldwide calls it the **3 Pillars of Promotional Marketing: Disruption, Authenticity and Visibility**. These are strategic pillars that, if you master all 3, you will unlock extraordinary results for your brand.



DISRUPTION

How do we effectively differentiate in a retail world dominated by discounts?



AUTHENTICITY

How do we create promotional campaigns that uniquely represent our brand and our storytelling?



VISIBILITY

How do we secure awareness and engagement across medias to reach a wider audience?

This playbook rebuilds your approach around the 3 Pillars. For each pillar we'll explore why it matters now more than ever before, offer new insights into consumer behaviour and commercial pressures, and share case studies showing how brands across snacks, personal care, frozen foods, beverages and home care use TLC's unique solution to win. A concise tactical roadmap at the end shows you how to put the 3 Pillars into action and move from traditional promotional tactics to value-led, emotionally resonant growth.



DISRUPTION

MAKE YOUR BRAND IMPOSSIBLE TO IGNORE



Why Disruption Matters for Brand Managers

Disruption isn't about making noise for the sake of it — it's about intercepting shoppers before they switch to autopilot. **64 % of consumers try a new product because the packaging catches their eye**, but they'll form a judgment in just twelve seconds. Meanwhile, **90 % of buying decisions are driven by emotion**. For brand managers, that means your challenge isn't just visibility - it's memorability.

Private labels are mimicking your functional benefits and undercutting your price, so the only way to stand out is to break the shopper script. That means creating emotionally-charged brand moments - both in-store and online - that surprise, excite, and disrupt expectations. Experiences that feel personal, premium and purposeful will make shoppers pause, reconsider, and connect.

INSIGHT: Disruption Is a Mindset, Not a Mechanic

Many brands think of disruption as a gimmicky activation. The reality is that disruption starts at the strategic level: it's about creating multi-sensory experiences that express your values and tap into behavioural triggers such as curiosity, scarcity and social proof. Consumer neuroscientists note that unexpected rewards activate the brain's reward circuitry, making memories stick. For brand managers, this means integrating storytelling and interaction into packaging, digital and at-shelf touchpoints. It also means challenging category conventions - placing your product in unexpected aisles or pairing it with complementary experiences can reshape how shoppers perceive you. For example, promotions that are surprising, appealing and sufficiently 'worth it' in terms of value, will get more attention than a standard discount or bundle offer.



CASE STUDY:



Birds Eye: “From Tea Times to Fun Times”

The Challenge:

When household budgets tighten, even the most loyal customers can be tempted to trade down to own-label. Birds Eye, a brand built on quality, trust, and wholesome family appeal, faced exactly that challenge during the height of the cost-of-living crisis. While competitors leaned into price cuts, Birds Eye needed a smarter way to protect its premium positioning, keep shoppers loyal, and reinforce the value it brings to family mealtimes.

The opportunity? Tap into the insight that many families were cutting back on extracurricular activities and find a way to give that joy back.

The TLC Approach:

TLC and Birds Eye teamed up to launch From Meal Times to Fun Times - a feel-good, value-added promotion designed to put smiles back on family calendars. Every qualifying purchase unlocked **a free family sport or activity worth £20 or more**, from swimming sessions to mini-golf, tennis courts to climbing walls.

Key to the strategy was ease and visibility:

- Off-pack activation, communicated entirely via impactful POS in Asda stores, meant no changes to packaging or production timelines.
- A clear, uplifting value message spoke directly to parents making tough spending decisions.
- A seamless online redemption journey made claiming rewards simple, keeping engagement high.



By connecting Birds Eye’s mealtime moments with out-of-home family fun, the campaign went beyond functional product benefits to deliver something truly memorable - giving customers something extra when they needed it most.

The Impact:



Birds Eye didn’t just feed families, it gave them more to smile about, proving that in tough times, true value isn’t always found on a discount sticker.



CASE STUDY:



Rinso: “Let’s Play” – Driving Family Engagement and Sales Uplift

The Challenge:

How do you drive sales AND reinforce brand purpose and deepen family connections without resorting to discounts in a competitive laundry detergent market?

The Approach:

Unilever’s Rinso, Indonesia’s leading laundry detergent brand, partnered with TLC Worldwide to launch “Rinso Ayo Main” (Let’s Play) - a nationwide promotion perfectly aligned to its “Dirt is Good” storytelling. With every purchase of Rinso washing products, shoppers could claim a free child admission at hundreds of premium attractions nationwide, from zoos and museums to theme parks and play centres. Promoted on 15.5 million packs and supported by in-store marketing and digital comms, the mechanic was simple: upload your purchase receipt and instantly receive your reward voucher.

