

Strategic Message Planner: Funko POP!

Advertising Goal

To help Funko POP! figurines become a woman inclusive lead in popular nerd culture.

Client: Key Facts

1. Funko Inc. of Everett, WA sells licensed pop culture collectibles. In addition, the company produces licensed plush, action figures, electronic items, clothing and houseware.
2. Funko Inc. was founded on October 23, 1998, in Snohomish, WA by toy enthusiast Mike Becker.
3. Toy collector Brian Mariotti became the owner and CEO of Funko Inc. in 2005.
4. Funko Inc. sells its products worldwide through its website and partnerships with retailers like Amazon, Target, and Walmart.
5. The company's primary products are vinyl figurines and bobbleheads known as Funko Pops.
6. Total sales in the past fiscal year were \$795 million.

Product: Key Features

What is the Product?

1. Funko POP! is a line of vinyl figurines that portray some of the most popular characters ever created.
2. Funko Pops retail from \$11 - \$30.
3. The first Funko Pops were revealed at the 2010 San Diego Comic-Con.
4. There are more than 8,300 Funko Pops from different characters in television, film, books, etc.

What is the Purpose of the Product?

1. Funko Pops are popular items to collect.
2. Certain Funko Pops have become valuable pieces that are worth hundreds.
3. Funko Pops make great gifts for the pop culture fans in your life.

What is the Product Made of?

1. Funko Pops are made from vinyl, a form of plastic.
2. Funko Pops all have square-shaped heads with rounded edges. They are pupil-free with round black eyes, a small nose and no mouth.

Who and What Made and Distributed the Product?

1. Funko Pops are sold online at funko.com and through retailers like Walmart, Target and Amazon.

2. Each Funko Pop has similar packaging but are distinguished by the different design on each box, exclusive to that character.
3. Each Funko Pop is made in Everett, WA through Funko Inc.

Target Audience: Demographics and Psychographics

The target audience for this ad is women ages 18 to 25 who are interested in becoming collectors. They are typically considered fans of nerd culture who enjoy participating in it during their free time. They consume different media like comic books, film, television, etc. They have been part of the community for years but believe it could be improved. The target audience consists of college students or young professionals with an income of 40,000 or less.

According to a study out of the University of Oregon that looked at the gender conflict in nerd culture, “Eighty-two percent of participants had experienced a gender-based insult when participating in nerd media. Findings suggest that harassment and representation in media is worse for female comic book and video game media and communities than in other sub-genres within the culture.”

The target audience includes women who identify as “pop-culture enthusiasts” but have not felt welcomed. They feel that women are often sexualized in nerd culture and not represented correctly. Seventy-five percent of respondents reported that a sexy or sexualized appearance was the most prominent aspect of women's representation in nerd media.

Over 36% of customers who purchase Funko Pops are avid toy collectors. The target audience has an interest in toy collecting. The target audience are women who have carried their passion into adulthood and have more financial stability to buy products and collect. Funko Pops are not only a popular collector’s item but are also much more affordable than competitors. They also all share a similar shape that does not sexualize any character or gender.

Product Benefits

1. Funko Pops come in over 8,300 different designs. You have choices and will enjoy the variety.
2. Funko Pops have an accessible price range in comparison to other collector’s items.
3. Funko Pops are popular collector’s items. Certain products appreciate in value significantly.

Direct Competitors and Brand Images

Direct competitors are other toy brands.

1. LEGO
 - a. Founded on August 10, 1932, in Denmark, LEGO has remained a popular toy brand for decades worldwide. LEGOs are sold online and in stores as well as through retailers like Target, Amazon and Walmart.

- b. LEGO sets range from \$15 to \$800. Some LEGO sets and minifigures are worth a lot.
 - c. Target audience members buy the product only sporadically. They do not feel loyalty to this brand because of the lack of marketing towards them due to LEGO marketing “girl” LEGO sets. It feels exclusionary to consumers.
2. Bif Bang Pow!
 - a. Founded in 2005 in Simi Valley, CA. The company designs action figures, toys and collectibles from characters in television, film, books, etc. Products are sold online through entertainmentearth.com.
 - b. Collectible items range from \$3 to \$600. Action figures can increase in value.
 - c. Target audience members are aware of the brand but do not purchase because of the high prices and inaccessibility.
 3. NECA
 - a. Founded in 1996 in Hillside, NJ. The company manufactures collectibles licensed in films, video games, music, etc. NECA collectibles can be found through entertainmentearth.com and Amazon.
 - b. NECA collectibles range from \$5 to \$1200. Certain products are worth a lot.
 - c. Target audience members are aware of the brand but do not purchase due to the high price range.

Indirect Competitors and Brand Images

1. Hasbro, Inc.
 - a. Founded on December 6, 1923, in Providence, RI, this competitor sells different toys and board games. Products range from \$5 to \$100.
 - b. Hasbro sales have dropped with the closing of Toys R’ Us stores. Other retailers do not display as many toys in their stores.
 - c. Target audience members are aware of the brand but do not believe the competitor sells valuable collectible items. Hasbro mainly targets children and families.
2. Mattel, Inc.
 - a. Founded in January 1945, in El Segundo, CA, this competitor is one of the largest toy makers in the world. Products range from \$5 to \$70.
 - b. Mattel, Inc. sales have dropped with the closing of Toys R’ Us stores. Other retailers do not display as many toys in their stores.
 - c. Target audience are aware of the brand but do not fit the target demographic. Mattel targets a younger demographic. They may occasionally purchase rare items.

Product Brand Image

1. Current brand image: The target audience buys Funko Pops already but believes they are not targeted towards them.
2. Desired brand image: Funko Inc, becomes a leader in diversity and inclusion in popular geek culture.
3. Brand image challenge: The target audience faces the dilemma of the “fake geek girl” and face criticism from male fans.

Strategic Message: The Promise

Funko Pops will welcome female fans to embrace their inner passion for nerd culture.

Supporting Evidence: The Proof

1. Funko Pops share a similar and inclusive design that does not sexualize any gender.
2. Funko Pops come in over 8,300 designs meaning there are plenty for you to choose from.
3. Funko Pops are affordable collector's items available through many retailers.