

RetailMerchandiser

RETAIL SUPPLIER

Mars Retail Group

This organization recently restructured its licensing program. As a result, it has continued to grow despite the current economic climate.

PROFILE



Mars Retail Group
John Capizzi,
general manager of
licensing

www.mars.com

HQ Henderson, Nev.

Services Manages more than 50 licensee programs for Mars

Mars Retail Group (MRG) recently underwent a significant transformation. Three years ago, the Nevada-based organization became responsible for managing the licensing division of Mars, Inc., a privately held company that generates more than \$30 billion in annual revenue and employs roughly 70,000 individuals.

Prior to the restructure, Mars Snackfood ran the licensing program, which at its peak consisted of 12 licensees. As a result of the effort put forward by the team at MRG in the last three years, the licensing program has grown more than four-fold and is now made up of 50 licensees.

Capizzi and his team are capitalizing on the popularity of their key brands by tying the company's candy division into its licensing program. He calls this the "one voice" strategy.

"Fortunately, we have both an iconic brand and recognizable characters, and we can bring them together in a meaningful way, which helps us differentiate our licensing program from our competitors' programs," Capizzi said. Whenever MRG looks to execute "one voice" on a new platform, it calls on its most reliable licensees, like SRI or CandyRific, first.

To support the growing program, Capizzi and his team are about to introduce an online software system that will help them manage their licensees. The system will allow the team to transmit data more efficiently and will create a shared server that will allow all parties involved in a project to access relevant information.

"In a great economic environment, we would probably be seeing more growth than we are right now, but during a time when a lot of companies aren't even hitting their bottom line, we're fortunate to be growing at this pace," Capizzi said. "During times like these, consumers look to brands they know and trust. In addition to our reputation, most of our products are very affordable. Candy in particular is considered somewhat recession-proof." 🍬



CANDYRIFIC

CandyRific is proud to be a licensee of M&M Mars. The M&M brand is the ultimate in the world of evergreen products that consumers relate to every day. The timeless characters are perfect for everyday themes and seasonal settings that are appropriate to what is happening in consumers' lives. They can be put into sports, music, and active lifestyle themes. They are also appropriate for the big adventures such as NASCAR and Transformers. Brands such as M&M are also recession resistant—they are a risk-free purchase for consumers because consumers know their expectations will be met.