The Impact:

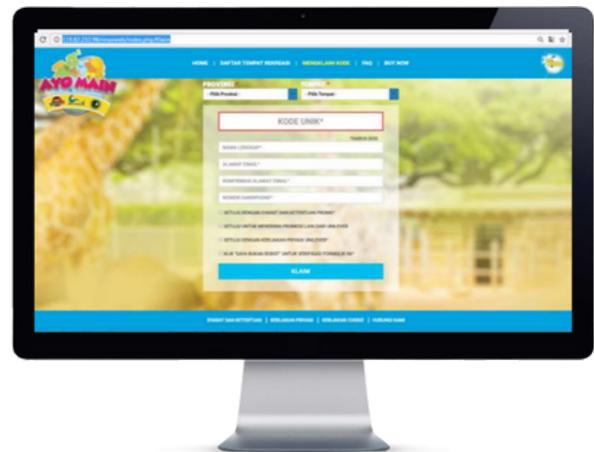
15%

SALES UPLIFT

30%

REPEAT PURCHASE AND PARTICIPATION RATE

By offering a high-value, experience-led reward that spoke directly to family values, Rinso strengthened its emotional connection with shoppers while driving sales growth - all without touching price.





THAT WINNING FAMILY

WIN YOUR SHARE OF R500 MILLION IN GUARANTEED PRIZES

BUY Tastic 2kg or 10kg
Fattis & More's or Jungle Oats 5kg or Golden Cloud Muffin / Cake Mix.

DIAL *120*2929#
and follow the prompts.
(Keep for use in-store)

SCAN

WIN your share of R500 million in guaranteed prizes.
See social media pages.

#ThatFam #ThatWinningFamily #Tastic #FattisAndMore's #GoldenCloud #JungleOats

Competition runs from 7 November 2018 to 28 February 2019. Standard store only apply. For T & C visit www.getthatwinningfamily.co.za or Tastic, Fattis & More's, Jungle Oats, Golden Cloud social media pages.

HOW TLC DRIVES DISRUPTION

For shopper marketers, disruption means more than flashy displays, it's about creating moments that stop shoppers mid-stride and make them engage. TLC's COSMOS platform makes this possible at scale, powering unique codes, QR journeys and gamified experiences that invite participation right there at the shelf. You set the budget, and we provide a full campaign, leveraging engaging consumer rewards that align to your unique brand story, turn heads and spark action. Whether it's simple buy-and-get, gamification, collector cards or full blown loyalty, we provide plug-and-play mechanics that engage audiences and reward every purchase. The result is a scalable, risk-free disruption at a fixed fee per reward, ensuring every qualifying shopper leaves with a personalised, memorable interaction that projects your brand above the noise.



AUTHENTICITY

UNIQUE BRAND-CENTRIC CAMPAIGNS



Why Authenticity Matters More Than Ever

In categories where products are interchangeable and private labels are closing the quality gap, differentiation is the only defence against commoditisation. Traditional price promotions teach shoppers to wait for deals, eroding your positioning. Shoppers increasingly expect personalised connections and value alignment from the brands they buy. According to McKinsey research, more than three-quarters of consumers say they are more likely to purchase from brands that tailor promotions to their interests and lifestyle, and over 80% prefer brands that reflect their personal values, such as sustainability or community impact. But in a market crowded with similar products and price-led campaigns, brand loyalty comes from emotional relevance and narrative strength.

Brand-aligned promotions that reward through storytelling — not just savings — can drive lasting consumer connection. These value-driven moments go beyond transactional incentives, they create a context where the savvy shopper feels that the promotion is authentic and more relatable, and therefore more engaging to your target audience. In this way, you can forge more personal connections, turning a simple transaction into something more powerful; a moment of connection with your brand that offers more value, more meaning and more reasons for shoppers to remember it and come back for more. For brand managers, that means creating campaigns that are both commercially effective and culturally resonant.

