



Economy No Object for Candy

New products and line extensions at the NCA's 2009 All Candy Expo prove that the confection and snack segments are in growth mode, despite the economy

BY LISA WHITE

Word on the street is that sweets are recession proof. While other industries are struggling, the candy segment is showing positive growth.

In 2008, confectionery sales posted an increase of 2.2 percent, according to estimates by the Washington, DC-based National Confectioners Association (NCA). Candy retail sales totaled \$28 billion, of which \$15.9 billion was chocolate, \$8.6 billion was non-chocolate and \$3.5 billion was gum.

The positivity was evident at this year's All Candy Expo, held May 19-21 at Chicago's McCormick Place Convention Center.

During his seminar, *Growing Confectionery Sales in the Convenience Channel*, Kit Dietz, owner of Dietz Consulting in Huron, OH, noted that 98 percent of U.S. households have confections and 93 percent of consumers visit the confections' aisle on a weekly basis. Dietz provided results of the candy study sponsored by AWMA with NCA and NACS.

Kid's candy

Fun flavors and creative products abound in the most recent kid candy introductions.

Offering a play factor, **CandyRific's** new Skittles Light-Up Rainbow Wand provides a colorful lit wand, with a .54-oz. bag of Skittles candy in the base.

Innovative Candy Concept's Too Tarts is now offered in new packaging, which provides more sour spray product.

The sour flavor has been extended to Candy Dynamics' Toxic Waste Hi-Voltage Bubble Gum. This product contains more than 2 ft. of gum with a sour core.

Creatables Lanyards, a new product by Fassin America, are fruit-flavored rope candy that can be woven or braided into headbands, necklaces and other formats.

Nestle's Wonka line, which is inspired from the popular *Charlie & The Chocolate Factory* novel, now offers licorice Kazoozles in Cherry Punch and Pink Lemonade flavors as well as Gummies in sour Puckerrooms and sweet Sluggles varieties.