



Case Study:

Kellogg's: Pop-Tarts

Year: 2022



This case study was prepared for the client Kellogg's for the product Pop-Tarts to create a deeper connection with Hispanic moms who crave new ways to maintain their culture with their teens. Pop-Tarts transformed its frosted pastries into a colorful palette for honoring Día de Muertos. It was developed and designed by Captura Group. In the Impact on Innovation category, it won silver.

Executive Summary:

When you see the U.S. Hispanic audience you've been working hard to engage finally start to adopt your brand with mainstream flavors and formats, how do you take it to the next level? If you're Pop-Tarts, known for challenging the convention with Crazy Good, you bring the richness of Hispanic culture not just into your ads, but also into your food. The opportunity was born out of an insight tied to Hispanic Moms who crave new ways to maintain connections and preserve culture with their Teens. These gatekeepers are our primary consumers--unacculturated moms unfamiliar with Pop-Tarts who need to know why Pop-Tarts are relevant. To create a catalyst for deeper connection, Pop-Tarts transformed its iconic frosted pastries into a colorful palette for honoring Día de Muertos (Day of the Dead).

Recognizing the responsibility of bringing this to life with reverence and sensitivity, the brand applied an intentional culture-first focus. The Limited Edition Pop-Tarts Día de Muertos launched in retailers nationwide in fall of 2021 and, with only a 2-month effort, generated 91% positive consumer sentiment, drove a 70% sales increase, and became a conduit for culture, not only for Hispanic families, but for ALL.

Definition of your challenge:

Pop-Tarts' in-language/in-culture marketing efforts have helped increase adoption of Pop-Tarts among U.S. Hispanic Households. The efforts focused on Spanish-preferring "gatekeeper" Moms—who hadn't grown up with Pop-Tarts—see the relevance for their families, leveraging the brand's existing portfolio of flavors. In 2022, Pop-Tarts wanted to deepen its connection with U.S. Hispanic Moms by not only reflecting culture in its ads, but also celebrating through its actual food. Pop-Tarts launched the Latino-inspired flavor "Chocolatey Churro" in 2020, but it did not become a top performer, mainly because it lacked dedicated promotional support. Pop-Tarts didn't want to create another Latino flavor for the sake of checking a box, especially when its core flavors were performing well with USH.

The brand asked: how could Pop-Tarts launch a Latino-inspired innovation going beyond flavor to become a full celebration of culture?

Key Considerations:

How do we ensure our USH audiences see a new Latino-inspired Pop-Tart as sincere, and not misappropriation?

How do we ensure our new Latino-Inspired offering does not alienate Pop-Tarts Non-USH consumers?

How do we ensure our new Latino-Inspired offering drives strong business performance? (i.e. generating growth while doing good.)

Measurable Objectives: Positive Consumer Sentiment, Meaningful Influencer Engagement, Positive Awareness & Buzz, Sales Growth & HH Penetration.

The Key Insight & Strategy:

Secondary data supported room for a new Pop-Tarts offering that could create a conduit for culture between parents and their kids [according to a KantarConsulting: Culture and Language Study]:

- 90% of Hispanic parents believe it's important to pass their culture onto their kids.
- 60% of Hispanics believe that it's important that companies make an effort to be active in their local communities (vs. only 34% non-USH).
- 59% of Hispanics believe their cultural heritage and/or background influences their purchase decisions (vs. only 34% non-USH).
- 59% of Hispanics seek out brands that acknowledge their culture's unique traditions (vs. only 36% non-USH).

But the question for Hispanic parents often becomes "How?" Pop-Tarts' qualitative research revealed that U.S. Hispanic moms feel that they are missing opportunities to pass on their culture to their kids. As her Teens spend more time outside the home with more "mainstream" friends and activities, including discovering new foods and snacks, she fears that her central role as "Heritage Keeper" is compromised. This insight opened the door for Pop-Tarts' Latino-Inspired offering as a catalyst for connection - give Mom an opportunity to celebrate and even educate her Teens on their culture through a cool food she knows they will love.

Key Communications Insight: U.S. Hispanic Moms crave new ways to maintain connections and preserve culture with their Teens, as they compete for their time with more mainstream influences. And Pop-Tarts—a brand known for challenging the convention of every day with Crazy Good—makes this possible like nothing else can.