INSIGHT: Authenticity Is About Value Exchange

Connections happen when consumers feel they're getting more than they give. But this can only happen if they understand and align with the brand's purpose and story. That doesn't mean giving away margin; it means offering experiences that align with your brand purpose and audience aspirations. Neuromarketing studies show that loyalty is driven by emotional resonance, not rational calculation. TLC has made it possible to offer added-value experiences at scale, to move from mere transactions to connections. When shoppers receive a reward that resonates with them - a free family day out, a wellness class or an entertaining moment, they attach positive feelings and memories to your brand. These experiences build more meaningful connections and if you're lucky, brand love, encouraging repeat purchase and generating social sharing. Valuable experiences can also cost a lot less than you think; TLC's model is structured on 3 decades of intellectual property working with a global network of over 100,000 reward experiences; so, you only pay a fraction of the perceived value, making it easy to deliver high impact rewards without overspending or eroding your margins.



CASE STUDY:

Baci

Baci: “Moments of Love” – Redefining the Easter Egg

The Challenge:

How do you turn a traditional Easter egg into something more meaningful than chocolate and drive sales in a crowded seasonal market?

The Approach:

Baci Perugina, part of the Nestle Group, replaced the standard trinket inside its Easter eggs with a guaranteed experiential voucher, offering romantic spa days, family attractions, and cultural experiences designed to celebrate love in all its forms. The promotion targeted couples and families and their purpose-led twist aligned to Baci’s heritage of love and affection, while giving shoppers a reason to choose Baci over commodity competitors. The campaign’s emotional hook was clear: every egg was a gift of time and memory – a Moment of Love, not just confectionery.

The Impact:

7,853%

OF VALUE GENERATED
EXCEEDED THE INVESTMENT

10%

SELL-OUT VOLUME
YEAR-ON-YEAR



The activation delivered both commercial results and a refreshed brand narrative, differentiating Baci as the brand for meaningful gifting at Easter.



CASE STUDY:



Dollar Shave Club: “Celebrating Dads” - Driving Father’s Day Sales

The Challenge:

How do you turn Father’s Day into a gifting occasion that boosts shaver sales and brand engagement in a competitive category?

The Approach:

Unilever’s Dollar Shave Club partnered with TLC to launch a nationwide Father’s Day campaign across Target stores in the US. The promotion offered shoppers a choice between a free 12-month gaming membership or a \$25 dining eGift card - rewards designed to appeal both to gifting shoppers and everyday grooming customers - particularly in the lead up to Father’s Day. The promotion was complimented by high-visibility in-store displays, shelf talkers and digital ads on Target’s site featured QR codes linking to a branded microsite for easy participation, providing heightened brand awareness and a seamless customer experience.



The Impact:

48%

INCREASE IN AVERAGE WEEKLY SALES OF SHAVERS AND BLADES IN STORES WITH DISPLAYS AND PROMOTIONAL ASSETS

15%

ADDITIONAL SALES LIFT IN STORES WITH SHELF TALKERS

61%

OF PARTICIPANTS PURCHASED DOLLAR SHAVE CLUB FOR THE FIRST TIME

The campaign successfully combined gifting appeal with clear in-store differentiation and disruption, converting seasonal sentiment into sales growth and new customer acquisition.



HOW TLC DRIVES AUTHENTICITY

As a brand marketer, authenticity is your chance to make your brand impossible to ignore - TLC specialise in making that happen without ever touching price. As the global market leader in non-price-based sales promotions, we use our fixed-fee reward model to protect your margins while delivering high-perceived-value, hyper-engaging rewards that fit seamlessly with your brand story. Think travel, entertainment, wellness, sports, or cultural experiences - curated so that every qualifying shopper walks away with something that feels personal, memorable, and worth talking about. Our deep consumer insights mean every program is tailored to your audience's lifestyle and values, making your product stand out for more than just what's inside the pack or on the price sticker. Through our COSMOS platform, you can track consumer data and insights to refine, learn and drive ongoing success



VISIBILITY

SECURE AWARENESS AND SELL THROUGH



Why Visibility Is Harder Than Ever

The campaigns fall flat without visibility. **Secondary placements can generate 70% more promo sales**, yet **15% of promotions fail because stores don't execute properly**. For brand marketers, this isn't just about getting noticed, it's about proving your campaign earns its place. Retail buyers are looking for initiatives that protect margin, drive category growth, and justify valuable space. At the same time, **online grocery penetration is up 60% versus pre-pandemic levels** and retail media is booming, forecast to reach **US\$100 billion by 2026**. So beyond the store, brands need to figure out how to reach their target audience where they have their eyeballs. That means your campaign must deliver omnichannel consistency, compelling retail sell-in, and transparent ROI - all while reinforcing your brand story and standing out against private label pressure.

