



Melanie P. Healey

Constantly Innovating

An Interview with **Melanie P. Healey**,
Group President-North America, Procter & Gamble

In terms of the global strength of the brands and of the P&G brand, how close is the coordination region to region and is product offering based on a specific region or is it consistent globally?

We have a combination of what we call global business units and go-to-market organizations, which is the organization I lead in North America.

We work to deliver scale as a global company, but always tailor our approach to win the local market with the local consumers.

I call it glo-cal: the combination of the global scale with the local relevancy that gives us the best of both worlds.

How has P&G maintained its innovation edge?

It is in our DNA and in everything we do from product innovation, to innovation in consumer understanding, to branding innovation and go-to-market innovation.

We need to constantly renew our understanding of how consumers perceive value to make sure we continue to deliver innovation on those value attributes that are important to them.

Commercial innovation includes how we go to market. For example, we recently launched our Have You Tried This Yet campaign and we are treating this almost as if it were a tier-one product innovation. We're leveraging all of our company assets, capabilities, and programs that we use for our individual brands. Knowing that P&G launches 150 initiatives a year, Have You Tried This Yet is an incredibly well-scaled, effective, and efficient way of getting that second bang of trial and even a third bang of trial six months later.

We activate our initiatives at the first moment of truth – in-store – behind big displays that showcase them. For example, we launched our Olympics/Proud Sponsor of Moms scale campaign last year and we're beginning to activate another scaled initiative behind the Special Olympics, utilizing our commercial innovation to drive trial behind our brands.

With such a culture of innovation, your brands are continually putting out different versions. Do you worry this could cause confusion because there are so many different offerings within each brand?

There is always a need for healthy renewal to a brand line-up to stay fresh and continue to connect with consumers, or find new ways to engage those who may not be considering your brand, but suddenly, might become more interested.

We have a huge market share with Tide, for example – it's the number-one player in the market. But when we brought in Tide with Febreze, we were able to go after a whole new segment of consumers and provide the right product for them – the great clean of Tide plus the odor removal they were looking for, in turn widening Tide's reach and appealing to more consumers.

The important thing here is we're constantly speaking to a wide range of consumers, especially with a brand as big as Tide.

How critical is community engagement and corporate responsibility within P&G?

At P&G, we define corporate responsibility very broadly to encompass both environmental and social responsibility. We truly believe that we can do well by doing good. That means touching communities in all parts of the world in ways that are meaningful to them, but also meaningful for our shareholders.

We are a for-profit business and it is important that we deliver for all of our stakeholders, and that includes our employees and the communities in which we operate.

The corporate responsibility programs we have globally are far reaching, from providing Clean Drinking Water with PUR, to the Pantene Beautiful Lengths program, to the Protecting Futures program with Always, to the UNICEF vaccine program with Pampers, to Tide Loads of Hope, and the list goes on.

On the environmental front, we are also very proud of our Future Friendly program in North America. Last year, retailers across the U.S. featured P&G Future Friendly products in their Earth Week displays and promotions. It's a great educational platform that teaches consumers how to save energy, save water, and save materials.

Is it tough sometimes to be hands off when you know this business so well?

As leaders, we need to have enough of a broad understanding to provide the right guidance when people need it, but you choose where you spend your time and that is going to be different at different times. As a leader, it is imperative that people trust you enough that they come to you with the good and the bad news, and you work through it together.

I am very fortunate to be surrounded by an amazingly talented, diverse, and passionate group of people. The richness, breadth, and depth of the organization represents the true power of the P&G company. ●

EDITORS' NOTE *Melanie Healey assumed her current post in 2009. She joined P&G in 1990 as Brand Manager and held positions across a variety of brands and countries before becoming Vice President & General Manager Feminine Care North America, President of Global Feminine Care & Adult Care GBU, and more recently Group President of Global Feminine and Health Care. Before joining P&G, Healey worked for Johnson & Johnson Consumer Division and S.C. Johnson & Sons. Healey has been recognized several times by both Fortune and Forbes magazine's "Most Powerful Women" lists. She graduated from the University of Richmond, Virginia with a B.S. in Business Administration in 1983.*

COMPANY BRIEF *Procter & Gamble (www.pg.com; P&G) has one of the strongest portfolios of trusted, quality, leadership brands, including Pampers®, Tide®, Always®, Pantene®, Bounty®, Dawn®, Pringles®, Downy®, Iams®, Crest®, Duracell®, Olay®, Gillette®, Braun®, and Fusion®. P&G employs approximately 127,000 employees working in approximately 80 countries worldwide.*

What impact did the economic downturn have on P&G's business and how did the brands manage such strong results during that period?

When we started to see indications of slowed market growth in North America, we immediately went back and evaluated our portfolio of brands. We made sure that we had the very best value we could offer, across all categories and at every tier.

We are always looking for ways to differentiate value for our consumers. In the laundry detergent category, for instance, we have Tide, Gain, Cheer, and Era. Having this type of broad portfolio enables us to withstand a recession like this one, with the brands that are best suited for the moment and for each consumer segment.