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IMC Final Project  
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Advertising Fundamentals

## **Integrated Marketing Communication Plan for: Trailblazer Trail Mix**

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### **Background:**

Founded in 1998, Trailblazer Trail Mix is a small, family owned company, located on a farm in upstate New York. The trail mix is produced locally, with all natural ingredients, and made with environmentally friendly, biodegradable packaging. The trail mix contains dried fruits and berries, and assorted nuts. It is sold in both chain grocery stores and specialty stores throughout the Northeast United States. Due to locally sourced ingredients and manufacturing, Trailblazer is able to keep production costs low, and therefore provide a healthy snack at a lower price than most competitors, while giving the customer better value.

Trailblazer is dedicated to providing customers with top of the line ingredients from local farmers, and make sure that each ingredient used is of the highest quality. Each product is crafted to have the perfect balance between nutritious and delicious, with both the customers health and happiness in mind. Trailblazer designs its products to be eaten on the go, as a snack at home, or wherever life takes the consumer. With multiple social media accounts, its own website, and traditional phone and email contacts, Trailblazer is able to keep in contact with all of its customers. Whether it is taking suggestions, helping with any questions, or reaching out directly to the customer, there is always a way to get in contact with the company, and help improve products.

In this IMC campaign, Trailblazer is looking to grow as a company, spread it's brand across more of the country, and try to become a top seller within the fruit and nut snack industry. Its target audience

is millennial dads, and it is trying to sell its premier product of fruit and nut trail mix to them. The campaign focuses on the modern day dad, and their expectations of being a 'super dad', spending time and taking care of their kids, working, and being constantly on the go. It aims to show Trailblazer trail mix as a fast and easy solution to hunger and something that they can feel good about purchasing and giving to their kids. With a mix of traditional and new (social) media, Trailblazer hopes to connect strongly with their target audience, and increase brand recognition. Over the course of the next year, Trailblazer will roll out this campaign with different media segments being used at specific times, and not all at once, looking to get media coverage/publicity in the process. This campaign is needed to get Trailblazer's name out in the public's view, and to connect with this largely untapped market. Within the next year, Trailblazer hopes to increase sales, position in the marketplace, and brand recognition greatly, as well as to gain control over the target market of millennial dad.

### **The Audience:**

The primary target audience for this campaign is millennial dads, ages 30-40 with children under the age of 10. They are learning how to deal with a long work week and balance their family life. Many of these new dads turn to social media, the internet, and their mobile devices for advice, and use it as a tool to help make the task of being a dad easier (Mooney & Fernandez, 2015). They make around \$45,000-65,000 individually, and are conscious about expense but don't like the idea of "cheap". Even with this concern for expense, they are willing to pay a premium for healthy, organic, fresh, and reduced environmental impact products. They value the health and wellness of themselves and their family more than ever, and want natural, "honest" products that will make them feel good about what they're eating and/or giving to their kids (Pollak, 2015). Many millennial dads are in control of what the household buys, as 80% of them handle the household shopping or share it equally with their spouse, and have a prominent influence in the CPG products that the household buys with 60% of CPG

products being purchased by dads (PTPA Media, 2016 & Edelman Marketing, 2012). Even with this buying power, fathers are not well represented in ads directed towards families, as they are typically portrayed as “bumbling idiots” that are incompetent of taking care of their children, which is the complete opposite from the reality that most millennial dads represent (Bliss, 2015).

