

A Marketer's Guide To Brand-Building

The passion he has for marketing as a discipline is part of the philosophy that has marked the career of veteran healthcare marketer Jim Kelly.

BY SCOTT EHRLICH

➤ Clear Eyes. Compound W. Murine. Chloraseptic. NewSkin. Dermoplast. All of these are brands that companies have given up on only to see them resurrected by Prestige Brands. Jim Kelly, the former chief marketing officer for Prestige Brands, has called these brands "little jewels," and he is in part responsible for reinvigorating each of these brands into a growth position.

FROM MBA TO CMO

For Kelly, getting into healthcare marketing wasn't a long-term master plan. When he finished business school, he had decided to focus on marketing. He took advantage of an opportunity he had to job shadow a friend who was in a brand manager capacity at Life Savers.

"I came away completely fascinated by it," he recalls. "The advertising meetings I was charged up by, the new product meetings I was really charged up by [and] even sitting down and talking to the marketing research people about consumer behavior was really charged up. I knew at that time it would be something I'd want to do."

Kelly began his career at Warner-Lambert, where he eventually had the opportunity to work on confectionary products such as Roloids and Halls. From there, he moved on to Combe, his one industry foray out of healthcare and into personal care. After temporarily tiring from the corporate mentality, Kelly tried his hand

as a consultant, working in a host of different industries, seemingly enjoying every stop along the way.

"I have always found that, as long as you are passionate ... you can enjoy any industry," he says. "I found that, when I was consulting and working with companies in a lot of different industries, from printed business forms to spices and seasonings, and it's the same in every place. When I was doing positioning and product development on business forms, it was as fun as confectionaries. It's equally exciting to figure out what is the consumer insight that will be the basis for a repositioning of that brand."

However, it was not long before the healthcare industry came calling on Kelly again. He took a position at Prestige Brands as the senior vice president of marketing in April 2007, and was promoted to chief marketing officer one

year later. At Prestige, Kelly has said his aim was to "bring a point of view about change, about reassessment of what we've done in the past, and about reinvigoration of these brands. It's more about our attitude of going about doing that, our pace about going about doing that, to rethink everything that we are doing."

Having worked on some of the biggest brands in the industry as well as some of the forgotten ones, on the inside of the industry and the outside, and through many different eras of healthcare marketing, Kelly has a level of experience in consumer health products that few can match. *OTC Perspectives* had the opportunity to glean Kelly's insights for marketers, as well as some words of wisdom from three major areas of importance in his field of expertise.

KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL MARKETING

"The first thing that I would tell any marketer is that the most important thing to be successful is that you have to love trying to



Under the care of experienced marketers, older brands often can be revitalized, as Prestige Brands has done with many of the products in its portfolio.

“Are consumers getting the message? Can you close your eyes and look at just the audio of a TV commercial and get the message? Can you turn the audio off and just look at the video and get the message? You have to look at it holistically, be able to sum up in a phrase what it just told you.”

– Jim Kelly on what an effective advertisement should do.

understand consumer behavior and you have to love trying to find what I’ll describe as the unique consumer insight that is inherent in why people appreciate a brand,” he says. “You have to love dealing with people, trying to understand why consumers behave and why.”

For Kelly, that philosophy drives everything he does in marketing. Marketers need an enjoyment and a passion for what they do in terms of understanding both the product and the consumer.

“One thing that always motivated me was I always really appreciated

the opportunity companies have given me, the chance to create something that I, as part of my team, have dreamt up, a new product idea and actually let it see the light of day and let it delight consumers all over the country and all over the world. At the end of the day, that’s what it’s really about. You have to understand how consumers relate to your brand and why they buy it. You have to enjoy trying to figure that out.”

GETTING BRILLIANT CREATIVE

To Kelly, the key to getting brilliant creative for OTC products is all about top-of-mind awareness. In his view, the best way to drive top of mind awareness quickly is typically through broadcast. However, there are other ways, such as emerging media and the Internet that also can drive such awareness.

“Traditionally, if you look at OTCs across every manufacturer, they are typically broadcast driven through radio and TV,” he explains. “It is not a surprise to anyone that it is part of our mix, too. However, with Little Remedies, we do largely print advertising because that is how we’ve found mothers gain information about products. It’s not broadcast, per se, but it’s a traditional medium.”

