Eye-catching merchandising and an attractive exchange offer of competitor machines for Mortein machines.

**Analysis**

The goal was to drive communication home to the consumers that the present Mortein was an improved and superior product in the market. Therefore, the new communication campaign would have to drive the product improvements carried out (new ingredients, seven times powerful PowerGard). But having said that, all these improvements are also easily replicable by competition, and it would not be long for them to match up to it, in a matter of months. Therefore, even if the funds were available to Hari from the corporate kitty for all these improvements on the brand, success at the market front would be much more difficult to achieve, given the large lead that All-out and Good Knight already have on Mortein. Hari is banking a lot on the new campaign, but its ability to persuade consumers to change over from competitor products to Mortein by stressing product and packaging improvements, looks doubtful. It is rightly questioned by Hari’s assistant manager, ‘Is a fear motivation sufficient to motivate customers to change over from other brands to Mortein?’

The total flying insecticide market was ₹8.25 billion in 2009. If vaporizers constitute 20 percent of the market, it amounts to ₹1.65 billion. Assuming the same CAGR for vaporizers as given in Exhibit 5, the market for vaporizers is estimated to be ₹1.94 billion in 2011. If the target is to achieve a 17.5 percent market share in two years time, it means a value target of ₹0.34 billion. The present sales of Mortein vaporizers at 10 percent market share is expected to be ₹0.17 billion. Therefore, the growth objective translates into 100 percent in two years, by no means impossible, but certainly a daunting task, which means a CAGR of 41 percent, year-over-year. Is Hari likely to achieve this only by product and brand improvements? Unlikely. Brand improvements and management can only do so much.

Hari would also require the help of other factors like deeper penetration (over and above the existing 16.4% penetration in urban areas and 22.6% in metros) in the market, increasing depth and width of distribution, and focused promotions at the retail level. It might be pertinent to ask at this stage whether only three SKUs would be necessary to continue the sales or whether a 90-day refill, suitably priced to consumers offering economies of scale (₹85-88), should be offered. With better electrification across the country, perhaps it is no longer wise to confine your operations only to the bigger cities and urban areas. The rural markets offer opportunities that are still relatively untapped and where competition is likely to be lesser. Of course, the additional sales and profits need to be traded off with the extra costs of servicing and distribution. All this requires the active participation and cooperation of the sales team and their ‘buy-in’ to the new strategy is absolutely essential, if Hari has any hope of achieving the objective set out for him.

**Case Analysis III**

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This case presents a set of interesting decision-making problems relating to the re-launch of Mortein Vaporizer as Mortein PowerGard. The primary objective of the re-launch was to improve the market share for Mortein, in the Vaporizer sub-category of electric mosquito repellents. The overall strategy of the proposed re-launch involved incremental product innovations for Mortein Vaporizer and radical innovation of its positioning. The case text furnishes a summary of the proposed business strategy, outline of the new communication campaign, and the proposed brand activation measures, along with other contextual details. The case also reveals that the Brand Manager of Mortein Vaporizer, Hari Panda, faces three primary challenges relating to this re-launch.
How to evaluate the 'Mom and Mortein' campaign? Will it be effective in creating a positive brand attitude towards Mortein Vaporizer? There are two aspects of this challenge – management of brand attitude and scientific evaluation of a campaign. The management of brand attitude is a medium to long-term marketing objective, whereas the campaign evaluation is a control function.

How to evaluate Mortein PowerGard’s proposed 360-degree brand activation campaign? There are predefined metrics for evaluation of brand activation, which is a control function like the campaign evaluation.

What short- and long-term business strategies to be pursued for Mortein Vaporizer? Business strategy for managing growth requires a structured situation analysis. The short-term and long-term competitive marketing strategies for Mortein would benefit from the findings of such an analysis.

The above-mentioned challenges shall be analysed under the following headings: Branding and Positioning (Challenges-1&2), and Competitive Business Strategy (Challenge-3). It is important to note that the manner in which, Mr. Panda addresses these challenges, can have long-term implications for Mortein and Reckitt Benckiser, the company. Thus, before proceeding, let us quickly review the importance of this re-launch.