In general, just as most millennials, millennial parents value meaningful experiences over consumer products and don't like the idea of “big corporations”. These parent's spending power is a combined \$200 billion+ and they are growing rapidly in size each year. They expect brands to be held accountable for their actions, and 82% of them expect their favorite brands to respond to social issues. They also like the idea of customization and personalization, with 42% saying that they value having a say in the production of the products that they buy (Nederbo, 2016). Millennial parents are also just as connected as their counterparts on social media, with 90% saying that they use some form of social media and find it helpful. With this online presence, 62% of millennial parents say that they are more loyal to brands that respond and interact with them on social media (Nederbo, 2016). This brand loyalty carries into millennial parents trust in brands, especially in times of need, where they are likely to turn to their favorite brands to help solve the problem in some way. Once a brand breaks the millennial's trust, it is near impossible to earn it back (Gross & O'Neil-Hart, 2017). In terms of tone, millennial parents respond well to brands that know how to talk to both themselves, and their kids. They also tend to have closer relationships with their children than previous generations did, seen in the 74 percent of millennial parents who let their children take part in decisions that affect the household (Anderson, 2017). Finally, millennial parents are more diverse than any generation of parents before them, and do not adhere to typical gender roles. This being said, companies should keep a close eye on the changing marketplace, and try to cater to each type of millennial differently, not trying to group them into one big conglomerate (Fromm, 2016).

The current audience of millennial dads think that fruit and nut snacks are a healthy and quick

option to eat, and are good options to give to their kids. Millennials are trending to more health conscious snacks, but at the same time are usually on the run and need something quick and nutritious to eat. The fruit and nut industry has grown 28% in sales since 2011, and continues to grow (Mintel, 2016). This provides the perfect opportunity for Trailblazer to market to a health conscious millennial dads group their fruit and nut products, specifically trail mix. The current perceptions towards this industry are already good, and Trailblazer has a positive image amongst this market. The only issues Trailblazer faces are obtaining higher brand recognition, hopefully becoming a household name eventually, and gaining popularity as a snack amongst this market. The secondary market in this case would be the spouses and children of these millennial dads, which control the other parts of buying power in the house. The market of millennial moms have virtually the same views of this industry as the fathers do, but the children mostly care just about taste and looks, which tend not to be a problem within the industry (Frei, 2013).

### **Strategy:**

Trailblazer will use both traditional and new (social) media to reach the target market, and gain brand recognition. Using the brand's identity of being a healthy, nutritious, convenient, and fast snack, Trailblazer will try to push their trail mix to millennial dads as a quick fix to their kids and own hunger, while they're on the go and trying to balance a busy work and home life. Trailblazer will position themselves as the “snack savior” to a busy dad, that is an easy solution to one of their many problems, and something they can feel good about, in a health and environment conscious way. Promoting the product's ingredients and emphasizing the protein, antioxidants, and vitamins it contains will appeal to these millennial dad's wants of a good snack for both themselves and their family. Trailblazer will also emphasize its locally produced, environmentally friendly, and small business farm position, as it promotes the company as being more “real” and “honest”, making these fathers feel better about



buying from and helping out a small business. Trailblazer will also create this campaign around the central idea of a busy working father who is always on the go, but still finds time to be with his family, and is very close to his kids. The company will promote it's trail mix as a product that can help enhance their lives by connecting them more with their children and family.

Along with promoting its most appealing attributes and benefits, Trailblazer will try to gain more social media and online presence to help position both the company and this product as modern and unique. It will also use this online presence to better connect directly with the audience and gain brand loyalty and recognition. Trailblazer will also customize it's trail mix options, letting the customer choose the ingredients based off their interactions with the company online. This will make it easy to market this product to the millennial father to buy for himself and his family (Mintel, 2016, Anderson, 2017, Mooney & Fernandez, 2015, & Nederbo, 2016).

### **The Message:**

The campaign will have a kind, caring, and motivated tone, that will emphasize the brands small business and family owned position. The language used will be honest, caring, and understanding to the audiences daily struggles. Trailblazer will use convenience as well to promote the product in the campaign, with word choice that gives off the sense of an easy and quick fix to the audience's problems in the form of a trail mix product. There will also be language used that emphasizes the reliability and authenticity of both the product and company, with the environmentally friendly, all-natural, and locally sourced aspects standing out.

The top three messages that this campaign will promote to the audience are the company's authenticity as a small, family owned business, that is closely connected to it's customers, the convenience that the trail mix product provides to the audience's hectic schedule, and the healthy and environmentally friendly parts of both the product and company, that will make the consumer feel good

about buying, eating, and giving to their family. If one sentence could break through the clutter for Trailblazer, it would be that the company is providing these millennial dads with a “snack savior” that helps fix problems in their busy daily lives, and it is something they can feel good about purchasing.

