

Lager's new look

Bass Brewers has redesigned and rebranded premium lager Staropramen to emphasise the word star. The new look, which was created by KLP Scotland, puts 'star' on the neck label and adds the line 'Star of Prague' to the main body label.

Bhs credit offer

Bhs has become the first retailer to offer a credit card option to its loyalty card holders with the launch of the Bhs Gold Card, which offers up to eight weeks' credit. The launch is being handled by retail marketing specialist RMP.

Agency's panel

Justin Hicklin, Philip Slade and Matthew Brown have set up a communications agency that will work with a panel of experts with academic, retail theory, fine art and economic and social prediction backgrounds. Hicklin Slade & Partners will buy in creative talent on a project basis.

Up in the world

Airtours has promoted Anita McErlean to the new position of director of communications responsible for all the tour operator's internal and external communications. Formerly director of UK operations, McErlean joined the company in 1993 as sales director.

Chinese data launch

Euromonitor has launched *China Marketing Data and Statistics*, the first bilingual source book of business and market planning data on China, incorporating data at national, provincial and municipal level.

BUPA contract

Redwood Publishing has won the contract to produce BUPA's quarterly customer magazine, *Upbeat*, which is circulated to 650,000 BUPA members.

Signed up by Register

Former sales and marketing director of Routledge, Tim Westbrook, is joining Register Information Services, the advertising and marketing information arm of Financial Times Business. Westbrook has worked as a sales, marketing and planning consultant for the past year.

Holiday highlights

Castlemaine XXXX is sponsoring the documentary *Hot Summer Down Under* on Sky 1, which starts an eight-week run on May 3. The series follows the antics of young people on holiday in Australia.

Metz CD promotion

Metz is launching a promotional campaign for the on-trade, offering a collector series of mini-CDs featuring dance, drum and bass and big beats music. Devised by Dynamo Promotional Marketing Consultancy, the promotion will run from May 1.

BAA task

British Airports Authority has appointed The Communications Agency to launch an internal communications programme, not The Communications Consultancy as was incorrectly stated in last week's issue.

First as Martini funds TV series

By Lisa Campbell

GMTV has achieved a broadcast sponsorship first by allowing an alcohol brand to fund a series.

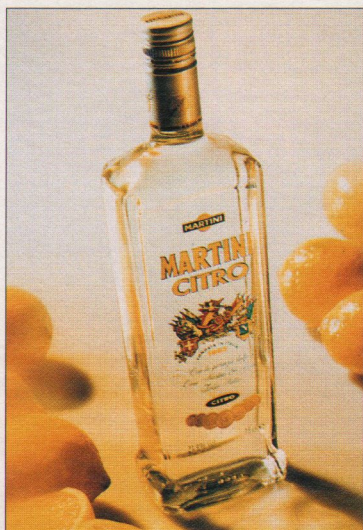
Bacardi-Martini's new product, Martini Citro, will feature on idents surrounding a new GMTV cookery programme, *Made in Italy*.

The four-week mini-series will be screened twice a week, on Mondays and Fridays, and was filmed on location in Italy.

Martini intends the series, presented by Italian chef Carla Tomasi and GMTV's Ann Davies, to reinforce its own Italian heritage at the same time as giving it a contemporary feel.

GMTV has never worked with an alcohol sponsor before and rarely allows alcohol commercials in its ad breaks. The last alcohol ad it screened celebrated Foster's centenary in January 1997.

Ray Magness, GMTV's head of broadcast sponsorship, said: "It is unusual for us to link up with alcohol. However, in this case the food, summer and Martini link was felt to be appropriate for our audience, 85% of whom are



Martini Citro: tie-in with GMTV's new series aims to reinforce Italian heritage

adults. The advertising is also not blatant alcohol but is subtle and stylish."

The new brand, a zesty, light-spirited drink, aims to expand the appeal of Martini beyond the traditional vermouth drinker.

It is pitched against Archers and Malibu and is aimed at a core mar-



ket of 25- to 34-year-old women.

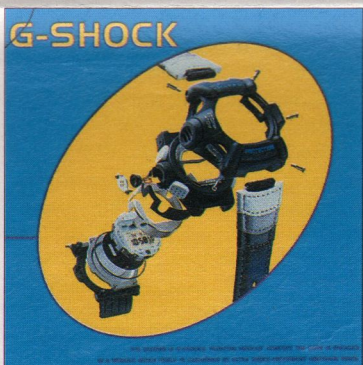
The May launch is supported by a £3m marketing campaign through HHCL & Partners. TV advertising breaks on May 11 and will run for 11 weeks. Twelve ten-second ads will also appear in GMTV ad breaks in June when the programme airs.

