Maturing brands – revitalisation through insight

Launch brands exude glamour and excitement like a Hollywood A-Lister on the red carpet. Patent expiry brands provide a real chance to test your nerves and commercial planning skills. But working on a mature brand? Sometimes it can feel like being the poor relation. Until recently...

An analysis of the PMEA¹ Brand Revitalization category winners over the last 3 years starts to tell a different story. The entries to this category weave a tale of segment differentiation, innovative integrated marketing channels and visually compelling campaigns which have delivered sales growths which many launch brands can only dream about. In this short paper we will explore 3 of the award winners, the techniques used to revitalize the brands and examine some of the wider implications for effective mature brand planning.

Copaxone® (Teva) - reigniting internal commitment to make the brand relevant for customers

**Issue** - Mature injectable MS treatment facing oral competition resulting in declining sales growth

**Revitalisation technique**
- Re-positioning of the brand to make it relevant with the customer in the face of a changing competitive set
- Internal engagement to increase commitment and cooperation

**Result** - ‘Significant positive and sustained growth, beating all expectations’²

Cholestagel® (Sanofi) - leveraging a structure planning process to gain greater customer insight

**Issue** - Decline in sales due to poor customer awareness and lack of brand identity

**Revitalisation technique**
- Application of structured process to gain greater customer insight
- Integration of innovative marketing channels

**Result** - ‘A turnaround in sales performance’³

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¹ Case studies adapted from the PMEA Mature Brand Revitalisation Category Judges’ Rationale for selection 2012-2014
² [http://www.pmlive.com/awards/pmea/results/market_excellence/excellence_in_brand_revitalisation](http://www.pmlive.com/awards/pmea/results/market_excellence/excellence_in_brand_revitalisation)
AmBisome® (Gilead) – strong definition of relevant patient segments and patient focused delivery

**Issue** - New competitor entrants had split the market in two and niched AmBisome leading to declining market share

**Revitalisation technique**
- Specific segment targeting building on key emotional driver
- Delivery of patient-centric tactics

**Result** - 20% growth in sales

**Discussion**

So what can we take from these success stories? In each case it appears the brand teams went back to their plans and questioned their understanding of the market and customers. They remapped the patient journey and challenged their assumptions around decision-makers. Crucially, they increased their knowledge of the up-to-date competitive set and reflected on their own brand offering in the light of shifting customer and patient expectations. They also examined the internal barriers and company limitations to success. This is a critical aspect of managing a mature brand as bad habits, apathy and a lack of curiosity to continually question assumptions can often combine to make the mature brand offering appear stale and uninteresting to key customers. It takes a capable and confident marketer to use all of the marketing techniques at their disposal to find the small glimmer of insight and develop this into mature brand differentiation. It may not seem as glamorous as a launch brand but success with a mature brand strengthens a company’s ability to adapt and respond to the changing needs of customers and patients, it provides vital continuity for the many patients treated with these brands and may often finance the possibility of the next launch brand.

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*Uptake Strategies has extensive experience in working on revitalising and reinvigorating mature brands. Please contact maxine.smith@uptakestrategies.com for any questions relating to this article or how Uptake Strategies can help your brand and team.*

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