

Mortein®

THE MARKET

Everyone agrees that Australia is one of the best places on earth to live.

Bugs think so too. Flies, cockroaches and mosquitoes in particular are part of a way of life for most Australians. The vast numbers of flies in the Great Southland was noted by the very earliest Europeans to set foot on Australian soil, Dutch navigators 150 years before Cook.

Today these insects invade every home in every Australian city and settlement, often in sufficient numbers to make a thorough nuisance of themselves. For people working in the open air or enjoying outdoor pastimes they can make life a misery, especially in summer. Biting and bloodsucking insects pose a direct health risk. Others contaminate food and spread germs and disease.

Rodents too are a problem, usually in the cooler months when they tend to move into houses in search of shelter and food. They are unpleasant house guests, spoiling food and causing damage to fabrics and woodwork, and like insects can carry diseases with them.

Mortein has been dealing with these problems in Australia for over 100 years and now competes in all three segments of the market. It is dirty work, but as Mortein's people say - somebody's got to do it.

The retail pest control market in Australia has been estimated at around \$110 million per annum. That includes rodenticides (8%), insecticides (78%) and repellants (14%).

ACHIEVEMENTS

Mortein, as a brand, is an all Australian phenomenon, even though as a company it has been owned by British giant Reckitt & Colman since the late 1960s.

As a result of the strength of the Australian operation, all of the R&D work on Reckitt & Colman



pesticides and related products worldwide is undertaken in Australia. Mortein itself is an internationally known brand and is widely marketed in several Asian markets, in the South Pacific, and in New Zealand as well as in Australia.

Even where the name of Mortein is unknown, the Australian technology which stands behind it is recognised as among the world's best. In some cases pesticide technology is applied to manufacturing operations in other countries. In several cases, however, the product is both developed and fully manufactured in Australia. Neocide, for example, which sells on the French market, is made in Australia and exported to France. Similarly Rodosol cockroach baits are manufactured in Australia and exported for sale on the South American market.

Today, despite intense competition

from international and local brands, Mortein remains the best known and most widely used household insecticide in Australia. The company now holds 47.1% of the Australian market in household insecticides, which is its traditional market segment. To maintain that position Mortein has adopted the very latest technology to develop a growing range of products which are highly effective, and which match the highest world standards of safety and environmental acceptability.

HISTORY

Mortein was first manufactured as an insecticidal powder in the 1870s by a German immigrant to Australia by the name of J. Hagemann. It is said that Hagemann himself came up with the name Mortein, with a little help from his French wife: the famous name is a combination of the French word 'mort' (dead) and the German 'ein' (one).

Hagemann used crushed chrysanthemum flowers to produce a pyrethrum extract. At first the powder was simply sprinkled about where insects were expected to be a nuisance, and it was not until the 1920s that a squeeze puffer was developed. That meant the Mortein powder could be used indoors for the first time.

Other developments followed. Hagemann was still very much involved with Mortein research in 1928, when he introduced a liquid version. He then combined this with kerosene and had a pump pack designed (the traditional 'flit gun') which allowed the insecticide to be sprayed into the air or onto the pests themselves. Hagemann became one of the first people to buy pyrethrum from Kenya.



"What I always say is . . .
When you're on a good thing
Stick to it!"

**4 out of 5
Australian families
use
Mortein
in preference to any
other insect spray**

PUSH THE BUTTON!
For only 2 to 4 seconds and 100 every fly, mosquito and other pest is on its way out. Mortein Pressure-Pak is fully automatic. A simple and safe method.

Mortein, the world's most powerful insecticide, is also the safest and most economical to use. Mortein can safely be sprayed anywhere in the home. There is no fire, no smoke, no fumes. It does not stain. It does not hurt. Mortein kills flies and all other insect pests faster than any other insecticide. Mortein Pressure-Pak is fully automatic. A simple and safe method.

Whether you use Mortein Pressure-Pak or Mortein Plus, you can be sure it will give you the best results and all insect pests. The same important thing, Mortein, is to look for Mortein and "When you're on a good thing - stick to it!"

You can buy Mortein from any chemist or store throughout the length and breadth of Australia.

Hagemann's product was distributed wholesale by Samuel Taylor. Taylor ran his own business until his death in 1895. Soon after that Taylor's business went broke, and in 1909 his children sold it. That transaction led to Taylor's business ending up in the hands of F. S. Steer and Thomas Jackson.

They were to revive Taylor's business and ultimately to set it up as a proprietary company in 1937 as Samuel Taylor Pty Ltd. This company was to play a critical role in Mortein's development, mainly through the activities of its larger-than-life managing director from the 1940s to the 1960s, Bill Graham.

Samuel Taylor adopted all the new versions of Mortein which Hagemann developed. By 1953 the product was already a household name when the Samuel Taylor company pioneered the aerosol industry in Australia by introducing the Pressure Pak. Though this was not at all like the sophisticated Mortein aerosols of today it was nevertheless a breakthrough. When TV arrived in Australia in 1956, a lengthy 'infomercial' by Mortein was one of the first TV ads produced and shown in this country.

