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Tupperware tale

Tupperware launched its latest product, GoFlex, in Singapore recently.



IT WAS a new twist to the Tupperware tale. The \$1.2 billion multinational, which has found its way into countless homes across 100 countries with its premium food storage, preparation and serving solutions, unveiled another innovative product for the Asia-Pacific region, last week in Singapore. The venue for the launch was the Equinox Complex, way up on the 70th floor of the Swissotel The Stamford.

As Dave Halversen, group president, Latin America, Asia-Pacific and BeautiControl, Tupperware, pulled out a slim disc that resembled a child's frisbee from his coat pocket, the gathering comprising sales personnel from countries across the Asia-Pacific region and media persons, looked on incredulously. They were being introduced for the first time ever to the concept of an expandable food storage solution through the organisation's latest product — GoFlex.

With its sleek and sturdy design, GoFlex, as its name suggests, is targeted at people who are constantly on the 'go'. 'Flex' represents the unique ability of the product to be expanded to three different levels and then folded flat so that it can be stacked on a dish rack, stored on a kitchen shelf or just slipped into a tote bag.

Space saver

Measuring barely 2 cm when compressed but with a capacity to pack in 950 ml when fully

expanded, GoFlex offers immense storage and space saving options to urban consumers. Fitness freaks can adjust the height suitably to limit food portions, families can pack a picnic spread and office-goers can tuck it into their brief cases. But, most important, GoFlex is sure to be a huge hit with children who can fold the funky container after lunch and use it for a game of frisbee! Like all Tupperware, GoFlex (priced at Rs.390) is non-toxic, air and liquid tight, freezer and dishwasher safe. And the recipe booklet accompanying the GoFlex pack gives consumers an opportunity to sample the "Flavours of Asia."

What about colour? It's Blueberry Mist (pale blue) that has been chosen by the organisation for the Indian market.

After a short presentation by designer David Kusuma, technical wiz and master brain behind GoFlex, and a lively Q and A session, it was time for celebration. Piles of food, plenty of entertainment... everyone present shook a leg and simply let their hair down. Amid the blast of music and the buzz of conversation, there were some guests who snatched a few quiet moments to gaze through the glass windowpanes at the venue, and drink in the spectacular view of Singapore by night.

Marketing mantra

Earlier in the afternoon, at a pre-launch briefing, Asha Gupta, general manager, Tupperware India, gave media persons an insight into the marketing philosophy of the organisation. Tupperware's marketing mantra did not altogether rest on one-on-one sales but on a more personalised and informal party experience, she said. Any homemaker could become a Tupperware consultant and work out of her home and at her own pace. Around 18 hours of work a month would suffice to earn her a tidy Rs.3,000.

Without the legwork of door-to-door sales, all she had to do was host a party and through it introduce her guests to the entire range of Tupperware. A recipe demonstration, involving the participation of the guests, would give them a touch-see-smell-hear-taste experience of Tupperware.

To illustrate the point, the party experience was simulated at the pre-launch briefing, where media persons actually had to make a mocktail using diverse Tupperware products.

'Seeing is believing', so they say, and Tupperware parties have proved to be the most successful way of promoting the range. But, the Tupperware tale does not merely end with plastic containers and profits. It's the story of an organisation with a human face — one that has helped scores of middle class women across the world to gain economic independence as

Tupperware consultants and distributors. And many women seem to prefer the flexi work hours offered by Tupperware to the 9 to 5 grind followed by exhausting household chores. The business experience builds confidence and empowers women to become their own bosses. Training, rewards and recognition and wonderful opportunities to travel to dream destinations round the globe motivate the Tupperware sales force to step up personal targets and increase turnovers.

So, it's no surprise that despite all the hoo-ha and the public awareness campaigns against plastic, the world over, Tupperware has managed to prove there's a positive side to plastic and emerge a topper.

MAYA MENON