

Smaller icecream tubs not so topping

Tip Top could face a backlash after trimming the size of some ice-cream tubs without reducing the price, a branding expert says.

Tip Top said yesterday it reduced the size of four of its specialty ice creams by 20 per cent last month to avoid price rises across all of its products. It had added more ingredients to compensate, such as more gumdrops in Goody Goody Gum Drops ice cream.

It made the move after market research involving 5000 consumers last year.

Senior brand strategist Wayne Attwell, from marketing consultants Bold Horizon, said Tip Top risked the same backlash Cadbury experienced when it reduced the size of its king-size block of Dairy Milk and substituted cocoa butter with palm oil in July. It no longer uses palm oil.

“I know a lot of people that won’t touch Cadburys now. I suspect if Tip Top haven’t changed the recipe and it’s just simply an economic thing, people will get pretty pissed off about it.”

With social networking tools such as Twitter and Facebook it does not take much to create a groundswell

of negative opinion, he said. “Before you would have met your mate at the barbecue and bitched about it. Now you go on Twitter and you tweet it to your followers. A lot of that stuff, it’s hard to come back from it. Cadburys are struggling. [Tip Top’s] brand will just get eroded.”

The flavours Goody Goody Gum Drops, Jelly Tip, Monkey Business and Gone Fishin’ have been reduced to 1.6 litre while Vanilla, Chocolate, Hokey Pokey and 10 other flavours were still two litres.

The company said it had increased ingredients, such as gumdrops, by 17 per cent to compensate for the loss of size. More than 132 people commented on stuff.co.nz, including many who said they would no longer buy from Tip Top.

Tip Top managing director Alastair De Raadt told The Dominion Post it would look at consumer reaction “very closely” but reversing its decision was “very unlikely”.

“If we hadn’t have done this, we would have to increase prices across all the products and we think particularly in the current economic climate that’s not the wisest thing to do.”

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