To this end, Kelly sees the media mix for OTC constantly evolving, with the true key to “be looking at the most innovative, cost-effective ways to get your message to consumers in the most consumer-involving ways. While broadcast has always been important and will always be important, I think there will be a whole range of things that will have to be examined. However, they have to be appropriate to the usage experience, to the fact that OTCs are need-driven products. For



The marketing team at Prestige Brands built a new ad campaign for Chloraseptic around the tagline, “One Touch Relief: The Chloraseptic Touch.”

example, you can talk to a person until they are blue in the face about Chloraseptic, but they won’t really act until they have a sore throat. That tends to be what happens in the OTC world. Whatever media you choose that may drive top of mind awareness, it has to be delivered in a way that is relevant to the need. Broadly speaking that is what you have to go after, and you have to assess any media vehicle against that,” he says.

Kelly again talks about the importance of the consumer insight. In his view, one mistake marketers make is to focus too much on the micro part of advertising at the expense of the macro. They would do better to put themselves in the consumer’s position and look at the ads holistically instead of getting bogged down in the details.

“Are consumers getting the message?” he asks. “Can you close your eyes and look at just the audio of a TV commercial and get the message? Can you turn the audio off and just look at the video and get the message? You have to look at it holistically, be able to sum up in a phrase what it just told you.”

BRAND POSITIONING

Since Prestige Brands works with orphan brands (brands other compa-



Prestige Brands reported that Clear Eyes was one of its top-performing brands in the quarter ended June 30.

nies decided were no longer worth their time or investment), all of the brands need to be repositioned. According to Kelly, Prestige Brands does a reassessment of the positioning on each of the brands, assessing the marketplace from

a medium and product point of view. The marketers also reassess the product line and possible innovations. The goal is to determine how the brand can be leveraged in terms of the marketing approach, particularly the media approach “because media, particularly broadcast, is what drives OTC products,” he says.

Kelly cites Chloraseptic as an example of a brand that Prestige Brands has revived and that the marketing team is particularly proud of. The new advertising campaign is based around the tagline, “One Touch Relief: The Chloraseptic Touch.” The point of this campaign is to identify with consumers relating to both their emotion and product experience. Kelly also is particularly proud of the work on the children’s medication line Little Remedies. For this one “we mined consumer insights about the brand and how consumers feel about the brand and we’ve expressed those insights in our advertising,” he says. “One key learning is that mothers get information in a specific way so our advertis-

With a brand that has not advertised for a significant period, Kelly says marketers “have a chance with those brands to redefine what the product is.”

ing relates to that and our path forward relates to that as well.”

MEGA BRANDS VS. ORPHAN BRANDS

As someone who has worked with both mega-brands and orphan brands, Kelly knows the different way of marketing both. While at Warner-Lambert, he was involved with Halls, “a true mega-brand,” he notes. While there, one of the things he spearheaded was to launch the Sugar Free Halls part of the line, which has become a very prominent part of that whole franchise.

Kelly likens leading a brand such as Halls to driving a bus or flying a plane, while working on an orphan brand is more like taking off on the space shuttle: “In other words, on a brand like Halls, you take what is already working on it, what made it big and prominent and you fine tune it, but you don’t reinvent it,” he says. “So the positioning should be consistent to what brought it to what it is today and should be leveraged and built upon. On the other

hand, with a product like Clear Eyes, a product that had in effect been off air for some time, you have a chance with those brands to redefine what the product is, not like with a product like Halls that has been on the air forever. You don’t really want to redefine it as it presents a risk that you really don’t want to take.

“In the case of a product like Clear Eyes or Chloraseptic, which really didn’t have a voice for a long period of time, you have a chance to take some of the values consumers have about the brand and redefine it and reinvent it and re-express it in your marketing. That is what is so exciting. You take a high-equity, high-awareness brand but you have the chance to redefine it [and] you have much more of a blank canvas to do that,” he says.

And because of the selectivity of Prestige Brands in choosing the orphan brands that the company brings under its umbrella, reinvigorating those brands isn’t as difficult as it may seem.

The brands that Prestige acquires tend to have very high awareness among consumers. “Each company has its own way about doing it, its own strategies,” Kelly noted. “But if you look at the brands [at Prestige], they are well-recognized brand names as that is an important thing... [Prestige Brands has] chosen to reinvest in it and drive it.”



In the personal care area, Prestige marketing efforts have led to sales gains for Cutex nail polish remover