

# Case Study: W.F. Young



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## Optimized PET packaging helps one century-old company stay 'young'

**W.F. Young relies on Meredith-Springfield's innovation to eliminate fluorination in plastic bottles**

For over five generations, family-owned W.F. Young has galloped through a number of changes in order to stay relevant in the equine industry. One thing has remained the same, however: The high-quality of W.F. Young's specialized animal care merchandise, much of which has been packaged by plastics manufacturer Meredith-Springfield Associates, Inc., for nearly three decades.



Absorbine®, an equine liniment product, was first created by Mary Ida Young in the late 1800s to replace the painful practice of "blistering," which helped to heal horse muscles, tendons and joints that were strained from delivering cargo. Mary Ida – who began W.F. Young with her husband, Wilbur F. Young, in 1892 – developed her own muscle rub in her farmhouse kitchen tub. Today, W.F. Young offers a full line of animal wellness products – including Mary Ida's original ointment – thanks to a little help from Meredith-Springfield, based in Ludlow, Mass.

"Our companies have really grown together over the course of 25 to 30 years," said Dwight Lowe, director of sales at Meredith-Springfield. "They have been with us from the beginning."

According to Mike Sheehan, vice president of operations at East Longmeadow, Mass.-based W.F. Young, Meredith Springfield has consistently provided quality products for their consumer market. The secret to that success, Sheehan said, is the level of service that Meredith-Springfield offers. "We use a variety of vendors, but we do most of our bottles with Meredith-Springfield," said Sheehan. "We enjoy working with Meredith-Springfield not only because of their cost and quality, but more importantly, their innovation in developing new bottles for us."

In all, the world-class plastics manufacturer – who specializes in extrusion blow molding and injection stretch blow molding – creates 20 different bottles for W.F. Young’s various product lines, said Sheehan. “These are pretty much stock-size bottles that we have for our business, although Meredith-Springfield is very amenable to helping us with future projects,” Sheehan said. The two companies are currently in the research and development phase of improvements to existing bottles to make them more resilient. “They are always willing to work with us to build a more robust and environmentally-friendly bottle.”



For example, Meredith-Springfield optimized a PET (polyethylene terephthalate) bottle for W.F. Young to eliminate fluorination in W.F. Young’s fly control line, Lowe said. Fluorination in plastic bottles prevents distortion and reduces chemical permeation, weight loss and odor emission. The process involves treating the surface of the plastic with fluorine gas and results in extra costs. The PET bottles Meredith-Springfield created eliminate the need for fluorination for several of W.F. Young’s product lines, which ultimately save W.F. Young money while keeping their brand integrity.

“PET is a non-leaching plastic that does not allow carcinogens or other contaminants to enter a container’s contents,” said Lowe. “It is, essentially, a polyester that exists as both an amorphous (transparent) substance and a semi-crystalline material and is made into glass alternative containers by using improved barrier technology.”

Meredith-Springfield’s ability to adapt to the current economic and sustainable climate to develop alternatives to glass and fluorinated bottles is an important aspect of their continuous relationship with W.F. Young, said Sheehan.

“In the marketplace, nothing remains the same; everything changes,” Sheehan said. “For us to be around for 122 years, we need to be open to change and work with suppliers who are willing to help us move forward with that. Meredith-Springfield has always helped us stay ahead of the curve so that we can continue to be front runners in the business we’re in.”

For more information about Meredith-Springfield, visit [meredithspfld.com](http://meredithspfld.com); more information about W.F. Young can be found at [wfyong.com](http://wfyong.com).



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