IMPORTANCE OF THE RE-LAUNCH
The proposed re-launch of Mortein Vaporizer was crucial because of the following reasons:

- First, the collective market penetration of the modern mosquito repellent gadgets in India was low. However, this segment has been growing rapidly owing to India’s economic progress and the associated lifestyle changes. In fact, the market for mosquito vaporizer in India had grown from 5 percent to 20 percent during 1999-2004.
- Second, the vaporizer category will continue to experience high growth rate in future. This was because the consumers perceived it to be safer, more convenient, and more economical, compared to the other formats of mosquito repellents.
- Third, this sub-category (electric mosquito repellents) was the current focus of all the multinational players like GSLL’s GoodKnight, RB’s Mortein, and SCJ’s All out.
- Fourth, Mortein Vaporizer was a distant market follower with a poor market share of 12.5 percent whereas, the market leader (All Out), and the market challenger (GoodKnight) respectively had 50 percent and 34 percent of the market share. Thus, in this category, Mortein Vaporizer was a marginal player with respect to its competitors.
- Fifth, the immediate target for Mortein Vaporizer, set by the management, was to attain a market share of 17.5 percent, by the end of 2011, and gradually improve thereafter. Otherwise, it would be a huge loss of opportunity for Mortein.
- Finally, the brand attitude of the customers towards Mortein Vaporizer was currently negative which called for appropriate steps.

Thus, Mortein could not afford to overlook this sub-category anymore. Hence, Mr. Panda was under pressure to revisit the future strategy of Mortein Vaporizer; however, the way forward was not hassle-free. The VP Marketing (RB, India), several advertising agencies, and Mr. Panda’s assistant had suggested a shift in the communication strategy of Mortein Vaporizer. Mr. Panda, on the other hand, had his own ideas and apprehensions about the move. His primary concerns were: How to evaluate the proposed campaign? What is the brand attitude of consumers towards Mortein vaporizer, and how to manage it? What should be the right strategy to improve the market share? Resolution of these doubts was pivotal for safeguarding and improving Mortein’s long-term prospects in the Indian pesticide market.

BRANDING & POSITIONING
Consumer’s perception about how different a brand is from the other competing brands affects a brand’s position within a category (Sujan & Bettman, 1989). In addition, the positioning of a brand is not a standalone activity; rather it is an integral part of a system (Figure 1). Consequently, adopting the Brand’s Antecedents and Consequences System (Keller & Lehmann, 2006), there can be four major components of Mortein’s Brand Value Chain (Figure 1). The perspective as depicted in the Figure is the framework of our further discussions about brand attitude (Challenge1) of Mortein.

Managing Brand Attitude
Brand attitude is the consumers’ overall evaluation of a
brand; it is a feeling, and thus can be either positive or negative towards a brand (Keller, 1993; Mitchell & Olson, 1981). Further, with respect to Mortein Vaporizer, it is important to understand, ‘what drives the brand attitude, its implication in terms of sales, and how to measure it’. Acker and Jacobson (2001) have identified five major drivers or factors that can cause a change in the brand attitude. Out of these five, in light of the case details, three factors are more relevant.

- **New products** - Dramatic and visible innovations supported with aggressive advertising and promotion leads to a meaningful increase in brand attitude. In case of Mortein PowerGard, it may however, be noted that the “newness” which the new campaign (ad and 360° activation) intended to establish were rather incremental from the customers’ point of view. Thus, the proposed re-launch may not induce desired sales result or increase in the market share of Mortein Vaporizer.

- **Product problem** - No matter how strong a brand is, product problems would cause a decline in brand attitude. However, any success based only on better features or specifications (even technology) would be short-lived. Finally, if the flagship brand’s attitude declines, it can affect the sub-brands. Thus, in light of the huge rural potential of India, Mortein should not let go its leadership position in the coils segment. Besides, if RB introduces dramatically innovative products in this sub-category, then the leadership position in the coil segment shall be beneficial.

- **Competitor actions.** The actions of the competitors can cause negative brand attitude. This point with respect to Mortein has been elaborated under the heading – Situation Analysis and Business Strategy. However, at this stage, we may succinctly summarize that it is a very competitive market, and has a lot of potential. Thus, it is important for Reckitt Benckiser to adopt strategies and programmes, which shall improve Mortein’s brand attitude vis-à-vis current and possible future competitors.

- **Change in top management.** It can affect the brand attitude owing to the changes in the strategy. Besides, the credibility of the top management also affects brand attitude.

- **Legal actions.** The brand attitude of an organization or product can decrease if the former is guilty in the court of law.
In light of the above discussion, the proposed advertisement campaign appears to be myopic. Thus, team Mortein should rethink its strategy for management of brand attitude.

