



THE MARKET

Whilst the Australian outdoors in Summer means many things to different people, most will agree that it is synonymous with insects, such as flies and mosquitoes. These insects, have been giving Australians grief for years, as the inventor of Aerogard, Dr Doug Waterhouse, wrote in 1966, “The bush fly...is a notorious nuisance to man throughout most of Australia, and doubtless it was so before the time of European settlement.”

Fortunately, as Australians love spending time outdoors, the personal insect repellent, Aerogard, has been there to provide effective protection against flies and mosquitoes, and has been doing so for the past 30 years. Aerogard was the first personal insect repellent to be sold in the Australian market in 1963.

Aerogard is as Australian as brands come, with most households having a pack at the ready to take to a BBQ, outdoor sporting event, camping ground or whenever they want to enjoy the Australian outdoors without the annoyance of flies and mosquitoes. The saying “Don’t forget the Aerogard” has become entrenched in the Australian outdoor culture.

The personal insect repellent market is valued at over \$16 million and growth varies considerably year to year. The insect repellent season is between October and March and 70 per cent of sales occur in this peak period. Weather plays a major role in this market’s growth, as hot and wet conditions encourage higher insect populations, and cold and dry conditions inhibit market growth.

ACHIEVEMENTS

As insects are synonymous with the great Australian outdoors, Aerogard is synonymous

with personal insect repellents. Since it was first marketed in 1963, Aerogard has been Australia’s number one personal insect repellent. Aerogard has earned itself a place in the Australian consumers’ hearts and minds as an “Aussie icon”, and the name Aerogard has almost become generic for the personal insect repellent category.

HISTORY

The original Aerogard formulation was developed in 1963 at the CSIRO by one of Australia’s leading entomologists, Dr Doug Waterhouse.

At the time, Dr Waterhouse was working in Canberra on ways of dealing with the bush fly problem which in those days made outdoor life such an ordeal.

He had already found a repellent for mosquitoes and sandflies during World War II, but nothing had yet succeeded in keeping the bush flies off.

After 15 years of searching for an effective compound, and testing many candidates, Dr Waterhouse found an American scientific journal

that listed several compounds that showed promise against houseflies over there.

Whilst there was no guarantee that any of these substances would work on bushflies, which are more aggressive than houseflies, Dr Waterhouse found a combination of two substances that provided effective protection against bushflies.

In 1962, during the Queen’s visit to Australia, unbeknownst to her, the Queen participated in an unofficial ‘field trial’ for the Aerogard prototype. After testing on the Governor General, Lord de L’Isle, Dr Waterhouse added the mixture to the gas freon, and found himself with the first ever spray-on mosquito and bush fly repellent.

The Queen’s staff were told of this prototype, and advised to spray it on the royal personage for maximum protection. Worried perhaps that it would ruin her light coloured dress, they merely sprayed it in her general direction. The result, during a summer garden party at Government House in Canberra, saw the pre-sprayed Dr Waterhouse, his wife Dawn and the Governor General fly-free. In contrast, the Queen was obliged to keep giving the ‘Aussie salute’. The impromptu experiment confirmed that for best results, repellents should be applied to the skin.

Shortly after, the General Manager of the Australian owned company Samuel Taylor, which owned Mortein, heard about this great innovation and approached Dr Waterhouse. The result of this collaboration was the birth of Aerogard, Australia’s most successful insect repellent.

In 1969, the Samuel Taylor company was bought by Reckitt & Colman who brought a number of innovations and marketing successes to the brand. In 1999 Reckitt & Colman merged with Benckiser. They formed the new company



Reckitt Benckiser which continues to support the Aerogard brand and drive the personal insect repellent market in Australia.

THE PRODUCT

Aerogard has changed considerably over the years, as new technologies have enabled both longer and more effective repellency. Furthermore, as Aerogard has gained more knowledge about insects and what repels, the formulations have continued to develop to ensure they provide the effective protection that Aerogard is known and trusted for.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

With the prevalence of skin cancer becoming more recognised, and an emphasis in the community on protection of the family against UV skin damage, in 1997/98, Aerogard launched the 2in1 personal insect repellent with sunscreen.

