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## Summary

In honor of the holiday season, Pillsbury™ Funfetti® announced on Monday, November 4th, the expansion of their The Elf on the Shelf® baking products with six new mixes and frostings. Their seasonal products retail for \$2.50 to \$5.00 and are available from October through December 2024, while supplies last. This is Pillsbury's second year collaborating with The Elf on the Shelf company. In the press release, Pillsbury highlights the features of their packaging, including how their boxed mixes include cutouts for Scout Elves, making it easier to celebrate The Elf on the Shelf tradition with parents and their kids. According to Dan Anglemyer, Chief Operating Officer at Hometown Food Company, "These new limited-edition products featuring everyone's favorite Scout Elf combined with...Funfetti® will create magical moments in the kitchen for the whole family!" The end of the press release included links to Pillsbury™ Funfetti® social media accounts and website. It also included information about their portfolios and parent companies as well as how many countries they are operating in.

## Affected Stakeholders

- Pillsbury's parent company
  - It's other brand concepts, including *Hungry Jack*, *Arrowhead Mills*, *White Lily*, *Jim Dandy*, etc.
- Investors of Pillsbury and Company partners
- Consumers of Funfetti and Pillsbury products
- Competitors of Pillsbury such as *Betty Crocker*, *Ducan Hines*, *Ghirardelli*, etc.
- Customers of Elf on the Shelf
- Elf on the Shelf's parent company
- People who celebrate Christmas
- Bakers/food bloggers
- Families with younger children

## Analysis

Pillsbury™ Funfetti® announced in a press release their collaboration with The Elf on the Shelf® to create new limited-edition baking mixes and frostings. Several products are available exclusively at Walmart, including Funfetti® The Elf on The Shelf® 's Marshmallow Swirl Fudge Brownie Mix, Peppermint Vanilla Whipped Frosting with Peppermint Candy Cane Blend Sprinkle Bits, and their Snickerdoodle Cookie Mix. This is important news in the food industry because Pillsbury is expanding their holiday product line-up, and this is also their second year partnering with The Elf on the Shelf®. The baking mix packaging also includes cutouts for your Elf, allowing families to combine these holiday activities. The mix and frosting flavors they released include classic holiday flavors, adding to the nostalgia and coziness of the season.

When I searched for "Pillsbury Elf on the Shelf," there were few results besides the initial press release. The first thing that I noticed was two news outlets who had picked up the story. [Trend Hunter](#), a research consultancy, wrote an article summarizing the information and analyzing their marketing tactics. They addressed trend themes as well as industry implications. [Snack Food & Wholesale Bakery](#), a

technology, production, and product news website that offers business strategies and solutions, wrote an article praising the collaboration.

I looked up The Elf on the Shelf's website and social media accounts (Instagram, Pinterest, Facebook) to see if there was any mention of the collaboration. The Elf on the Shelf had not promoted Pillsbury on their website or social media accounts. I also visited [Pillsbury's main website](#), which was linked at the bottom of the press release. On the homepage, there was an advertisement captioned, "Introducing Funfetti® The Elf on the Shelf® Baking Mixes & Frostings!" The ad featured several of their new products and images of the Scout Elves, with their products linked below. I also visited the Funfetti and Pillsbury social media accounts (Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest), which were linked in the press release and at the top of the Pillsbury website homepage. On the [Pillsbury Instagram account](#), there was no mention of the collaboration, and all of their posts were promoting recipes that were focused on Thanksgiving. However, the [Funfetti Instagram account](#) had one post about the collaboration on November 15, nine days after the initial press release. The post included a Reel using one of The Elf on the Shelf® cookie mixes, with a caption promoting the product. The Funfetti account has 109k followers, with their post receiving 594 likes and three comments. That is less than a 1% engagement rate, which is lower than most companies would like. I looked into the engagement rates on their previous posts, and they have an engagement rate between 0.5-2%.

## **Recommendations**

The first improvement I would recommend to Pillsbury Funfetti is to post more on both Instagram accounts. While I understand that Pillsbury and Funfetti have separate accounts to promote different products, I think it would be useful to create dual posts so that the Pillsbury followers would be aware of the product release. Additionally, the Pillsbury account had not promoted the collaboration or release of the holiday line-up at all, so their followers were unaware of the new products. If they encouraged their social media and marketing team to create videos that promoted the Funfetti account, I believe that they would have a higher engagement rate on both of their accounts. This would create a crossover in accounts, so more people would be aware of all the different Pillsbury products. I think the social media team should create content that promotes their family-friendly brand, such as videos of families baking together with their Scout Elves by their side.

I would also recommend the marketing team to focus more on their TikTok account. Pillsbury and Funfetti's TikTok accounts are not linked anywhere on their website or Instagram bios, which led me to believe that they did not have an account at all. After searching for [Funfetti on TikTok](#), I discovered that they have a verified account with 126.9k followers and a total of 1.9M likes. Their TikTok posts the same videos on their Instagram account, which promotes consistency and a similar content schedule. They should try out different trends on their TikTok platforms to increase engagement. I also think this would be a great opportunity to partner with bakers and food reviewers, which would be a great way to reach a wider audience. After reviewing this announcement, I would say that Pillsbury has done well in some areas, but also room for growth. The first and most important item is to create consistency across both social media accounts and create a purposeful schedule to increase engagement and media coverage.

## **Citations (linked in text)**

<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/pillsbury-funfetti-unveils-new-limited-edition-the-elf-on-the-shelf-baking-mixes-and-frostings-302294306.html>