Much of this was due to Graham's aggressive marketing. He was a firm believer in the power of advertising and saw the potential of TV as soon as it appeared. He developed new brand after new brand, including several which are household names today, such as Preen, Fabulon, Aerogard and Mr Sheen. Mortein was, perhaps, his favourite. He was a passionate believer in the safety and efficacy of his product, and once (rumour has it) drank down a glass of Mortein in front of a shocked government inquiry to demonstrate how safe it was.

Graham was also personally responsible for initiating the development of the infamous Louie the Fly, about whom more later. Even before the advent of Louie the Fly in 1957, however, Graham had built Mortein into an Australian icon.

In 1969 the Samuel Taylor company was bought by the British company Reckitt & Colman. The Australian firm, under its British parent, retains the reputation of having introduced and promoted to the Australian market several of the country's most familiar household names over the past few decades. But among these consumer icons, Mortein stands out as the most widely recognised of all.

THE PRODUCT

Mortein has come a long way from the simple pyrethrum powder and early kerosene-based flit gun fly spray. Mortein now has products to cater for all pest problems. They range from odourless fly sprays, Lure'n'Kill surface sprays, Nest Kill cockroach baits, flea killers, mosquito coils, Mozzie Zappers, outdoor surface sprays and even rat and mouse baits - no pest alive is safe from the Mortein range of pest control products.

PROMOTION

Mortein's character Louie the Fly has proved to be one of the most enduring and endearing of Australian advertising creations. His occasional appearances since that first advertisement in 1957 seem hardly sufficient to explain his huge success and popularity. But huge it is. Well over 90% of Australians recognise Louie and know the 'Louie the Fly' jingle, and - which is more impor-

tant - correctly associate both the character and the jingle with Mortein.

Louie's longevity has been a major plus for the brand, because the insecticide business is highly seasonal. Each year 75% of sales are generated between October and March (rodenticides present a different pattern, but Mortein's involvement in this segment is quite recent). As a result insecticide advertising also appears in bursts during the Australian spring and summer. Louie's great strength is that he generates instant recall of the Mortein brand name even after the long seasonal lay-off, while other brands must to some extent rebuild their image each year.

It is some measure of the character's success that he spawned a cartoon series of his own, in Sydney's *Sunday Telegraph* newspaper, making him one of very few Australian advertising characters to have done so.

Originally, Louie represented leading edge animation technology. But even in the early days he was more than simply an imaginative innovation. By using animation, the creators avoided showing real flies crawling over food and babies' bedclothes, which would certainly disgust audiences. Louie routinely behaves in this way, which conveys the same point without giving the same offence. Further, Louie is an engaging, roguish personality. He is doomed to get his comeuppance, like the pirate in a pantomime, but he always manages to reappear for another go in the next ad. This might explain some of his continued success into the 1990s. In a sense the consumer does not feel involved in killing, and yet at the same time can see that Mortein is effective in removing the threat of the 'mighty unclean' Louie.

Louie has been revived in slightly different forms by a series of advertising agencies, with and without the famous jingle. His most recent incarnation was in the mid 1990s, when once again his reappearance has proved to be an enormous success for Mortein. These days Mortein's advertisements depict Louie with a number of friends - cockroaches and other insects - all of whom he unsuccessfully warns about the power of Mortein. This overcomes Louie's one obvious drawback - the suggestion that Mortein is designed only for flies or flying insects.

It is a mark of Mortein's marketing success that when asked to name a product 'which kills insects' over 90% of respondents answered 'Mortein'.

From the earliest days of the company, Mortein has sought to stress in its promotions that it is not only effective, but extremely safe.

This is one reason why many of its advertisements feature babies and children. Recent advertisements emphasise this by using the catchphrase 'More smart, more safe, Mortein'.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

In 1995 Mortein introduced the first odourless fly spray, known as Mortein Odourless Fly and Insect Killer, which is now leading the market. The product builds on the technology of Mortein's Ultra Low Allergenic fly spray which was introduced in 1986 and



which has also been a great success for the company. Mortein Lure'n'Kill is another product introduced in 1995, which works by luring cockroaches to the sprayed surface and eliminating them faster.

Three new products have been launched in 1996. The first of these is an Odourless surface spray. The second is an innovative cockroach bait known as Nest Kill, which not only kills the cockroaches that eat the bait but also those back in the nest, as a result of the product's unique multiplier effect. Mortein Nest Kill has already proved to be very successful in the market.



shape to fit into the corners and angles where rats and mice usually run.

BRAND VALUES

Mortein's goal is to provide the ultimate in responsible pest control solutions. While other branded products may kill insect pests successfully, few if any command the level of confidence and trust inspired by the Mortein name.

Things you didn't know about Mortein

- Mortein Pressure Pak was the first commercially produced aerosol in Australia back in the 1950s.
- Mortein was a pioneer in advertising, producing one of the first television advertisements in Australia.
- That loveable rogue Louie the Fly, synonymous with the name Mortein, has been around since 1957 on television.
- The name 'Mortein' is said to derive from the French 'mort' (dead) plus the German 'ein' (one) and was concocted by Mortein's German inventor and his French wife in the 1870s.
- Mortein, developed and made in Australia, has been the leading brand of household insecticide in Australian homes for over 100 years.