In terms of appeal and ad execution format, the following alternatives can evoke positive emotion towards Mortein and lead to a positive brand attitude:

- Using ‘Mom & Mortein’ campaign to evoke strong positive emotions. However, this would require a lot of effort and may not yield much return because GoodKnight has already occupied this positioning.
- Having an executional format that would disseminate credible information. This alternative is available to all the competing brands. Thus, Mortein could directly or implicitly compare and counter the MMR campaign of All Out, and evoke a positive feeling about its brand. In this context, Mortein’s advertisement may consider involving a trusted spokes-character, while targeting the new customers.
- Adding a credible informational execution to the old campaign (pre-‘Mom & Mortein’), which had caused the current negative emotion towards Mortein, because, the arousal of positive feelings (through credible information) and appropriate negative feelings makes the advertisement more appealing (Yoo & MacInnis, 2005). Those feelings in turn positively influence ad attitudes through the mediational effect of evaluative thoughts.

Marketing Campaign & Its Evaluation

There are three key phases of any campaign process: strategy generation, creative development, and campaign evaluation (Morrison & Haley, 2003). The two primary objectives of any campaign evaluation are - first, to understand which aspects of the marketing effort are yielding results, and which are not and second, to make required changes in the campaign, which would result in more promotion with lesser spending. Broom and Dozier (1990), have found that campaigns are more successful when these are created and managed, using a scientific management approach that puts creativity and communication skills into an effects-oriented context. To be scientific, the campaign evaluation must capture the customers’ brand-knowledge as well as measure the “consumers brand engagement” or “brand activation” (Gambetti & Graffigna, 2010). Accordingly, we may classify the domain of campaign evaluation into traditional and scientific measures of effectiveness.

Traditional Evaluation of Campaign Effectiveness

The traditional measures generally capture target-market’s awareness of the brand, awareness of advertising, recall of advertisements, recall of the advertising message, purchase intention, attitude change towards the product, increased sales or market share, and achievement of advertising objectives (Morrison & Haley, 2003). Among the existing models, the “Five As” model is considered most comprehensive (Keller & Lehmann, 2006). Hence, the proposed ‘Mom & Mortein’ ad campaign of Mortein PowerGard, can be measured on scales ranging from the lowest to the highest level, as described, below:

a) Brand Awareness – Status of the customer on a continuum of “recognition - recall” about Mortein PowerGard
b) Brand Associations – The attributes of Mortein PowerGard, which the customers are able to relate or recall (ranging from tangible to intangible)
c) Brand Attitude – The disposition of the consumer about Mortein PowerGard on a continuum of “acceptability – attraction”
d) Brand Attachment – The connection of the consumer with Mortein PowerGard on a continuum of “loyalty to addiction”
e) Brand Activity - (includes) the purchase and consumption frequency, as well as customers’ post-purchase behaviour through word-of-mouth, etc. (regarding Mortein PowerGard).

In spite of the above-prescribed improvisations, it may be noted that, we shall still be measuring only a small component of Mortein’s marketing campaign. The brand Mortein, like all other brands, engages with its customers in multiple ways. Thus, we should resort to a scientific campaign evaluation.

Scientific Evaluation of Consumer Brand Engagement

Brand activation or consumer brand engagement (BA/CBE) refers to the ways in which a brand can connect with its target market to achieve competitive advantage and is a more holistic approach to evaluate a marketing campaign. Its incorporation in the evaluation of Mortein’s marketing campaign should therefore make the process more scientific. Table 1 demonstrates how Mortein
PowerGard can benefit by adopting Interbrand’s (2010) 10 dimensions of brand activation.

Finally, let us conclude our discussion on Mortein’s Branding and Positioning by analysing two basic points. First, whether the proposed brand activation of Mortein PowerGard is really 360-degree, i.e. has the brand manager ignored something? Second, is rather a corollary, “how can the proposed brand activation of Mortein PowerGard be improved?” The purchase of Mosquito vaporizers, in terms of consumer buying decision, is an example of low involvement product. Moreover, once the consumer has purchased one brand of vaporizer for the refill, he or she would continue to select the same brand. Hence, converting an existing user of vaporizer with another “me too vaporizer” would be a difficult task. Considering this, the efforts of Mortein PowerGard’s 360-degree activation should be directed towards reaching out to the new consumers – the untapped urban and metro consumers and the first-time users (e.g. students living in hostels). Mortein could consider distribution of trial or starter packs (with repellent equivalent to 10 to 15 nights) to students living in hostels. India has close to 60 percent of its population below the age of 30 years. This segment spends more time on the net and mobile. Thus, Mortein can release freely downloadable mobile and computer games based on Louie. Lastly, as this is a very competitive market, the last mile battle for customer’s wallet would always be in terms of the price and product availability. Consequently, Mortein should strengthen its distribution and cover more number of retailers in comparison to its competitors.

**COMPETITIVE BUSINESS STRATEGY**

We have adopted SWOT analysis for this discussion. Further, only brand positioning and brand architecture have been considered for identifying competitive strategies for the Indian insecticide market. Nevertheless, the findings of this constrained exploration are interesting.

