

Strepsils

THE MARKET

Like people all over the world, when Australians have a sore throat the first brand they may think of is Strepsils. Strepsils has been Australia's most popular medicated throat lozenge for over forty years.

Within the self-medication market there are two major sales streams. Sales are split between pharmacy and grocery. Happily, Strepsils is the medicated throat lozenge which dominates both.

A clear leader in the pharmacy throat lozenge market, Strepsils accounts for over 22% of the market. Strepsils is also a leader in the grocery medicated throat lozenge market with over 18% of the market by value. This, despite an ever growing choice of competing products.

However, Strepsils market success is not limited to the Antipodes. In fact, Strepsils is the leading throat lozenge in Britain, France, Holland, Thailand, Malaysia, New Zealand and Saudi Arabia. In just about every one of the 110 countries in which it is sold, it remains a leading brand. An examination of worldwide sales of Strepsils between 1996 and 1997 revealed a massive 20% rise in sales. It would appear that across the world where people suffer from sore throats the first thing they think of is Strepsils.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Strepsils has achieved what all brands strive for, icon status. Like "Hoover", Strepsils has become a part of the vernacular. In fact, if you went into any Australian garage or shed, you'd more than likely find the famous Strepsils tin enjoying a useful second life as a container for nails, screws or fishing tackle. Moreover, this status has been maintained within a category that is overwhelmingly driven by innovation.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of the Strepsils product is that it has continued to grow within an ever-changing market environment de-



spite the fact that the basic Strepsils formula has not changed throughout its forty-year history. To put this into some perspective, imagine a car or television set remaining market leader over a forty-year period without constantly changing and reinventing itself.

Market research has shown that consumers see Strepsils as the most preferred medicated throat lozenge. The fact that Strepsils has been able to sustain this primacy over such a long period is a tribute to the original Strepsils formula. Today, Strepsils remains one of the few medicinal products to be enjoyed by generation after generation.

HISTORY

Strepsils was first developed by the famous Boots Company in Britain in 1958.

During the 1950s it was established that the chlorination of phenols increased their antiseptic activity and it was suspected that chlorination of benzyl alcohol

might form a compound that would also be very effective. This suspicion was confirmed with the development of the compound 2,4 dichlorobenzyl alcohol (Dybenal). Research found that when Dybenal was used in conjunction with a chlorinated phenol derivative developed by Boots, amylmetacresol (AMC), the combination provides an effective formulation.

It was discovered that Dybenal worked to dehydrate the cell walls of microorganisms thus providing good antiseptic and antimycotic protection. AMC provides excellent antibacterial properties by interfering with the protein of the microorganism. The successful combination of these two new agents was the genesis of the original Strepsils formula.

The Boots researchers demonstrated that they had developed a combination which would prove to be the basis of the lozenge which would go on to relieve more sore throats across the world than any other. Their next task was to devise a method of delivery.

After extensive development research they identified a sucrose/liquid glucose mixture which,



when boiled down in a vacuum, formed a liquid glass wherein the active compounds were incorporated with Tartaric Acid. The addition of the Tartaric Acid not only improved the taste but also provided the acidic conditions which best suited the efficacy of the active agents.

Upon its release, Strepsils was available only on prescription. Over the years and throughout its markets, however, Strepsils has been deregulated or introduced as a medicine available without prescription.

The rest, as they say, is history.

THE PRODUCT

Over the years the integrity of the original Strepsils formulation has been maintained, simply because its effectiveness has not waned. However, the original formulation has been supplemented by the introduction of a few major variants across most markets as well as several local market variants.

The first flavour variant to be introduced was "Honey and Lemon" in 1974. This was followed in the 1980s with the introduction of "Orange Vitamin C" and "Eucalyptus and Menthol". "Menthol" aids in the treatment of congestion with the inclusion of a double dose of good old Aussie eucalyptus.

Over time the Strepsils packaging has been modified to meet the demands of an ever changing market and to maintain a competitive price position.

The rising costs of tin plate in the 1980s necessitated the replacement of the famous Strepsils tin with foil blister cartons. Although this meant the demise of a versatile and cherished part of the Strepsils brand heritage, the compensation was an immediate and obvious renewal and updating of the brand's image.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

In the 1990s, Strepsils has developed line extensions which provide the consumers with more treatment options for sore throats.

In 1994, Strepsils Plus Anaesthetic Lozenges were launched. The introduction of a very effective local anaesthetic, Lignocaine, provided improved pain relief to complement the proven

efficacy of the original Strepsils formula. Compared to Benzocaine, the anaesthetic used by many of Strepsils' competitors, Lignocaine provides longer lasting relief from a smaller dose. It is suitable for more severe, painful sore throats.

The success of Strepsils formulations, however, is not just due to the effectiveness of the pharmaceutical ingredients but also the developers' ability to present them in pleasant tasting lozenges. Strepsils Plus is no exception and comes in a cooling mint flavour.

The latest development has seen the



much time thinking about or comparing the different brand promises of throat lozenges while they are healthy.

When consumers have a sore throat, it makes sense for them to want a product they can be sure will soothe the discomfort, be reasonably palatable and will help reduce the bacteria which can cause sore throats.

The genius of "Strepsils Works" as a brand promise is the fact that it is demonstrably true.

In fact, research to discover the brand values which consumers most associate with Strepsils has consistently produced the same results.

"Strepsils is a brand that understands my throat."

"Strepsils is clinically assessed and shows me, in clear and simple terms, how it works."

"Strepsils are pleasant tasting and simple to use, even down to the packaging."

Strepsils brand values have been built and strengthened with the passage of time. More than anything else, it is these values which have seen Strepsils maintain its position as the first choice for sufferers of a sore throat since 1958.

release of Strepsils Sugar Free with a herbal lemon flavour. This is just as effective as the rest of the Strepsils range, and suitable for those looking after their teeth or their calorie intake.



PROMOTION

One of the key elements in the continued strength of Strepsils has been the discipline shown in the way the brand values of Strepsils are presented. Strepsils positioning across all markets has never wavered. Strepsils, now as always, is a palatable, comfortable, reliable and very effective way to soothe a sore throat.

BRAND VALUES

A throat lozenge, by its very nature, will always be a grudge purchase. Not surprisingly, consumers don't spend

THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT STREPSILS

- The word "Strepsils" is both a singular and plural form. Every individual lozenge is known as a Strepsils, not a Strepsil.
- The name Strepsils is derived from the streptococcus bacteria which is one of the most common in sore throats worldwide.
- Strepsils was the world's first medicated throat lozenge commercially available.
- The famous Strepsils tins, whilst originally providing a dexterity test to open, are still enjoying a useful second life in most Australian sheds and garages more than a decade after they were last available. This is a classic example of recycling from before the word gained its present currency.
- Australia, France and the UK are the leading countries for Strepsils sales.
- Strepsils relieves more sore throats for people around the world than any other throat lozenge.