The product provides maximum, long-lasting protection from biting and annoying insects as well as harmful rays from the sun, in a moisturising lotion that cares for the skin.

The launch reinforced Aerogard's position in the market as the first choice for all repellent products. Today, the 2in1 insect repellent with sunscreen is the number one product in this segment with a 60 per cent share and growth consistently in double figures.

In the 1998/1999 season, the Aerogard range was relaunched with the introduction of new evolutionary graphics. The objective was to make the brand more contemporary, bring it further into line with its brand values and increase the relevance to consumers.

The pack colour in the range was standardised to the now, well known Aerogard blue colour. The shield symbol was retained due to its strong association with the Aerogard brand, and also its value as a powerful and descriptive symbol reinforcing Aerogard's efficacy in shielding or guarding consumers from mosquitoes.

Pack copy was also reduced to produce a more simple, uncluttered look which maximised readability. This is important, as personal insect repellents are a low involvement, low interest category where consumers spend a minimal time at the shelf selecting products.

The packaging changes have been successful, and with recognition of Aerogard packs now at 95 per cent, have been a major factor in contributing to Aerogard's market leadership.

PROMOTION

Since its launch in the 1960s, Aerogard has been supported heavily on both television and radio with advertising. Advertising executions such as the famous 'Arm in Cage' and the 'Don't forget the Aerogard Mr Walker' featuring cricket legend Max Walker, helped to form the 'Aussie icon' status that Aerogard now holds, and position it as one of Australia's leading brand names.

Advertising through the early 1990s employed a number of media such as outdoor and event sponsorship. Many a motorist would have seen the huge Aerogard supersite billboards, featuring an arm in a perspex box, with black ping pong balls circulated in the box to simulate flies and mosquitoes.

In the late 1990s and into the new millennium, Aerogard once again focused on producing television advertisements. In the 2000/01 season, two new executions were created, and were successful in reinforcing Aerogard's values.

Throughout the years, the constant message in the advertising has been "Don't forget the Aerogard and Avagoodwiegend", which has now become a familiar phrase in Australia.



Aerogard is also active in supporting the community. A recent activity undertaken by the brand focused on assisting victims of the NSW floods in December 2000. These floods saw one third of the State underwater, and as a result, facing epidemic levels of mosquito-borne diseases.

Aerogard donated 15c from every product purchased over the month of December, and with overwhelming support from consumers, enabled Aerogard to donate a staggering \$25,000. As well as the donation, crates of Aerogard were donated to communities around the State plagued by floodwater, and with repellent supplies in local stores depleted, the Aerogard was airlifted in by emergency services.

BRAND VALUES

Aerogard's values of efficacy, trust and family protection have been a major contributor to its success. Aerogard offers consumers quality products that provide the highest possible level of protection against disease carrying insects. Consumers have demonstrated over the years that Aerogard is the most trusted personal insect repellent brand. It is also the friendly, down-to-earth brand most chosen by Australians. Aerogard is fondly known by Australians as the original personal insect repellent, and still the best.



THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT AEROGARD

- The Queen was involved in the initial, unofficial 'field trial' for Aerogard in 1962.
- The young, ginger haired kid in the 'Max Walker' advertisement aired in 1977 is Jim Plunkett, who now plays for the Carlton AFL Club.
- Tests conducted in tropical rainforests and mangroves by UTS demonstrated Aerogard's 100 per cent effectiveness. Volunteers applied Aerogard to one leg and left the other unprotected. On the legs protected with Aerogard, not one mosquito landed for over four hours, while the unprotected leg had an astounding average of 48 mosquito landings in ten minutes.
- It's only the female mosquito that bites. To lay its eggs it requires a meal of blood (preferably human).
- Mosquitoes are attracted to people by chemical and physical signals, such as exhaled breath and body heat. These signals vary amongst individuals and this is one of the reasons why some people are more prone to being bitten than others.

