

Cracker Barrel

Background

- Cracker Barrel is the ultimate “windshield brand” in that it was founded in 1969 to provide local highway travelers (“folks on the road”) with a home cooked meal in an environment reminiscent of a country store.
- Today, most of its 600 locations across 46 states are found along the interstate highways, targeting hungry travelers.
- For years, approximately 84% of their media spending was allocated to out of home billboards to reach the highway traveler.
- In 2011, the RAB partnered with Cracker Barrel’s agency, MPG, to convey radio’s strength in delivering for brands such as Cracker Barrel.
- These discussions ultimately resulted in a successful radio test, followed by a national radio campaign.

Objectives

- Promote seasonal menu items to drive traffic to Cracker Barrel restaurants.
- Help launch salads in select target markets and encourage listeners to sample the new menu.



Solution

- Katz Marketing Solutions activated an on-air endorsement program with key radio personalities in 105 markets highlighting specific seasonal menu items for Cracker Barrel, both on-air and within social media elements (Facebook posts, tweets and email blasts).
- Some of the endorsement spots were presented in a “whisper” giving away “secret recipes” from the Cracker Barrel “handcrafted” recipe book.
- Radio remotes at select Cracker Barrel locations featured the participating DJ brand ambassadors giving away Cracker Barrel Gold Cards and dinners for two.

 Cracker Barrel Audio #1

 Cracker Barrel Audio #2

Results

- According to Cracker Barrel CEO Sandra Cochran, the resulting sales “exceeded expectations” and the restaurant chain will use spot radio to tell customers about menu “updates.” Radio is still bringing people through the door.
- “Radio continues to be an effective medium, but it appears we have opportunities in radio to get even better. We continue to think it is an important medium.” Larry Hyatt, CFO, Cracker Barrel.