

Handling pet food recalls with a full suite of services

When dealing with high-profile ‘celebrity-endorsed’ products, recall effectiveness is paramount

The U.S. regulates pet food as stringently as any other food product. After all, a [growing number of people](#) truly consider pets as part of their family. Thus, when a pet food recall is announced, it must be handled with considerable care.

When a recall requires the application and coordination of numerous services, working with a single third-party expert greatly simplifies the process. One multi-faceted specialist can reduce inefficiencies, communicate among teams more effectively, and ensure that no step in the recall process falls through the cracks.

Challenge

Recalling a food product can be especially difficult when a celebrity’s name is attached to the brand, given the potential to draw greater media coverage than usual.

After discovering elevated levels of vitamin D in wet cat food, a nationally prominent manufacturer issued a voluntary recall of five varieties of its celebrity brand-name pet food. The added potential for wide media coverage required the manufacturer to approach the recall with high sensitivity, while working to quickly remove all affected products from store shelves and to notify all impacted customers.

With the recall impacting a significant volume of units across the United States, the manufacturer held responsibility for notifying retailers across the country that impacted products needed to be removed from shelves immediately. However, with the product available in so many stores, this truly was a substantial task.

Solution

Sedgwick brand protection was able to leverage its full suite of services to assist the pet food manufacturer in effectively and successfully carrying out the product recall.

In a situation where a recall requires more than the removal and destruction of several products from store shelves, working with a third-party expert that offers a full suite of recall services can vastly improve the efficiency and success of the event – especially when added media scrutiny and heightened customer concerns are at hand.

HIGH-PROFILE
‘celebrity-endorsed’

product

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Nationwide call center support

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NOTIFICATION MANAGEMENT

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NATIONWIDE
reverse logistics

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ON-SITE EFFECTIVENESS CHECK AT

2,500

locations

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Customer reimbursement

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PRODUCT DESTRUCTION

Working with a single specialist means there is no risk of miscommunication among those executing the recall, your customer-care response is synchronized with recall logistics, and you avoid impacting your normal business operations.

The pet food manufacturer engaged Sedgwick brand protection to leverage its 25 years of experience managing product recalls across a variety of industries. Since the manufacturer had other pet food brand names in its family, it was crucial that regular operations were not interrupted. Sedgwick brand protection was able to quickly establish its own agents to work with the manufacturer and its retail customers to seamlessly conduct the recall.

How we can help

Sedgwick's ability to quickly scale a response and its full suite of recall management capabilities can help any company respond effectively and successfully to a recall.

Sedgwick brand protection began by providing call-center support to help manage the increase in retailer and consumer calls. To remove the products from retailer shelves, Sedgwick's agents sent notifications to the manufacturer's direct accounts, managed responses, and coordinated reverse logistics to return affected product that was not destroyed in the field. Upon receipt, the product was inventoried and held for destruction.

After notifying retailers of the impacted product that needed to be removed from the market, Sedgwick agents conducted nationwide on-site effectiveness checks at 2,500 locations to confirm retailers had properly removed the recalled product. In cases where the retailer had not effectively done so, Sedgwick agents conducted a second round of visits and follow up communication to ensure the recall was completed effectively.

In addition to helping notify retailers of the recall, Sedgwick also handled the reimbursement of customers who had purchased the affected product. When customers called the call centers that Sedgwick supported, our dedicated agents dispatched coupons to those who sought replacement product or a refund.

Key takeaways

- Recalls involving celebrity name brands often draw additional media coverage and increase risk for the manufacturer. It is important that manufacturers engage help from third-party experts who can manage these sensitive recalls effectively and efficiently, without interrupting day-to-day operations.
- When a recall requires several services to effectively complete it, engaging one full-service expert firm can make the process easier and more efficient. Working with a single specialist on all aspects of the recall can ease communication, reduce inefficiencies, and result in a more successful recall.
- Pet food product recalls must be considered every bit as important as those involving food for human consumption. Most owners view their pets as part of their family and want to consume products from companies who share this belief.

Sedgwick brand protection

Brand and reputation are the most valuable and vulnerable assets a business has. Brands embody and encapsulate everything a business does and its customers expect. Nothing says more about a company's commitment to its customers than its efforts to uphold promises of safety, quality and service. That's why companies are often remembered more for how they handle an in-market challenge than for the problem itself. We know what it takes to manage recalls in a way that upholds your commitments to customers, supply chain partners, the industry and regulators.

Trusted by the world's leading brands and businesses, we work in partnership to manage the risks and minimize the impacts of in-market business and product crises. Since 1995, we have managed more than 5,000 of the most sensitive and time-critical recall and remediation programs – spanning 60+ countries and 50+ languages.

To learn more about our recall, remediation and retention solutions, contact us today.

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