- The competitors of RB, i.e. GSLL and SCJ, have been focusing on this sub-category. The market leader SCJ had the first-mover advantage in the vaporizer market. Moreover, it has been innovative in terms of communication strategy as well as new product innovation. Currently, for example, it is in the process of introducing a common (repellent) vaporizer for flies and mosquitoes.

- The challenger GSLL, on the other hand, has been proactive in achieving congruence between brand personality (dependable, unobtrusive protector) and Indian consumer (non-violent, emotional, family-oriented). This positioning was in contrast to that of the market leader, All Out, i.e. *Machharon ka Yamraj – the (natural) killer of mosquitoes.*

**Table 1: Mortein PowerGard’s Brand Activation (Based on Interbrand, 2010)**

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<tr>
<th>INTERNAL FACTORS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong> Clarity</td>
<td>The degree of clarity about Mortein Vaporizer, within RB, with respect to the brand’s values, positioning, and target audiences, etc. A shared articulation of the above, within RB, will affect other activities relating to PowerGard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong> Commitment</td>
<td>The degree of commitment and belief. It will in turn affect the time, influence, and investment that PowerGard will get.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong> Protection</td>
<td>How secure the Mortein PowerGard is in terms of legal protection, proprietary ingredients, design, geographical spread, etc.?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong> Responsiveness</td>
<td>Mortein’s ability to respond to market changes, challenges, and opportunities, as well as the desire and ability to constantly evolve and renew itself.</td>
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<tr>
<th>EXTERNAL FACTORS</th>
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<td><strong>5</strong> Authenticity</td>
<td>The expectations that customers have about Mortein’s capability to deliver against certain set of defined values.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong> Relevance</td>
<td>Mortein’s fit with the customer or consumer needs, desires, and decision criteria vis-à-vis the target market.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7</strong> Differentiation</td>
<td>Mortein’s degree of distinction from the competition in the mind of the consumer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8</strong> Consistency</td>
<td>The degree of similarity about the experience relating to Mortein across all touchpoints or formats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9</strong> Presence</td>
<td>The degree to which Mortein is omnipresent and positively talked about by consumers, customers, and opinion-makers in both traditional and social media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10</strong> Understanding</td>
<td>The degree of recognition, among the consumers, which Mortein enjoys in terms of knowledge and understanding about its distinctive qualities and characteristics.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
• GSLL had also adopted an encirclement attack strategy and had products in all formats of mosquito repellents available in the India market. RB adopted a similar strategy but rather as a kneejerk reaction. Though it entered the vaporizer market in 1999, the format did not receive much focus of the management until 2004.

• The encirclement attacks are valid strategies but GSLL and RB having different brand architectures, the results of encirclement are different for both the companies. While GSLL has adopted the “house of brand” architecture, Mortein of RB has adopted the “branded house” architecture. The following two points have elaborated the implications of the above-mentioned differences in the brand architectures of GSLL and RB.

– HIT, a brand from the GSLL house, had positioned its mosquito and pest control aerosols and other products as killer and powerful products. This positioning of HIT was in sharp contrast to GoodKnight’s positioning. Yet, there was no spill-over negative effect or dissonance owing to the “house of brand” architecture of GSLL. Further, it would be interesting to note that GSLL, through HIT, was able to make flanking attack on both the market leader (All Out) and the follower (Mortein).

– On the other hand, Mortein had a strong positioning as a powerful pesticide. Hence, as a mosquito repellent lotion, under the current positioning, customers will not patronise it. This is an example of demerits of the branded house architecture. Thus, in the medium and long term, RB should explore the possibility of developing new products with independent brand names for this market.

CONCLUSION
The value of the insecticide market in India, in spite of the low penetration of the modern mosquito repellent gadgets, was close to ₹26.299 million as on 2012 (case Exhibit 4). Moreover, modern gadgets such as spray/aerosol and electric insecticides had the projected CAGR of 8.4 and 5.6 respectively. Hence, Mortein should focus on the aerosols along with vaporizers, as the future lies in both the aerosol and the electric insecticides. Further, in India, the potential of the rural market is huge but the needs and the sensitivities of the Indian rural consumers are much different from their urban counterparts. In addition, the rural areas and semi-urban towns of India have problems of power supply, besides having houses with more open spaces. Thus, Hari Panda and RB should explore suitable insecticide products for the Indian rural markets. Finally, these new products should be sensibly branded and positioned to reap maximum benefit from the latent first-mover advantage.

REFERENCES