### **The Media Mix:**

Trailblazer will use a mix of new and traditional media to reach their target audience. In terms of traditional media, millennial dads watch on average 20 hours of television a week (Roy, 2016), so a television ad will be created and played on channels that are popular with this group such as ESPN, NBC Sports Network, Fox Sports, FX, Spike, TRU TV, and AMC, mostly during the morning and evening time slots. The campaign would also try to get this ad on TV streaming services such as Hulu and Netflix, which are popular amongst millennial men as well (Burke, 2016). 92% of Millennials listen to radio, spending about 12 hours a week listening (Pew Research, 2015). A radio ad will be created, being put on stations popular with millennial dads, such as country, news/talk shows, and pop/contemporary hits stations, mostly during “drive time” time slots, where these fathers are commuting to and from work. Trailblazer will also try to get these ads on music streaming platforms such as Spotify, Pandora, and Apple Music, which are all popular amongst millennial men (Burke, 2016).

In addition, three different print ads will be created and distributed amongst popular print publications amongst the market such as the New York Times, USA Today, Wall Street Journal, Wired Magazine, GQ Magazine, Men's Fitness, Car & Driver, and Sports Illustrated (Bazilian, 2015). The final traditional media ad will be an out of home ad placed in various high traffic areas such as on buildings and near/on public transit (buses, subways, taxis, etc.) in a few major American cities (New York, Boston, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Washington D.C., etc.). The primary focus of this campaign, however, will be targeting new media. Trailblazer will unleash a social media and online campaign in

which two different digital display ads will be used. They will both be a sidebar ad which will appear on YouTube, which millennial fathers use constantly to look up parental advice and how-to's, and Facebook, where older millennials are prominent (Mooney & Fernandez, 2015).

### **The Deadline:**

Trailblazer will be releasing its digital ads, TV, and radio ads around April and the upcoming spring and continue throughout the year. This is right when both the NBA and NHL playoffs, NFL offseason activities, and MLB season are starting. This means that many millennials dads are tuning in to sports channels and stations, and their online presence will be greater (Dunstewart, 2014). This is also a time when many new TV shows are premiering and these dads are likely to tune in. As for the print ads, they will be put out in the summer issues of the print media, when fathers are spending time with their kids over summer vacation and reading more print media. Finally, the out of home will be put out in the fall, right before new sports seasons are starting (both professionally and kids), and these dads will be on the go more frequently, with greater chances of exposure to these ads on their way to sporting events, work, and other parts of their busy lives (Dunstewart, 2014, Anderson, 2017).