INSIGHT: Think Like a Retailer, Plan From the Store Back

Brands often approach visibility as an afterthought, pitching a campaign that looks great 'on paper' but doesn't align with store realities. The most successful brands start with the shelf: they analyse traffic flows, category adjacencies and retailer priorities, and then build a promotion that grows the entire category. They also recognise that planning cycles are accelerating; **McKinsey notes that traditional monthly planning is shifting to weekly or even continuous cycles to keep up with volatile consumer demand**. For brand managers, this means adopting an agile mindset, testing campaigns quickly, and providing data that proves ROI and helps retailers make decisions faster.



CASE STUDY:



Frito Lay: “Snack More, Win More” – Securing Secondary Space and Driving Sell-Through

The Challenge:

In a crowded snack aisle dominated by price promos and private labels, how do you win Gen Z attention, secure prime secondary space, and turn that visibility into repeat purchase behaviour?

The Approach:

We brought the “TikTok energy” to snacks - delivering instant gratification in every pack and giving retailers a differentiated story to back with premium placement. Starting in the Philippines with the Everybody Wins concept - a guaranteed feel-good reward in every pack. Shoppers uncovered mobile-first, social-shareable rewards such as movie tickets, travel credits and entertainment passes from our exclusive rewards network; plus the chance to win an 8-day resort stay. The buzz and high-perceived-value rewards gave retailers confidence to offer end-caps and secondary placements, knowing the promotion would draw traffic and grow basket size. Following its success, the campaign evolved into Snack More, Win More in Singapore and Malaysia, using receipt validation to claim rewards and maintaining the same immediate-satisfaction appeal, while ensuring visibility across both shelf and in-store touchpoints.

The Impact:



The campaign influenced buying behaviour, secured high-traffic placement, and drove double-digit engagement rates - proving that instant, high-value rewards can be a lever for both distribution wins and incremental sales without eroding margins.





CASE STUDY:

FERRERO Ferrero: “Travel is an Amazing Sport” – Boosting Duty-Free Sell-Out During the Olympics

The Challenge:

How do you increase sell-out and average spend in the Duty-Free channel during the Olympics while engaging a diverse, international traveller audience?

The Approach:

Ferrero set out to reward a different kind of athlete – travellers – during the Olympics. Across airport retail, shoppers spending €20 on Ferrero products received €20 travel credits to book hotel stays via TLC’s global travel platform. The mechanic was simple to communicate, instantly valuable, cumulative, and usable worldwide – making it highly appealing to a broad mix of travellers from families with school-age children to business passengers.

By offering a reward that aligned with the travel environment and delivered genuine value, the campaign created a compelling reason for travellers to buy now and buy more. Crucially, this approach also strengthened retailer relationships in the duty-free channel, providing a differentiated offer that drove footfall, increased basket size, and secured prime space at high-traffic airports

The Impact:





HOW TLC DRIVES VISIBILITY

TLC helps brand marketers win visibility by giving your team the commercial firepower to pitch with confidence and credibility. We equip you with retailer-ready proposals backed by insights from thousands of FMCG promotions, complete with visual mockups, and compelling case studies. We can help you show how brand-centric promotions can expand baskets, increase rate of sale, and bring new shoppers into the aisle - all without eroding margin.

Through our COSMOS platform, you get real-time dashboards that can show sales by store and participation heat maps, so you can optimise execution and share results with retail partners. We help you plan omnichannel activation from the shelf to the screen, and our team handles fulfilment, compliance and partner sourcing so you can focus on brand storytelling, retailer negotiations, and building visibility in high-value spaces. It's smarter, faster, and built for brand managers who want their big ideas to land where it counts: on shelf, in cart, and in the hearts of consumers.

Turning Strategy into Action: Your Roadmap to Value-Led Growth

You've now seen how Disruption, Authenticity and Visibility work as united strategic pillars to deepen brand love, protect margin, and drive omnichannel visibility. But how do you embed these into your brand plans? As a brand marketer, you're juggling long-term equity and short-term targets, and pivoting from price-driven tactics to value-led, emotionally resonant growth can feel like a big leap. Shifting from discount-based promotions to experience-led incentives is easy, if you start with your brand's 'WHY' and what your target customers value most. Then with TLC's strategic framework, you can unlock higher rate of sale, secure secondary space, and differentiate without discounting. Below is a roadmap to help you put the 3 strategic pillars into action and move from price-driven tactics to value-driven growth:

1. Audit current promotions and establish goals

- o Analyse the share of marketing spend currently devoted to discounts. Calculate the margin impact and cannibalisation effects.
- o Identify key commercial objectives such as increased sales, basket size, data capture, strengthened retailer relationships and visibility.

