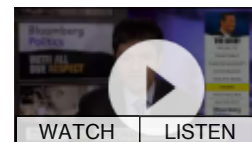


[News](#)[Markets](#)[Insights](#)[Video](#)

Sign in with Facebook Or use your Businessweek account

Email

Password [Forgot password?](#)

Remember me

Already a Bloomberg.com user?

Sign in with the same account.

Don't have an account? [Sign up.](#)[Help! I can't access my account.](#)

Partnership™
for Drug-Free Kids
Where families find answers

Magazine

It's On The Tip Of Your Tongue

July 30, 2006

They're little green patches of film that melt instantly on your tongue, releasing bursts of minty breath freshener strong enough to wipe out all signs of that garlic shrimp you had for lunch. Sound familiar? They're Listerine PocketPaks, and they're made of a material that folks in the food industry call "edible film." Introduced by Pfizer Inc. (PFE) in 2001, PocketPaks sparked a craze. Now everything from sushi to Sudafed is showing up on store shelves all wrapped up in melt-in-your-mouth film.

Consumers are lining up for the chance to stick out their tongues. Retail sales of edible film, at about \$100 million a year today, are expected to hit at least \$350 million by 2008, says James Rossman, a former maker of edible film who is now a consultant in Tampa. In 1999 sales were just \$1 million, mostly from niche products such as the edible underwear that's a favorite gag gift at bachelor parties. "Listerine broke the market wide open," says Rossman -- who, by the way, in 1974 had a hand in inventing some of the first edible undies.

Over-the-counter drugmakers are breathing new life into tired brands by pressing them into flavored strips. In 2004, Swiss pharmaceutical giant Novartis (NVS) introduced Triaminic and Theraflu Thin Strips. This April it followed up with Gas-X Thin Strips, a new twist on a nearly 30-year-old brand. The Triaminic franchise now claims a 20% share of the pediatric cough and cold market -- the first time since 1999 the brand has broken the 20% barrier. "Most of the growth has been driven by the Thin Strip," says Brian McNamara, a vice-president at Novartis Consumer Health in Parsippany, N.J. In the past year, retail sales of Theraflu and Triaminic strips were up 28% and 26% respectively, bringing in more than \$19 million, according to Information Resources Inc.

Sales of Listerine PocketPaks, meanwhile, fell 20%. But even if the breath market turns sour, strips could prove appealing as a way of delivering drugs. Film strips dissolve quickly without requiring water. That's good news

gaseous event, you can take a film and be on your way," says Alexander Mark Schobel, CEO of MonoSol Rx, a Warren (N.J.) manufacturer of edible film. Some Big Pharma companies are eyeing the technology for more lucrative prescription drugs, he reports.

SLY POOCH

Patients with four legs and fur may be the next target for drugs-on-film. Albert Ahn, a veterinarian and spokesman for Hartz Mountain Corp. in Secaucus, N.J., says his company is looking at edible film as an alternative to stuffing pills down pets' throats. "Dogs and cats are pill con artists," he says. "They hide them under their tongue or in their jaw and then spit them out when you're not looking." Strips stick -- and some drugs can also be given at lower doses on films because they are absorbed better through the tongue. Ahn estimates that pet pharmaceuticals represent a \$1 billion market.

The risk is that consumers might not buy into this film frenzy. It can be hard to mask a medicine's taste on film because the strips are so small. And the novelty effect may wear thin. Hartz recently pulled its mint breath strips for dogs off the market in the U.S. because they never caught on. (Ahn says, however, that they are a "resounding success" in Japan.)

Declining breath-film sales haven't deterred the food industry, which is finding all sorts of new uses for the technology. Some meat manufacturers are using films to cure and glaze ham. There are electrolyte strips that athletes can consume in lieu of sports drinks to fight dehydration. Film might someday be used as a moisture barrier, separating the tomato sauce from the crust on a frozen pizza, for example, so the crust stays crisp. "These films can improve the quality and shelf life of food," says Tara McHugh, research leader for an Albany (Calif.) unit of the Agriculture Dept.

And get this: Matthew de Bord, owner of Origami Foods in Pleasanton, Calif., has developed films made of carrot, and tomato with basil, which can be used in place of seaweed to wrap sushi. "Some people have an aversion to seaweed, or they just want an alternative," de Bord reasons. Costco Wholesale Co. (COST) is testing sushi wrapped in de Bord's films at some of its stores in California. Wonder how that might play in Tokyo.

By Arlene Weintraub

From Around the Web

Sponsored Links by Taboola

Secret To Happiness Revealed!

Hatchery

How Harry's Is Changing The Way We Shave

Harry's

Holiday Tech Gift Ideas and Shopping Guide 2015

Digital Trends for LG

Forget The iPhone 6. Next Apple Sensation Leaked

The Motley Fool

LearnVest

This Startup Wants To Turn Your \$5K Into \$2.5 Billion

Business Insider | Fundrise

This Men's Fashion Hack That Has Retailers Worried

Five Four Club

How This Razor is Disrupting a \$13 Billion Industry

Dollar Shave Club

Nicholas Cage's Net Worth Will Shock You

AccessTheStars

More From The Web

- **The Walking Dead News, Features and Videos** (wow.com)
- **Wine Enthusiast's 2015 Holiday Gift Guide** (Wine Enthusiast)
- **How Small Businesses and Startups Can Stay Competitive and Clos...** (Salesforce CA)

From Businessweek

- **8 Subtle Signs of Adult ADHD** (ADHDLiving.Today)
- **14 Celebs Living With MS** (WebMD)

[LIMITED-TIME OFFER SUBSCRIBE NOW](#)

0 Comments

Businessweek.com

Login ▾

Recommend

Share

Sort by Best ▾



Start the discussion...