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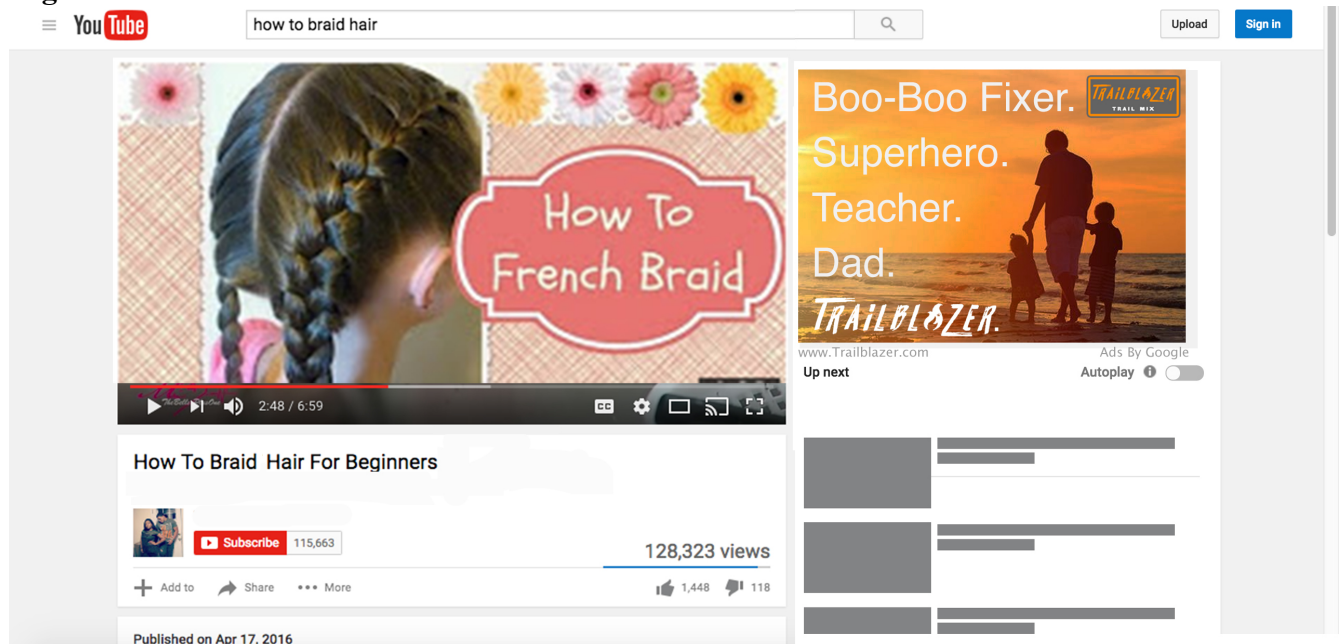
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## Ads

### Digital:




YouTube Ad (Sidebar)



YouTube Ad (Closeup)



Sponsored Create Ad



**15% off your next purchase**  
[www.Trailblazer.com](http://www.Trailblazer.com)  
Click the link above to get 15% off  
your next purchase of Trailblazer trail mix

Facebook Ad (Sidebar)

**Out of Home:**

(To be put on buses, subways, sides of buildings)



Print:

## KEEP YOUR LIL' ONES KICKIN'

FOR ALL  
OF LIFE'S  
ADVENTURES



As a family owned business, we know you're already busy enough raising your future soccer superstars. So don't worry about what snacks you're giving them, we've got you covered! Trailblazer trail mix is a quick, easy, and healthy snack that you can feel good about giving your kids, and will keep your lil' ones kickin'.



## HOME RUN.

FOR ALL  
OF LIFE'S  
ADVENTURES



You love taking your kids out to play some ball, and who could resist a classic game of catch? Now while you're warming up for the next batting practice, remember to give them something that's good for them and they'll enjoy, with protein packed ingredients to help them hit that next home run.



## DAD'S TO-DO LIST

- ☐ Wake up kids
- ☐ Bring Kids to school
- ☐ Go to work
- ☐ Complete annual report
- ☐ Pick up Kids
- ☒ Feed kids
- ☐ Bring Johnny to Hockey
- ☐ Bring Katie to Soccer

Don't Worry About This One.  
We've Got You Covered!



### ON THE ROAD TO WHATEVER'S NEXT

If you're like most dads we know, each day brings a new set of challenges to conquer. Being constantly on the go, it's hard to work in a meal, and sometimes you forget completely. That's where Trailblazer trail mix comes in. Fast, simple, and nutritious, you don't have to worry about that after school snack anymore, we've got you covered! Trailblazer is a family owned business, so we understand the struggles of parenting. Now focus on the rest of your list, we know you're already busy enough! **TRAILBLAZER**



*FUEL THEM UP RIGHT  
FOR THEIR NEXT GAME*



**ON THE ROAD TO WHATEVER'S NEXT**

A busy schedule can prevent even the best hockey dads from giving their kids the right nutrition to get out there and play. Not to worry, Trailblazer trail mix is the perfect solution to this age-old problem. A simple, quick, and nutrient filled snack is exactly what we provide, with protein packed nuts and antioxidant-rich dried fruits and berries. We also use all natural, locally sourced ingredients, so you can make sure that you're fueling them up with the best!