2. Segment audiences and map your needs

- o Use existing data and persona research to understand motivation drivers (e.g. Gen Z values unique experiences and social sharing; parents seek family outings; Baby Boomers prioritise adventure).
- o Match reward categories to audience interests and align with brand positioning. For example, pair adventure experiences with energy drinks targeting Gen Z thrill-seekers; kids sports with laundry detergents; pamper and wellness experiences with personal care brands appealing to millennials; or cooking lessons with premium food products for more affluent, gourmet-led consumers. This ensures the reward doesn't just add relevant value, it reinforces the brand's positioning in the minds of the shopper.

3. Select the right reward mechanics

- o Guaranteed vs. chance-to-win: guaranteed rewards ensure everyone is engaged, and gets added value from their purchase; high-value prizes can add 'wow' excitement but only appeal to the lucky few who actually win.
- o Mechanics designed for engagement - for example:
 - A straightforward claim mechanic for mass reach and simple redemption.
 - Gamification with randomised outcomes to boost excitement and repeat participation.

- Offer a reward currency value that can be accumulated with every purchase and spent on free experiences.
- collector cards that unlock rewards upon completion.
- Different tiers of rewards for different spend levels or qualifying purchases.

Select the right combination – based on shopper behaviour, brand objectives, and retailer expectations – ensuring your reward mechanic supports your goals for disruption, authenticity, and visibility.

4. Partner smartly and align with brand purpose

- o Build partnerships with experience providers that reflect your brand values and audience aspirations (fitness brands, streaming platforms, hotels, attractions). Ensure supply and quality.
- o Incorporate sustainability and inclusion by selecting partners with environmental or social credentials.

5. Integrate data capture and measurement

- o Require registration for reward redemption to collect first-party data. Be transparent about data use and offer value in return (e.g., tailored offers).
- o Use unique codes to track purchase, participation and subsequent behaviour. Combine with retailer data to measure uplift and ROI.

6. Test and optimise

- o Pilot experiential promotions within your marketing calendar. Compare results against your usual price discounts to prove the business case for a differentiated approach.
- o Optimise reward mix, communication channels and creative based on performance data. Personalise follow-up offers.

7. Scale and embed into loyalty strategy

- o Integrate experience-led rewards into existing loyalty programs or create new paid tiers offering premium experiences (e.g., annual subscription with monthly experiential perks).
- o Train sales and trade marketing teams to pitch experiential promotions to retailers, emphasising how they deliver all three pillars: Disruption at the shelf, Authenticity to the brand, and Visibility gains in-store and beyond.

8. Communicate boldly

- o Harness the emotional storytelling potential of experiences in creative campaigns. Focus on how rewards make consumers feel rather than just their monetary value.
- o Leverage social media and influencer partnerships to amplify the experiences and encourage user-generated content.

By following this roadmap, FMCG marketers can pivot from the discount trap to a more sustainable, emotionally resonant growth model.



YOUR 3 PILLAR ADVANTAGE

Powered by TLC

We know the idea of rethinking your promotional strategy can feel daunting - more perceived complexity, cost, set up time and more resource. That's where TLC comes in. With proven experience having created thousands of successful campaigns across global FMCG brands - we take care of the heavy-lifting for you.

Our expert teams handle the entire promotion lifecycle, from strategic planning and creative ideation to launch, fulfilment, compliance, reward management and real-time reporting.

Armed with deep consumer insights, an exclusive global partner network, and a fixed-cost reward model, we bring the 3 Pillars to life without adding strain to your team. Our campaigns drive basket expansion, improve sell-out, win secondary space and delight retailers - all while protecting your margin and enhancing brand love.

With TLC behind you, the 3 Pillars go beyond theory; they become a practical, repeatable, and powerful formula for commercial success.

Ready to turn Disruption, Authenticity and Visibility into your competitive edge?

Book a discovery call today and see how TLC
does the heavy lifting - so you don't have to.

[Let's talk](#)