Be the first to comment.

Subscribe

Add Disqus to your site

Privacy

[Feed](#) Most Popular

- [Read](#)

- [Discussed](#)
- [Oil Bulls Brace for Repeat of OPEC's Bearish Blow at Meeting](#)
- [World's Biggest Pension Fund Loses \\$64 Billion Amid Equity Rout](#)
- [BlueCrest to Return All Outside Investor Money](#)
- [IMF Approves Reserve-Currency Status for China's Yuan](#)
- [The Silicon Valley Idea That's Driving Solar Use Worldwide](#)
- [IMF Approves Reserve-Currency Status for China's Yuan](#)
- [Zuckerberg to Give 99% of Facebook Stock Away During Lifetime](#)
- [The Silicon Valley Idea That's Driving Solar Use Worldwide](#)
- [Oil Bulls Brace for Repeat of OPEC's Bearish Blow at Meeting](#)
- [Unearthing America's Deep Network of Climate Change Deniers](#)
- [Addiction Treatment Goes Public: AAC's Recovery-Center Empire](#)
- [Whole Foods, Half Off](#)
- [America the Relatively Beautiful](#)
- [Obama to Oil Industry: Drill There, Not Here](#)
- [Sanctions Aren't Enough to Stop Putin, and He Knows It](#)



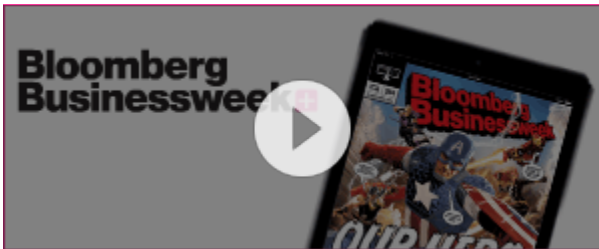
Is
Big Data
your core
strategic asset?
It should be.

Get Economist Intelligence Unit report

The advertisement features a network diagram background with nodes and connecting lines. The sas logo is at the top left. The text is centered, with 'Big Data' in red. An orange bar at the bottom contains the text 'Get Economist Intelligence Unit report'.

- **Golf Game Getting Worse? Weird Trick Helps Thousands** (Graves Golf)
- **Reduce credit card interest payments using this method** (NextAdvisor)
- **4 Best Balance Transfer Cards For Good Credit. 0% Intro APR For 21 Mo...** (LendingTree)
- **15 Actors That Deserve An Oscar** (Buzzlie)
- **Your Granite Countertops Are Behind the Times** (Reviewed.com)

Sponsored Links by Taboola



[Ads by Google](#)

- [Kurdistan Standards](#) Meet Kurdistan's import standards. Contact SGS today to learn more! www.sgs.com/ksqca_inspection
- [I am INC Research](#) See how we can help you develop the medicines people need. www.incresearch.com
- [Help Desk Software](#) Help desk and IT Asset Management Purchases & Contracts. Try Now! www.manageengine.com/IT_Help_Desk

An advertisement for optionshouse. The background is green. At the top, it says 'optionshouse' with a small triangle symbol. In the center, there is a white circle containing the text '100 FREE TRADES'. Below the circle, it says 'When you open & fund an account.' and '*Other trading fees may apply.' At the bottom, there is an orange bar with the text 'GET YOUR FREE TRADES'.

[Terms of Service](#) [Trademarks](#) [Privacy Policy](#)

©2015 Bloomberg L.P. All Rights Reserved

[Careers](#) [Made in NYC](#) [Advertise](#) [Ad Choices](#) 

[Website Feedback](#) [Help](#)

[Continue to Businessweek](#)

Explore Litigation Insights

Docket Alarm provides insights to develop a more informed litigation strategy and the peace of mind of knowing you're on top of things.

Real-Time Litigation Alerts



Keep your litigation team up-to-date with **real-time alerts** and advanced team management tools built for the enterprise, all while greatly reducing PACER spend.

Our comprehensive service means we can handle Federal, State, and Administrative courts across the country.

Advanced Docket Research



With over 230 million records, Docket Alarm's cloud-native docket research platform finds what other services can't. Coverage includes Federal, State, plus PTAB, TTAB, ITC and NLRB decisions, all in one place.

Identify arguments that have been successful in the past with full text, pinpoint searching. Link to case law cited within any court document via Fastcase.

Analytics At Your Fingertips



Learn what happened the last time a particular judge, opposing counsel or company faced cases similar to yours.

Advanced out-of-the-box PTAB and TTAB analytics are always at your fingertips.

API

Docket Alarm offers a powerful API (application programming interface) to developers that want to integrate case filings into their apps.

LAW FIRMS

Build custom dashboards for your attorneys and clients with live data direct from the court.

Automate many repetitive legal tasks like conflict checks, document management, and marketing.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Litigation and bankruptcy checks for companies and debtors.

E-DISCOVERY AND LEGAL VENDORS

Sync your system to PACER to automate legal marketing.