

“Build a Better Mousetrap” 2004 New Product Innovations of the Year

Naples, NY. December 27, 2004: Despite the tailwind of a low-carb trend that produced 3,375 new low- and no-carbohydrate product launches in the USA in 2004, a record year for new packaged goods was just not to be in 2004. According to Datamonitor’s Productscan Online database of new products (www.productscan.com), new product marketers launched some 33,185 new food, beverage, health & beauty, household and pet products in the USA and Canada last year. That was 1.5% short of 2003’s all-time record high total of 33,678 new product introductions.

New Product Introductions: 1995-2004	
1995.....	20,808
1996.....	24,496
1997.....	25,261
1998.....	25,181
1999.....	25,928
2000.....	31,432
2001.....	32,025
2002.....	31,785
2003.....	33,678
2004.....	33,185

Source: Productscan® Online

While new products were numerous, truly new and different products were less so. Just 6.7% of 2004’s new product launches earned an Innovation Rating from Productscan Online, down significantly from the 8.6% of launches that did so in 2003. To earn an Innovation Rating, a new product must offer breakthrough features and benefits in any one of the following six areas: formulation, positioning, packaging, technology, creating a new market, and merchandising. Clearly, “me-too” type products were the order of the day in 2004, suggesting that packaged goods companies were more concerned with addressing competitive weaknesses than with dazzling consumers with highly unique items.

Top Domestic New Product Innovations of 2004

Given that 2004 was an Olympic year, it seems appropriate that the year’s top innovations more or less embraced the Olympic motto of “swifter, higher, stronger” with products designed to work faster, last longer and make life easier along the way. The ten new products below were chosen by Productscan Online as the year’s top innovations from the more than 30,000 new U.S. and Canadian introductions reported in 2004 by the database.



According to one researcher, over 80% of households own a slow cooker. But how often do consumers really use it? Slow cookers often require extensive ingredient collection and preparation. Not anymore. Omaha, NE-based ConAgra comes to the rescue with new frozen **Banquet Crock-Pot Classics**, the first complete meal for Crock-Pot slow cooking. Each Classics pouch serves up to 5 people and contains everything needed including tender meats, fresh vegetables and seasoning sauces. Varieties include Herb Chicken & Rice and Stroganoff with Beef & Noodles.

Wolfgang Puck Coffee in the New Self Heating Can is the result of \$24 million in research and development spending by San Diego, CA-based OnTech. Just push a button and this new gourmet coffee heats up to a toasty 145 degrees Fahrenheit within minutes and stays hot for up to 30 minutes. Marketed by WP Beverage Partners LLC of Newport Beach, CA, the line includes a rich blend of premium coffee and whole milk flavors like Dulce de Leche Latte and Rich Espresso Latte.





Consumers who want to have their warm cake and eat it too, frosted, now have a way to do so thanks to a breakthrough from Minneapolis, MN-based General Mills. The company's new **Betty Crocker Pour & Frost Pliable Frosting** makes frosting a cake faster and easier than ever before. To use, simply microwave the frosting for 20 seconds, stir and pour over cake. Since the frosting can be poured onto a warm cake, there's no waiting like there is with regular frosting products. It's available in flavors like Vanilla and Hershey's Milk Chocolate.

Think of it as beer with an extra energizing kick. New **Budweiser B-to-the-E Beer** is beer infused with caffeine, guarana and ginseng for a brand new sensation. Said to have a lightly sweet and tart taste, this beer is made with select hops and aromas of blackberry, raspberry and cherry for something altogether different. With 6.6 percent alcohol by volume, it packs more punch than regular beer, but is also packaged in sleek, slim 10 fl. oz. cans, much like energy drinks. It's new from St. Louis, MO-based Anheuser-Busch.



Who doesn't love a toasted cheese sandwich. But try making one of these at work. Without a skillet or a toaster oven, you're out of luck...unless you have new **Toastabags Toaster Bags**. This revolutionary new bag takes the hassle out of making a toasted sandwich. Simply put a sandwich into the bag and insert the bag into a toaster slot. These bags can take the heat because they're made from a woven fabric coated with the same material used in oven liners. Cleanup is a snap and the bags are reusable. They're new from Plantation, FL-based Toastabags.

What's the number one consumer frustration with flashlights? Not having the right batteries on hand. That may be a problem from the past thanks to St. Louis, MO-based Energizer Holdings, Inc.'s new **Energizer Quick Switch Flashlight**. Quick Switch is the flashlight that runs on 2 D, C or AA batteries. Just flick the battery selector switch on the flashlight case to match the battery types you have handy.



