

Reading Media Text: Lucozade Adverts

Lucozade is a product which over the years has totally changed the target audience and its impact on the market. At the start of its production life it was marketed as a drink which helped aid recovery for sick children, so the obvious target market was mothers who would be encouraged by the commercial to buy the drink for their children. However, as time went by this proved unsuccessful. It was time for change and this they did, changing not only image but target market and the different uses for the drink.

The first advertisement studied was an original commercial which advertised Lucozade as a drink which aids recovery from illness; aimed to be bought by mothers, and promoted very much as a 'happy family' drink. However, the slogan 'Lucozade Aids Recovery' made consumers think it was a drink only for the sick and not intended for healthy people; because of improving social conditions and medical care, fewer people felt the need to buy Lucozade when they were ill, causing an obvious decrease in sales. Another problem was the packaging: it was a unique large glass bottle, but was only suitable for use in the home. Consumers who felt thirsty were unlikely to buy it and drink it on the street, which meant that the brand was only sold in large grocery stores and chemist so limiting its availability and reducing its market share. The drink itself was also a problem as it was then only provided in one flavour and consumers could take it or leave it, so many simply did not like the taste and bought other soft drinks. A positive side to this advertising, however, was that everybody had heard of Lucozade and it had an excellent reputation, strongly associated with glucose and health. It was sold at a high price compared to production cost which meant that Lucozade made tremendous profit on each bottle sold. There was also no direct competition, not even from supermarkets, who often market their 'own brand' versions of successful products.

The Daley Thompson advertisements were the 'cure' and saviour of the Lucozade drink in using a top sports superstar to endorse and advertise the product. Thompson was a double Olympic gold winning decathlete in the 1980s, and so was a world renowned sports star and he was British!

A totally new advertising campaign was now launched to give Lucozade a new image and enhance its reputation in a modern way that consumers would feel was relevant to them. The image of the children and sickrooms was gone and in came representations of fitness and healthy living, so completely transforming the total target market, as it now promised energy for healthy athletes, not for convalescent children. In addition there would

be announcements of new products for example providing new flavours that would give Lucozade a much wider appeal through its advertising. Also the first part of the campaign introduced the single-drink, quarter litre bottle. Sales improved dramatically and the newer, smaller bottle was sold in small shops as well as chemists, so widening its availability.

The Daley Thompson advertisement starts with an extreme close-up of a red traffic light which draws attention immediately to the screen, as it then switches to a shot of Daley Thompson slowing down from a run, while it states: '8AM Daley Thompson', stops training for a refreshment. Another picture of a red light cross fades to a shot of Daley coming to a standstill: when Daley stops, the viewers stop to focus a shimmering heat on the running track, which is red, the corporate colour of Lucozade. The effect of this dramatic opening is to show the viewer Thompson's total exhaustion, whilst the red colours remind us of the product label.

It also has an American style with the traffic lights and intense heat so suggesting what an international superstar Daley Thompson is. It also indicates that if he trains in America, he must be popular whilst it is a country associated with success - as is Thompson, and, by implication, Lucozade

The traffic lights turn amber as it goes to a shot of Daley: the clothes he is wearing are grey and dull emphasising that he is exhausted from a long training session. He is depicted with a bottle of Lucozade, flipping it out of out of his bag to show it is portable and will fit into a bag which can be taken anywhere. He drinks it; an extreme close-up follows of the vivid orange Lucozade liquid and bubbles passing through it like the energy building up. There is also an extreme close-up of the bottle with a Royal Seal of Approval indicating that is a high quality product, which is good enough to be royally approved, to remind viewers of the tradition and reputation.

The music speeds up and the camera moves in and goes to an extreme close-up of a green light, zooms in and out quickly and moves to a mid-shot of Daley getting ready to sprint; this is in slow-motion which indicates the energy building up and rushing through his body from the tip of his toes to the top of his head. He burst from the block and races down the track towards the camera and audience to fully involve them, stressing how quick he is and it is implied that the Lucozade has fully revitalised him. There is then a variety of shots of his legs pounding down the runway, making the advertisement more explosive and exciting so retaining audience involvement. The shots change quickly to reflect the speed of Lucozade, but

it ends with a freeze frame of Daley in motion winning his race. The words 'Lucozade' and 'the refreshing glucose drink' appear in the Lucozade 'font' whilst the voice of Des Lynam is heard saying these words, portraying more celebrity endorsement which gives Lucozade an even better image having been endorsed by two famous sport personalities.

Sound is also used to excellent effect in the advertisement as the music is of a heavy metal style, which was popular with teenagers at the time, the band being Iron Maiden with their song 'Phantom of the Opera', complementing the images perfectly. The music gives the advertisement a racy and modern edge whilst also appealing to a younger audience than the mothers of the older advertisements.

Therefore, the advertisement was constructed extremely well and this was reflected in a huge increase in sales, mainly because of the Daley Thompson endorsement. It helped Lucozade become what it is today, a well known and respected top sports drinks used by the worlds best professional and amateur athletes aswell as ordinary people on the street who have been convinced by a series of very powerful advertisements.