**A Snack That's (Almost)  
As *SUPER* As You Are**



**ON THE ROAD TO WHATEVER'S NEXT**

It's hard being a super-dad. Feeding yourself and the kids shouldn't be. Get yourself a snack savior with Trailblazer trail mix. Made with all natural ingredients, and biodegradable packaging, so you can feel good about what you're buying, and save the world for your kids in more ways than one

*TRAILBLAZER*

## STAR QUARTERBACK (in TRAINING)

FOR ALL  
OF LIFE'S  
ADVENTURES



Now he's just learning the basics, soon he'll be a star quarterback. Fuel his dreams with Trailblazer trail mix. Nutritious, delicious, and biodegradable. So you can feel good about what you're giving him, while making his, and other generation's futures brighter.



### Radio Ad

Hey dad, so you just picked the kids up from school, right after getting out of a long day of work at the office. Johnny has hockey practice and Katie has soccer practice, so now you're on your way to drop them off.... That's when you hear the dreaded words..... “daaad Im hungryy”. You panic and start thinking about all your options... do I not feed them and be a horrible dad? Do I stop for cruddy fast food? Do I make them late for practice and grab them something else?... thats when it dawns on you.... you genius! You have a package of Trailblazer Trail Mix in the car! Not only is it quick and convenient, but its also good for your kids! Score – dad 1, hunger 0.... Trailblazer, On the road to whatever's next.

**TV Ad:**

**A Dad's Normal Monday**

**(60 sec.)**

**VIDEO**

**AUDIO**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>Alarm clock shows 6:29 am<br/>Dad laying in bed next to alarm<br/>Clock hits 6:30am<br/>Dad Rolls over, smacks alarm, gets up</p> <p>Cuts to dad running to the shower, brushes teeth, gets dressed waking kids (boy age 9, girl age 7) up, brewing coffee, making toast, serving breakfast at a sped up pace</p> <p>Continues with speeding up video of dad driving kids to school, dropping them off, going to work, working on reports, participating in a meeting</p> <p>(Speeding up) Dad leaves work, picks up kids from school, brings them to hockey and soccer practice, watching practice, driving both kids back home, making dinner, doing homework</p> <p>Video stops. (Dad looking clearly stressed, paused at the dinner table with kids homework.</p> <p>Video rewinds rapidly to car ride to hockey/soccer practice. Plays in regular motion, showing dad driving, kids in the back seat dancing/singing, Arrives at soccer field. Dad parks, turns around to kids, pulls out Trailblazer Trail Mix container.</p> <p>Dad and kids sit in car sharing snack briefly, smiling, laughing.<br/>Camera zooms out from car, Trailblazer logo fades in, along with slogan “On the road to whatever’s next”.</p> | <p>Silence<br/>Snoring of dad<br/>click of clock, alarm goes off<br/>Alarm blaring, smack noise, dad groans</p> <p>VO: (Dad voice) A typical Monday morning starts now. (Deep breath)<br/>Frantic music abruptly starts<br/>VO: (Fast paced talking) First I Shower, get ready, wake the kids, and make breakfast</p> <p>Frantic music speeds up<br/>VO: (Pace of talking is sped up)Next I drive the kids to school, go to work, work on reports, go to meetings</p> <p>Frantic Music continues to speed up</p> <p>VO: (Rushed, almost out of breath) Then I rush from work , pick up the kids, bring them to practice, watch both of their practices, drive home, make them dinner, do their homework</p> <p>Music stops<br/>VO: Out of breath, panting, catches breath<br/>VO: Hold on, hold on... It must seem like I don't enjoy this much... Let's look back at earlier today (Rewinding Sounds)</p> <p>Kids singing along to “Happy” by Pharell Williams<br/>Dad Laughing</p> <p>(“Happy” Faintly Playing)<br/>VO: This is one of my favorite parts of the day<br/>Family: Laughing<br/>VO: It's the little things that make the day a great one, and having a quick car snack with my kids is one of them.<br/>(Music Fades out)<br/>VO: Trailblazer, on the road to whatever’s next</p> |
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