



**REJUVENATING A BRAND**  
**Out with the old, in with the old**

When tickets went on sale for the opening concerts in the Spice Girls reunion tour this year, they sold out within 38 seconds — an impressive record for a brand that had been in mothballs for so long.

At the same time a petition by 14 000 users on Facebook prompted Cadbury to reintroduce the Wispas chocolate brand, which was discontinued in 2003. Then in July the Fiat 500 became the latest in a series of iconic cars like the Mini and Beetle to be reinvigorated, 50 years after its original launch.

The business of pumping life into old brands is everywhere. With increasing competition and globalisation, brands need to be constantly kept alive, says Rob Hill, group managing partner at Ogilvy SA. “Brands lose relevance and connection. Now more than ever, they can’t rest on their laurels. Markets are not static any more so brands need to be able to respond accordingly.”

So how do you know when your brand or product needs a shot in the arm? Every brand is different, but there are five general principles in reinvigorating an established product.

**Find a consultant**

Seek a research company or brand consultant to gauge your brand’s performance. They would help answer questions like: Has the market moved while your brand has not? Where

## Features

should your brand be in the current marketplace?

“It’s about building on the foundation of your brand as opposed to going radical,” says Added Value brand project director Erna George. “Find out what the good parts of your brand are and merge them with what is hip in the marketplace.”

Another tool used by the industry is called cultural insight. It helps identify where the market is going. Added Value brand director Eden Lanser suggests a tracking study to identify whether your brand is weakening. Are consumers less aware of it? Other indicators include sales figures, growth in the total market, anecdotal evidence from customers (through traditional research or by watching shopping behaviour), and increasing complaints through customer service hotlines.

If you’re losing shelf space, it’s a sure sign of a brand in need of a new life. Many brands have a quarterly tracker that will give an indication of how people perceive them. “Is it getting more modern and contemporary, and is

the user profile getting younger or older?” asks Lanser.

**Choosing an agency**

You need to look at all elements of the marketing mix: product, packaging, distribution, pricing, strategy, communication, promotion and advertising. Other questions: Do I need a new look and what could be innovated? What are the distribution channels? “You might want to distribute your brand or product through different channels. If you’re a premium brand, you don’t want to be in wholesalers or the middle market as the retail landscape is changing so drastically,” says Lanser.

An important lesson in choosing a media planner, and advertising and branding agency, is to make sure



Apple's iPhone

they have a digital brand management strategy.

“Even if your brand doesn’t require an online campaign immediately, it could still pop up online in various ways or be attacked online and you need to have the right people to know how to defend it or orchestrate online campaigns,” says advertising industry expert Louise Marsland.

Adds George: “If you’re looking to have an effect on the market, pricing has to play a role. You also have to think about costs further down the line, so investing upfront with the appropriate agency is better. It is better to see an agency as an investment than as an expense.”

**Redevelop your strategy**

Identify core strengths and assets, then build on them based on market trends. “Often, it is easier to set out the future destination then figure out how to get there by ensuring where the growth is going to come from,” says Steve Purnell of Brand Fruition. “Olay, Clean & Clear and Lucozade are examples of this.”

Elements to consider when redeveloping a strategy are:

- Innovation: German carmaker Audi lagged far behind German rivals BMW and Mercedes-Benz in the 1980s but has closed the gap through product innovation. “This is vital to reinvigorating a brand,” says Hill. “It’s about re-engaging consumers. Apple is a great example of keeping its brand relevant, whether it’s iTunes or the iPhone.”
- Design: New packaging suggests a



Mini Cooper

fresh brand. Look at Mini and All Gold.

- Culture: It’s even more important than strategy. “The question to ask is how to reconnect with a brand and relate it to what’s happening in society,” says Hill. “Carling Black Label lost its way because it was all about masculinity, but expressed in an old way. It was only through connecting to society that it has been brought back to life.” Dove Evolution has also connected powerfully with an emerging belief system of what constitutes beauty.
- Brand extension: Take Jungle Oats with its new products such as lunch-box snacks and energy bars. “Here’s a brand which, if it didn’t have an extension, would be old-fashioned,” says Hill. “By making it relevant for the life we live today, it has helped

ignite the brand.”

- Get into surprising places: Pep Stores is a classic example of how to reinvigorate a product. It paid to have itself woven into the script of local soapie *Generations*.

**Executing your new plan**

Now that you’ve developed your products and packaging and got an agency to run your campaign, you need to measure its success. A brand-help tracker gauges basic measures such as advertising recall among consumers. You also need to monitor in-house sales, traders and advertising. Social network websites like Facebook and MySpace are also avenues to track the value of your brand.

**Tweak your marketing**

Once you’ve established the performance of the rebranding investment, you need to adjust or tweak your marketing. For example, it might be that your packaging needs rejuvinating. “It’s about keeping your finger on the pulse all the time,” says Lanser.