

Heather Kennedy

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Consumer marketing specialist, with 20 years of experience in the food industry, focusing on brand and marketing strategy, communications, education, product development and commercialization. Currently sharing my passion for developing and marketing consumer centric products and services with students at the Leeds School of Business.

Recipient of MBA Teaching Excellence Award 2021 and the CESR Graduate Faculty Award 2022.

Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado

Boulder, CO 6/16 - present

Associate Teaching Professor – Marketing Department

- Developed MBA level Marketing Strategy course that provided students the opportunity to work with a natural foods company to develop a strategic plan in real time.
- Collaborate with peers to develop and teach a variety of MBA and undergraduate level courses.
- Currently serving as Faculty Director to the Badami Office of Experiential Learning.

Fresh Ideas Group

Boulder, CO 1/14 – 6/19

Lead Strategist

- Developed strategic marketing, branding and PR plans for clients.
- Led programs for new clients, developed and implemented rebranding strategies and retail execution.
- Continue to serve as strategic counsel as needed on packaged goods and retail clients.

University of Denver

Denver, CO 1/14 - present

Teaching Professor – Marketing Department

- Developed and taught curriculum for graduate level Marketing Concepts, Brand Management and Digital Marketing courses that received excellent student reviews.

Whole Foods Market

Austin, TX and Boulder, CO
10/04 – 12/14

National Marketing Director

- Developed strategy and vision for National Marketing team, liaison between National and Regional marketing teams providing a platform for 15 Team Members to manage and execute programs. Worked with Quality Standards team to communicate the benefits of Whole Food's outstanding quality requirements and ensure all health statements were legally compliant.
- Designed and implemented a national annual planning process resulting in a company-wide marketing strategic plan, calendar and budget.
- Launched first Whole Baby program which partnered with vendors to deliver information on organic products to new moms, resulting in a series of vendor funded programs, raising \$1 Million in year 1.
- Oversaw \$30 Million dollar gift card program, which grew over 30% versus prior year.
- Collaborated with Private Label project leader to create marketing strategy, calendar and key metrics to support Whole Foods Market brands.

Whole Journeys Director

- Developed and implemented marketing, customer service and reservation strategies for Whole Journeys, a new experiential travel company from Whole Foods Market.
- Created and managed the financial management system including budgeting and forecasting process, banking needs and accounting procedures.
- Led development of the website, including agency management, copywriting and creative execution.

Local Producer Loan Program Manager

- Managed key strategic initiative of locating and funding small entrepreneurs creating exceptional and unique local products.
- Refined loan process resulting in over a 100% increase in loans disbursed vs. prior year
- Conducted financial assessment resulting in a below average rate of default on loans of this type.
- Created marketing and public relations initiatives resulting in tv, magazine and food blogger mentions

McCombs School of Business, University of Texas

Austin, TX 2008

Lecturer – Strategic Brand Management, Corporate Social Responsibility

- Revised and executed Strategic Brand Management class for MBA students that covered the value of and challenges inherent in managing brands as assets.
- Developed and taught the first MBA level Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility class offered by the McCombs School of Business.

Feeding America

Chicago, IL 10/02 – 10/04

Senior Corporate Relations Manager

- Developed branding and communications strategy for CRM, Food Sourcing and Communications.
- Created strategy and process for customer returns policies with non-food packaged goods manufacturers resulting in 1 Million pounds of incremental donations.
- Identified an opportunity for process improvement, created financial tracker that linked to current database, resulting in a decision-making tool for upper management.

Kraft Foods, NA

Glenview, IL 9/99 – 10/02

Senior Associate Brand Manager – Salad Dressing

- Managed 2003 business planning process, including creation of marketing and trade strategies, volume forecast, P&L development, and presentation to upper management.
- Effectively managed development of the 2003 advertising strategy, acted as liaison between brand team and advertising agency, and managed \$22 Million media budget.
- Created fully integrated plan for Hispanic consumers, gained agreement from upper management, and obtained \$3.1 million in funding, resulting in volume 10% above plan.

Senior Associate Brand Manager – Taco Bell Home Originals

- Led cross-division effort to promote dinner solutions, which provided incentives to retailers, resulting in the second highest shipment month in brand history.
- Managed a cross-functional team to create product exit strategy by identifying liquidation opportunities that minimized financial impact to both the brand and the retailer.
- Developed the “in-and-out” strategy and led the cross-functional team that commercialized two concepts, leading to \$1.2 million in incremental shipments.
- Restructured the financial reporting process, which led to increased accuracy in forecasting and more reliable P&L management on a complex business.

Associate Brand Manager – DiGiorno Pizza

- Managed relationships with outside agencies to create and execute all in-store and out of store consumer promotions.
- Performed a weekly analysis of business results and led presentation to the Brand team.
- Identified strategic opportunity to grow business through sampling, hired outside agency, and managed the national program that led to a 15.2% increase in sales vs. prior year.
- Efficiently managed a \$12.5 million consumer promotions budget.

Education

McCombs School of Business, University of Texas at Austin

Master of Business Administration 1999, Concentration in Marketing and Entrepreneurship

Texas Christian University Ft. Worth, TX

B.S. Psychology / Minor in Business Administration 1993 - Violin Performance Scholarship Recipient