G-Shock winds up for £5m push

Casio has signed up advertising agency Doner Cardwell Hawkins to develop a £5m ad campaign aimed at distancing its trendy G-Shock watch from the rest of its range and making Casio the UK's biggest watch brand by the end of the year.

The pitch shortlist included Bates Dorland, Arc Advertising and Travis Sennett Sully Ross. Incumbent Peter Kane & Co pitched unsuccessfully but will continue to work on the rest of the Casio range. Travis Sennett will continue working on G-Shock across the rest of Europe.

Doner Cardwell Hawkins will produce press advertising starting in July and TV work that will break in September. Targeting 18- to 35-year-olds, it will attempt



G-Shock: targeting a wider audience

to extend G-Shock's appeal from its present cult status to a wider audience.

"Casio's mainstream range is ideally suited to retailer such as Argos, but G-Shock is distributed

through non-traditional outlets, such as fashion retailers. We want to continue appealing to style leaders but also attract style followers," said marketing manager Kevin Rogers.

Casio is currently the UK's third largest watch brand by volume and sixth by value. Rogers says the company intends to use G-Shock to make it the number-one value watch.

The shock-resistant, digital watches have been sold in the UK since 1983 and have traditionally appealed to the military due to their hard-wearing design. More recently, as combat gear has become fashionable, they have become popular in the club scene. There are 167 styles of watch selling for between £60 and £200.

UK leads the way in direct response ads

More than half of all UK press advertising now includes a direct response mechanism – well above the European average, according to new research from Register Group.

The survey, which evaluated 75,000 press ads throughout 1997, reveals that 54% of press ads feature some method for reader response, including telephone numbers, coupons, company addresses or Internet addresses. This compares with an average of 39% across western Europe.

However, the number of press ads that feature a Web site address is 4%, a figure below the European average. This rises to 7% for telecommunications advertising

and 14% for business equipment advertising.

The direct response sophistication varies dramatically across different categories. Eighty-three per cent of household appliance ads feature a response mechanism, but this figure falls to 13% for confectionery ads and 3% for tobacco ads.

Kerry Jonas, head of research at Register Group, said: "When you compare the UK with the rest of Europe, we are much more likely to include Freefone numbers (0800 numbers are now used in one in ten ads), but there is less chance of us showing a Web site address. There's bound to be a lot of change over the next year."

New Euro rules to hit retailers' warranty sales

Electrical retailers are set to lose the millions of pounds they earn from selling cover plans due to a new European directive giving consumers a two-year guarantee on white and electrical goods.

The Consumers Guarantees Directive will give consumers greater confidence when buying goods and make them less likely to buy cover plans, which can cost up to £150.

Retailers have traditionally sold these warranties to subsidise product areas where profits have been squeezed. Consumers could now face higher prices as retailers try to balance the books.

Nick Bubb, retail analyst at SG, formerly Société Générale Securities, said: "It is difficult to see how this will not affect the warranty business, especially white goods where demand for cover plans is strong."

However, electrical retailer Dixons denied that demand for its warranties would fall, as they also provide cover against accidental damage and theft.

Donovan brings new Shell writ

John Donovan, the sales promotion agency managing director who is suing Shell for copyright infringement over its Smart Card loyalty scheme, has served another writ on the oil company, this time for libel.

Donovan, whose agency, Don Marketing, has already brought three copyright actions against Shell, is suing over a press statement the oil firm released in response to his latest copyright writ.

Shell responded to the writ, served two weeks ago, by saying it was satisfied that "the claim ... is entirely without substance".

Donovan says that this implies he is bringing a claim which is "wholly bogus and false". The libel writ claims damages on the basis that Donovan's reputation has been gravely damaged and that he has "suffered acute anxiety and distress".

A spokeswoman for Shell said: "All we have done is defend our position when publicly attacked by Don Marketing."



Clothes brand Gap is to advertise its khakis on television for the first time. The campaign, which was created in-house, breaks on May 4. The series of 30-second spots will appear on Channels 4 and 5, satellite channels and in cinemas. The TV ads were directed by 'Hollywood talent' including Grammy-nominated music video director Roman Coppola. The campaign will be supported by press ads in titles such as *The Face*, *Arena* and *Men's Health*, as well as outdoor ads and in-store marketing.