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## DEDICATED BLAST

# DURACELL®



WITH devices like digital cameras increasingly powered by built-in rechargeable batteries, and more consumers using smartphone alarms instead of battery-operated alarm clocks, the battery market itself lost some voltage between 2007 and 2012, with revenue declining 10 percent, according to Mintel, a market research firm.

But plenty of items still require batteries, like remote controls, smoke alarms and flashlights, and the market is showing positive signs. Alkaline batteries gained 15 percent in revenue in the 52 weeks ending June 16, according to IRI, a market data firm. The number of batteries sold declined by 5.8 percent over the last year, but revenue increased because makers charged more for improved batteries that promise longer-lasting power.

Now Duracell, the Procter & Gamble brand, is introducing a line of batteries, Quantum, that will be its most powerful, and which will come at a premium, with a suggested retail price 20 percent to 30 percent higher than the Copper Top. (Another premium battery line, Duracell Ultra, which is priced the same as Quantum, will be discontinued.)

Duracell batteries have had a copper-colored upper section and black lower section since 1972, but the new batteries are red below the copper band.

"Consumers associate red with more power, and we chose red to differentiate it and to highlight Quantum's Hi-Density Core," said Volker Kuhn, general manager of Duracell North America, using the brand's trademarked term for the technology used by the new line.

A commercial that will be introduced on July 29 opens with a procession of fire engines and ambulances driving down a highway.

"Nobody knows where or when the next powerful storm is going to hit, but it will," says a voice-over, the actor Jeff Bridges.

After lightning strikes on the horizon, and firefighters shine flashlight beams during a storm to discover someone in rubble, Mr. Bridges reveals a donation in conjunction with the new line's introduction.

"The next storm is out there, but so are the heroes, so we're giving a million Duracell Quantum to first responders everywhere," says Mr. Bridges.

The campaign, which is by the Acme Idea Company in South Norwalk, Conn., includes online advertising and videos featuring first responders describing heroic rescues. Duracell, which declined to reveal expenditures for the campaign, spent about \$67.6 million on advertising in 2012, compared with \$43.8 million by its rival Energizer, according to the Kantar Media unit of WPP.

Duracell's association with emergency workers goes back to at least 2002, when a commercial featured the Rocky Mountain Rescue Group, a volunteer search and rescue squad for mountainous terrain, with the brand emphasizing that team members use Duracell batteries for their flashlights and headlamps. The commercial was also by Acme, which has been the brand's agency of record since 2001, when Duracell was owned by the Gillette Company, a company that was acquired by P&G in 2005.

Along with featuring emergency workers in numerous commercials since then, in 2011 the brand introduced its Duracell Power Relief program, which dispatches trucks and trailers to disaster areas to distribute free batteries and provide charging stations for cellphones and laptops.

Since its inception, the program has deployed 11 times after disasters like hurricanes and blizzards, distributing more than 250,000 batteries. When the brand, which has more than 4.1 million followers on Facebook, posted a photo on Facebook on May 20 of one of its Power Forward trucks that was en route to Oklahoma City, which had been struck by deadly tornadoes, more than 15,450 Facebook users clicked the "like" button, and more than 1,340 shared the photo with their networks of friends.

Scott Kulok, the creative director at Acme, said that research by the agency indicated that consumers deeply admired first responders, and that actual emergency workers (who also were members of the Screen Actors Guild) were cast in the Quantum commercial.

"First responders are the heroes of our age," Mr. Kulok said. "When the worst happens, they turn into superheroes."

In the alkaline battery segment, which accounts for about 80 percent of the household battery market, Duracell has a 39.4 percent share of the market, followed by Energizer Holdings, which makes the Energizer and Eveready brands, with a 32 percent share, according to IRI.

Consumers are most likely to buy batteries for remote controls, followed by flashlights, smoke alarms, clocks and digital cameras, according to a 2012 survey by Mintel.

Joe Waters, co-author of "Cause Marketing for Dummies," said that both Duracell's Power Relief program and its new plan to donate batteries to first responders demonstrated how, in an era when brands reach consumers through social media like Facebook, companies strive to share values with consumers over just selling to them.

As for donating products to first responders, Mr. Waters added that along with being charitable, there was a real practical benefit to Duracell because first responders also buy batteries for professional and personal use.

"What brands are looking for is loyalists, and firefighters and other first responders are an incredible network of loyalists," Mr. Waters said.

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