An Eye Toward Crossover Appeal: Among total Millennials, 75% say their food influences are shaped by interaction with people of other races and ethnicities, so Pop-Tarts believed this innovation could halo its appeal to broader, non-USH audiences. *Source: Travelocity.*

Execution:

Innovation: Pop-Tarts selected Día de Muertos (Day of the Dead), a celebration that originated in Mexico and honors the lives of loved ones who have passed, applying a tirelessly intentional focus to bring it to life with cultural respect and sincerity. With this spirit, the Limited Edition Pop-Tarts Día de Muertos was born, transforming the iconic frosted pastries into a rich and vibrant palette for nine (9) all-new "Printed Fun Designs" inspired by the Día de Muertos celebration, including Calaveras de Azúcar (colorful sugar skulls) and Flores de Cempasúchil (bright yellow marigolds).

For the featured flavor, Pop-Tarts chose its existing Chocolatey Churro and reimagined it with the new Día de Muertos-inspired designs and packaging. The brand wanted to avoid trying to replicate traditional flavors like "Pan de Muertos" out of respect for the honored role they play in the celebration.

Pop-Tarts empowered Captura Group to lead the Día de Muertos initiative. The Hispanic shop kicked off with a full Día de Muertos immersion to ensure that all agency partners could have the proper context, integrate cultural sensitivity and carry out an effective tone and role for the brand. Input was also captured by HOLA, Kellogg's internal Hispanic business resource group, and Kellogg's Cultural and Inclusive Marketing Team.

Creative: Pop-Tarts unified all Día de Muertos elements under the creative theme of "Let's Celebrate Día de Muertos" to democratize appeal to all audiences.

Go-To Market: Pop-Tarts Día de Muertos were distributed in retailers nationwide September through November, including displays in selected Walmart stores. A fully integrated marketing campaign ran in Spanish and English language media including a national influencer program with Mariell Guzman (renowned Mexican-born artist); social media; Spanish-language radio; a social purpose grant program with the National Association of Latino arts and Cultures (NALAC); and PR/Earned media pitching.





Results:

The Pop-Tarts Día de Muertos innovation generated strong impact across Total Market, proving the power of cultural insight supported with intentionality to drive immediate results. Positive Consumer Sentiment: 91% positive social media reactions, in English and Spanish, appreciating the food and cultural connection.

- Where do I get these???
- Aren't these Día de Muertos Pop-Tarts too cool to eat?!
- Qué lindas y deliciosas. How beautiful and delicious.
- Están bien ricas. Sabor a churro! They're really delicious. Taste like churros!
- Including Pop-Tarts part of their Día de Muertos rituals, humbling the Kellogg's IAT. "I want to bring these to the cemetery to visit my son and my Goddaughter."
- A teacher shared that her students gifted her a box, tagging #honorremembercelebrate

Those expressing concern for Pop-Tarts Día de Muertos were the exception. *Source: Captura Group Social Listening, Infegy Atlas*

Meaningful Influencer Engagement: Mariell's vibrant content resonated with fans, spotlighting family & Pop-Tarts: Exceeded Instagram In-Feed & Stories Engagement Rate (27% vs. 20% bm) and CTR (.11% vs. .09%bm). 1.6K link clicks with 1.3M impressions. *Source: Captiv8*

Positive awareness & buzz: 357.6 MM total earned impressions, comprising 64% of Pop-Tarts' fall 2021 earned PR.

Grow Chocolatey Churro Sales & HH penetration:

- Sales +70%.
- Sales velocity +17.7%
- ACV +42.5%
- + ~½ pt HH Pen. *Source: Nielsen*

Industry Impact:

U.S Hispanic Market can Lead Total Market Growth

Multicultural-led initiatives have strong potential to help reverse the course of previous efforts that have underperformed and drive overall growth. Even insights that are connected to U.S. Hispanic audiences have the power to transcend. #USHispanicmarkettotherescue

Perfectionism is Not Productive

Seldom do brands find themselves able to have every "duck placed in its row" for the perfect launch conditions with new segments. The key is supporting the right variables to drive success, and having courage to go to market. Do not let perfection be the enemy of good, otherwise you may never get out of the starting gate. #avoidanalysisparalysis

Take Risks, but With Strong Intentionality

In the pursuit of embracing culture, there will always be the risk of less than favorable response from small pockets of the population. But with the right expertise, preparation and execution, the likelihood of positive reception among our audience is much stronger. #rewardoutweighstherisk