

Head Monster's Formula for Growing an Accessories Business

Written by Bob Snyder
08 January 2012

While many companies search for ways to add value, Monster consistently turns adding value into an art, a lucrative art. But how?



“One demo at a time,” asserts **Noel Lee, known as the Head Monster**. It’s not enough to add valuable features: you have to show the benefits to the public.

When industry pioneer Lee started in the audio cable business, there was no internet, no blogging, no YouTube. “You had to stand in front of buyers and demo, and demo, and demo...”

“If you want to sell high performance to the public, you still have to show high performance,” says Lee.

Noel Lee is the man that’s a retail legend for taking nearly-free audio cables and convincing the

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public to pay more for better Monster audio cables.

That led to the creation of the value-added accessory industry. And more recently, the Head Monster took the cheap "ear bud" and created a market for \$150 fashion headphones using celebrity involvement. **Monster now owns 52% of the over-\$100 headphone market in USA and 26% of the over over-130 euro market in Europe.**

Lee still believes strongly in demo-ing, taking an IFA press audience through a demo to illustrate each and every individual product now launched. The press watched the test to show how ordinary HDMI cables can lose data, the demo on how sports earphones can be washed and still play (*see photo*), the test to experience the sound from the new Clarity speakers...well, you get the idea. Demo...demo... demo...

Part of this comes from Noel Lee, the showman. Part comes from Noel Lee, the man with a known passion for music. And that passion can be catching...

In another example from IFA, Monster announced **a new partnership with an Italian house of fashion, Diesel**. In announcing the Diesel Noise Division with Monster, Diesel's Andrea Giacomelli explained, "We watched as fashion and technology came together, for example in categories like spectacles. We wanted to do something different with technology and then we met Monster. The two companies both have a passionate founder who started a company in the same year, 1978. Diesel founder Renzo Rosso, like Noel in cables, took denim fabric, added value and started selling it at twice the price."

When Giacomelli finished his introduction to the electronics press at IFA, attention turned to the first product...the **Diesel Vektr**, an edgy, fashionable pair of headphones.

Giacomelli stood there, letting the product design speak for itself, but the Head Monster spoke up, insisting "*Put it on, put it on...*"

Giacomelli somewhat reluctantly consented and adorned himself with the Vektr headphones.

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He stood there, feeling a little sheepish but Noel only beamed proudly. Once more the Head Monster had his demo.

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