

# P/O/P TIMES<sup>®</sup>

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## Mountain Dew P-O-P Goes Through the Roof

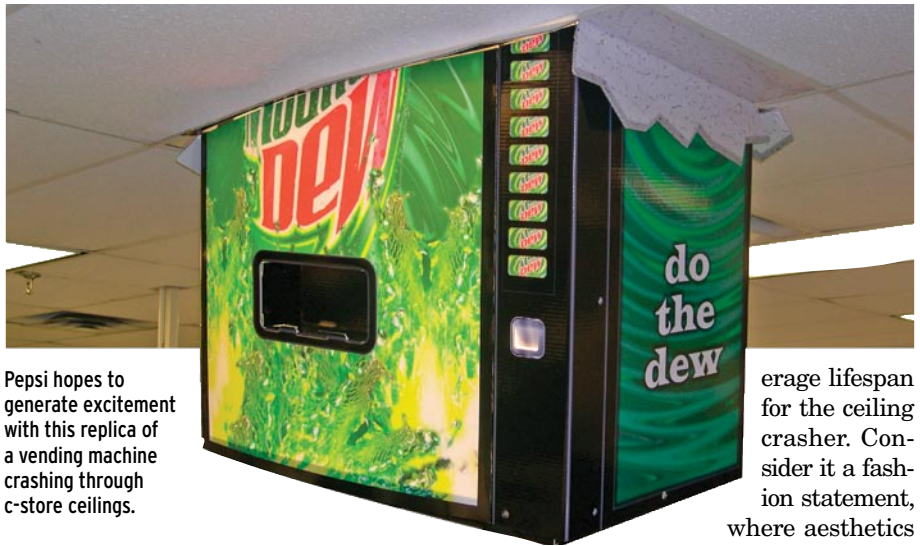
PURCHASE, N.Y.— Officials at **Pepsi-Cola Co.** hope to repeat the crashing success they enjoyed three years ago when they brainstormed a skateboarder falling through the ceilings of convenience stores across the country. This time, it's a replica of a vending machine, which distributors began installing in c-stores in March.

The eye-catching display should continue to command attention from the beverage's target audience: 18- to 25-year-old males. The action the display implies also reflects Mountain Dew's tie-in with extreme sports. "It's energizing, and that's a big part of what Mountain Dew is about," says Charlie Blecker, senior production manager at Pepsi.

At 36 inches long, 24 inches wide and 24 inches tall, "we tried to get it as realistic in size as possible," says Blecker. Those dimensions do avoid interrupting vital sight lines throughout the convenience store, so thieves can't hide behind it and even the tallest shoppers aren't in danger of smacking their heads on it.

In its quest for authenticity, Mountain Dew worked with **Rapid Displays**, Chicago and Union City, Calif., to create the display, which consists of a four-color process litho mounted to a B-flute corrugate with a black coroplast base, and a four-process printing plus white and .020 PETG sub panels. The entire unit hangs from the light grid system, so that the existing fluorescent bulbs shine through the center of the display and give the vending machine an illuminated look.

Should a store owner decide not to install it over a light fixture, the front still appears shiny. And even the way the team positioned the vending machine lends a sense of immediacy. "It isn't just falling



Pepsi hopes to generate excitement with this replica of a vending machine crashing through c-store ceilings.

straight through the ceiling grid. It's kind of cocked at an angle as if the ceiling just gave way," says Rapid Display's marketing manager Jennifer Cintron.

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*– Charlie Blecker,  
Pepsi-Cola Co.*

Because the display piece itself doesn't require electricity, the creative team dodged questions of fire safety. It also requires no maintenance, thanks to this unusual placement. "It's not like a typical display that's on the floor where they mop and it gets messy after a while," says Blecker.

In fact, he anticipates a longer-than-average

lifespan for the ceiling crasher. Consider it a fashion statement, where aesthetics

more than durability will dictate how long it remains. "Once it gets placement it probably doesn't come down until somebody in the 18- 25-year-old range wants to collect it and asks the manager if they can have it," Blecker says. The official target time for the display is six weeks.

The 1,000 units shipped with setup instructions so that if convenience stores don't make arrangements with their route drivers to install it, a clerk can handle the task. Because it fits over the light panel, the installer doesn't need to remove anything – the in-house finishing means convenience stores merely use the attached glue flaps to square it off to the ceiling panel. Total set-up time: five minutes.

"The excitement comes from the surprise factor – you walk into a convenience store and you don't expect a big machine to be crashing through the ceiling," Blecker says. "It's very realistic and almost bigger than life."

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