Mouth pain can be a real pain in the neck to deal with. Drops are okay, but are messy and can be hard to apply in just the right spot. Not so with new **Ora-film Oral Pain Relieving Strips**. Similar in format to breath strips, these pain relieving strips begin to dissolve instantly, yet stay in place. Mess-free, these portable strips are just the ticket for immediate oral pain relief from canker sores, sore gums, braces and dentures. They're new from Oyster Bay, NY-based Apothecus Pharmaceutical Corp.

Cold and flu season is upon us and we're without the usual defenses given the shortage of flu vaccine. Nobody likes either of these ailments so what is a person to do? For starters, how about going on the offensive against cold and flu germs with new **Kleenex Anti-Viral Facial Tissue**. These new tissues kill 99.9% of cold and flu viruses in the tissue within 15 minutes. The secret to their success is a moisture-activated middle layer, sandwiched between two outer layers. They're new from Neenah, WI-based Kimberly-Clark Corporation.



Shower cleaning sprays are great, but who has time to apply them after each shower? If you're like most people, you have better things to do with your time which is where the new **Scrubbing Bubbles Automatic Shower Cleaner** comes in. This battery-operated cleaner will clean your shower with the touch of a button. Simply hang the unit under the shower



head and press the button. After a time delay (15 seconds), the unit will automatically spray shower cleaner throughout the shower. Just walk away and let Automatic Shower Cleaner and its 360 degree rotating sprayer do its thing! It works with water on shower walls to prevent soap scum and mold & mildew stains. Results are guaranteed with daily use after an initial period of 14 to 21 days. It's new from Racine, WI-based S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc.



Intimidated by digital cameras that require the computer acumen of Bill Gates to operate? Now there's a simpler option with the **CVS Digital One Time Use Camera**. Equipped with a self-timer and automatic flash, this camera has a picture preview and delete feature so that you can retake shots to get the perfect picture every time. To use, take up to 25 pictures and return the camera to CVS for 25 high-resolution 4 x 6 prints and a free Photo CD with your digital pictures. It's new from Woonsocket, RI-based CVS Pharmacy, Inc.

Top International New Product Innovations of 2004

New product creators were also working hard in markets outside of the USA and Canada in 2004. New packaging types and technologies were of particular interest in 2004's list of top international innovations.

Motherly Cubes Natural Baby Food is frozen baby food in an innovative cube format that enables the consumer to customize meals by mixing and matching cubes while cutting down on waste. It's new in Australia.

Fresh breath is only a green tea drink away thanks to Coca-Cola System's new **Coca-Cola Fress Breath Conditioning Green Tea Drink** that is new in Japan. It contains champignon extract to prevent halitosis and also has zero calories.

Who says that beer has to come in bottles and cans? In the United Kingdom, it doesn't with new **Dog & Duck Best English Ale** which is the first beer packaged in Tetra Pak aseptic cartons, a package also known as a "drink box."

Changing garbage can bags is a job we all love to hate. That job just got easier with **Glad Stack-A-Sac Kitchen Tidy Bags**. New in Australia, the bags come in packs of ten. Line the garbage can once for every ten bag changes.

Get up close and personal with your pet with some help from the Internet and the **AOS Technologies ISeePet Food Dispenser** that is new in Japan. The tall, canister-like dispenser features a camera built into the front. Consumers can "link" to the food dispenser over the Internet to view their pets and even feed them remotely by hitting the "feed" button.

	<u>Foods</u>	<u>Beverages</u>	<u>Health & Beauty Aids</u>	<u>Household</u>	<u>Misc.</u>	<u>Pet Products</u>
2000	13,373	3,541	11,747	1,695	349	727
2001	13,200	3,777	11,597	2,088	569	794
2002	13,452	3,584	10,979	2,091	814	865
2003	14,812	3,984	11,139	1,546	739	1,458
2004	14,826	4,110	11,201	1,297	585	1,166

Note: The "Miscellaneous" classification includes tobacco, car care and items related to foods, beverages, health & beauty aids and household products.

Marketing Intelligence Service Ltd., a unit of Datamonitor plc that is based in Naples, New York and was founded in 1968, is a provider of new product information to industry via its Productscan® Online database of new products — the world's largest online database of new products with nearly 1 million new products from 1980 to the present — located at www.productscan.com.

Note: For a high resolution image (600 kb) of 2004's mousetrap products, click on <http://www.productscan.com/mouse04.jpg>

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