

Call it a Comeback: Nostalgia Marketing and the Relaunch of Old Favorites

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It seems that lately companies have been engaging in a lot of nostalgia marketing, which involves tapping into consumers' positive memories from the past. We can see this through the recent reintroductions of a number of previously discontinued products. For

example, Crystal Pepsi, a clear cola soft drink, was brought back last summer for a limited promotional 8-week stint, which was successful enough to end up garnering a permanent relaunch. The soda was originally introduced in 1992 and was heavily marketed at the time through Super Bowl commercials and other marketing initiatives: www.youtube.com/watch?v=KPvyq_KmXhc. However, the soda never caught on back then and even became the butt of many jokes, being parodied on Saturday Night Live and elsewhere: www.nbc.com/saturday-night-live/video/crystal-gravy/n10459. Crystal Pepsi was seen as one of the biggest new product failures in PepsiCo's company history and the soda was discontinued in 1993. Nonetheless, over the years a cult like following developed for the product, especially in many social media forums on Facebook and Twitter, with fans petitioning Pepsi to bring it back. Eventually the company agreed and promoted the soda's initial relaunch by pairing it with some additional nostalgia, in the form of an online game it dubbed "The Crystal Pepsi Trail", which was inspired by the iconic old computer game The Oregon Trail.

Another discontinued soft drink Surge, was brought back by Coca-Cola in late 2014 after a swell of consumer requests on social media. The product's reintroduction was limited to only being sold on Amazon.com. However, very successful sales there prompted the company to relaunch Surge nationwide in 2015.

In addition to the soft drink industry, this rise in nostalgia can be seen elsewhere such as Kia's television ad campaign which features the classic 1990's football video game Techmo Bowl and football great Bo Jackson, who was considered to be the video game's best and most unstoppable player. In the ad, Bo can be seen driving a Kia Sorento on the football field within the video game itself:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f2aG7oa53Eo>. Finally, Nintendo also got into the act, launching its Nintendo Entertainment System: NES Classic Edition, which is a replica of the original NES, that comes preloaded with 30 classic Nintendo games and uses an HDMI TV connection: www.nintendo.com/nes-classic. Demand for that system was so great, that it prompted the company to also release the Super NES Classic Edition.

It seems that with this rise in nostalgia marketing, companies are realizing that even in an age of ever-changing advanced technologies, consumers still have an affinity for beloved products of the past, and are willing to purchase from firms who appreciate that. Time will indeed tell if this trend continues, and what other old favorites might be making a comeback down the road. In the meantime, what are your thoughts on this new trend? Are there any other previously discontinued products that you've noticed being reintroduced? Any others that you would like to see brought back? Please share

your thoughts in the comments section below.