

# Starbucks' Eggnog Latte back on menu

Customers balked after it dropped drink

**Bruce Horowitz**  
USA TODAY

Starbucks has eggnog on its face.

The coffee kingpin will bring back its seasonal Eggnog Latte nationwide this month after a customer revolt spread from letters to phone calls to social media. It had dropped the beverage, a seasonal offering since 1986, to try to simplify its expanding menu. "We made a mistake," says spokeswoman Linda Mills. "We are very sorry."

How sorry? Well, they're not handing out free Eggnog Lattes. But Starbucks hopes to have the drink back in all stores by the week of Nov. 17, says Mills. Because it has always been so popular in the Pacific Northwest, it was re-introduced there Nov. 1. The problem, she says, is quickly getting enough eggnog from suppliers.

The move to very rapidly respond to consumer complaints isn't unusual. Last spring, after the company began selling its lemon cake and pumpkin bread in miniature loaves instead of slices, it got complaints and quickly changed back to the slices.

For retailers in the social media era, instantly responding to consumer gripes is critical. Quick action is especially critical for Starbucks in the holiday season, by far its most profitable period.

Starbucks started hearing eggnog complaints Nov. 1 when it began its holiday push at U.S. stores by switching to red cups from its usual. The consumer blowback began with complaints to baristas who had to explain that the beverage had been discontinued, says Mills. It evolved into complaints to its customer call center, e-mails, letters and social media posts on Facebook, Twitter and to its MyStarbucksIdea.com site.

Shannon McMullen tweeted: "Seriously heartbroken this A.M. Just found out Starbucks is not bringing back the eggnog latte. It was the only thing keeping me going."

Starbucks has learned its lesson, says Mills.

Meanwhile, the chain also is bringing back the Gingerbread Latte to the Pacific Northwest region — though it still was served in the rest of the country. And next week it will roll out nationally a new Chestnut Praline Latte.

One corporate branding expert says that Starbucks knows what many companies still need to learn.

"All companies need to become more nimble to respond to this kind of feedback," says Tracey Riese, author of *Making Brands Work*.



Aggressive incentives and a new ad campaign have boosted the new Chrysler 200 in the eyes of buyers.

# Chrysler 200 claws its way into fight

40% higher sales in Oct. throws it into midsize contention

**Brent Snavelly**  
Detroit Free Press

Chrysler's all-new 2015 200 sedan is beginning to gain ground even though industry sales in the midsize segment have slowed down and a number of competitors have aggressive incentives on their better-selling models.

Sales of the 200 rose 40% in October after Chrysler launched a new national marketing campaign at the end of the month and boosted its incentives.

Most other automakers reported sales increases for midsize sedans that were largely in line with expectations for overall industry sales increases.

Sales increased 13.8% for the Toyota Camry, 8.1% for the Nissan Altima, 7.8% for the Honda Accord and 5.1% for the Ford Fusion. Sales of the Chevrolet Malibu fell 5.1%.

Chrysler sold 11,675 Chrysler 200s for the month, but that is still only about one-third of the 33,164 Camrys sold in October.

"This house has very high expectations for this car. We are not there yet," Al Gardner, CEO of the Chrysler brand said last month. "We knew it would take longer than we would like. But selling 10,500 to 11,000 a month at this stage is exactly on plan."

In October, Toyota, Honda and Ford were all running aggressive incentives on their midsize sedans, Gardner said.

Toyota, which was trying to clear out 2014 inventory, was offering 0% financing for 72 months with a \$500 cash rebate, while Honda Accord was offering 0% financing for 60 months with a \$1,500 rebate for 2014 models.

"It's an incredibly aggressive marketplace," Gardner said. "And no one has an interest in giving up market share and customers to the new Chrysler 200."

Chrysler also launched a new national advertising campaign on Oct. 24 for the 200 that touts the reliability and performance of the car.

Chrysler's new ad campaign also drives home the tagline,

"America's Import," which replaced "Imported from Detroit" as the brand's tagline earlier this year. The novel ads are a language mash-up of English and rivals commenting in German, Japanese or Swedish.

"We are very aware that we, unlike others, have an obligation to conquest new customers," said Olivier Francois, Chrysler's chief marketing officer. "Because of this, we wanted to make our product pitch stand out. The twist, the unique twist, is to do it in another language."

The launch of the 200 also comes during a difficult year overall for the midsize car segment as consumers migrate more and more to small crossovers.

So far this year, sales of midsize cars now account for about 22% of U.S. auto sales, down 1.6% for the first 10 months of 2013, according to Autodata Corp.

"We don't care (about the segment decrease) because it is staggering, the sheer size of that market," Gardner said. "There is a huge opportunity for us."

# Tesla beats break-even expectations in 3rd quarter

**Chris Woodyard**  
USA TODAY

Electric-car maker Tesla, which has been one of Wall Street's highest fliers, reported Wednesday that it beat analysts' expectations with an adjusted profit of 2 cents a share in the third quarter. Analysts had expected it to break even.

The earnings are down from a 12-cent-a-share gain a year ago.

Tesla said its adjusted gain for the quarter was \$3 million on revenue of \$932 million, up from \$852 million last year and beating analysts' expectations for \$893.8 million.

On a GAAP basis, Tesla lost \$75 million, or 60 cents a share, which the company said is consistent with past guidance.

The results came after the market had closed, and the stock jumped in after-hours trading. Tesla shares, which had risen to \$260 at the start of October, closed Wednesday at \$239.97, down \$7.96 or 3.33% for the day.

Tesla says it plans to deliver 33,000 cars this year, down from the 35,000 it had forecast earlier. It blamed the complexity of the new features, including all-wheel drive, that it unveiled recently. It says it expects to make 50% more cars next year. It also said, however, that it was postponing the sale of its coming Model X crossover from the first quarter to the third quarter of next year.

"We're adding some very new stuff that's not out there," Musk said in a conference call after the

results were released. As a result, it's taking longer to bring the Model X to market.

Tesla has been pushing hard to increase overseas sales, especially in China. It recently introduced enhanced versions of its only model, the Model S luxury electric sedan. A new performance version is billed by the Palo Alto, Calif.-based company as the quickest accelerating sedan, at zero to 60 miles per hour in 3.2 seconds.

Despite falling gas prices, Musk says he's far more worried about maintaining Tesla's production pace than enticing new customers. "Demand is not our issue," Musk said. "We have more demand than we can address."

Contributing: Matt Krantz

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Specifications and details of this RFP can be found at www.escc4.net or www.tcpn.org under Current Solicitations. General inquiries may be directed to Robert Zingelmann at questions@escc4.net

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