

Shell

Name of promotion: Star Trek

Client: Shell

Live: March-June 1991

Agency: Don Marketing

Budget: About £4m

Object of promotion: To take Shell away from Collect and Select into "a new world of promotions"

It has to be said that Shell caused a good deal of surprise when it announced the end of its loyalty collection scheme. Its major rivals were among the many who thought it had made a mistake.

Shell itself is naturally swift to rebutt this. "As a vehicle to break away from collection schemes and get customers hooked into shorter-term promotions, Star Trek worked," says Alan McNab, national promotions manager at Shell UK.

He is happy to talk promotions in a wider sense and has lots to say about Shell's huge site redevelopment scheme in 1991. But he is reluctant to talk about Star Trek in isolation from everything Shell has done since then. Work post-Star Trek has included Explore Britain, Classic Sports car Collection, Shell Air Miles, Truckers' Choice and, most recently, Travel Games.



Shell licensees promoted the game on site

David Watson, Shell's sales promotion and advertising manager takes up the story: "Our research showed that Collect and Select meant we kept our loyal customers, but we weren't gaining new ones. Each new shorter-term promotion was geared to grabbing a portion of our competitors' customers," he says. He goes on to explain that Air Miles (geared towards high mileage drivers) and Truckers' Choice are the holding mechanic of all Shell forecourt activity as the drivers these promotions attract represent its core clientele. Both are running until the end of 1992 and possibly much longer. Watson claims that since the middle of 1991, Shell's market

share has jumped, but he cannot reveal actual figures.

Neither McNab nor Watson can say whether Star Trek attracted new customers. "It's hard to isolate the results of that one promotion" says McNab. "The promotion we're sure of is The Classic Sports car Collection."

Paul Hunter BP's promotions manager is more certain: "We can only evaluate Star Trek by its effect on us and it made no significant impression on our business. It wasn't strong enough. Shell put a lot into Star Trek without much return. We're sticking with catalogues."

Those not so closely involved in the market are kinder, but tend to agree. Sue Short from the ISP says: "It was very brave. Once you're locked into a scheme, it's difficult to woo consumers away to something new." Peter Holloway says: "Change for change's sake is dangerous, it's only justified if it's more effective." Shell might claim this has happened, but it cannot be sure what role Star Trek played. Eric Clark attributes the problem to the fact that Don Marketing worked on a one-off basis. "I don't believe that ad-hoc arrangements are in anyone's interest. The client keeps much useful market information away from such suppliers."

Radion

Promotion: Radion on-pack

Client: Lever Brothers

Live: June 1991 to February 1992

Agency: Creative Partnership Marketing

Budget: £250,000

Object of promotion: To find a way to use "real" families in a promotional way which complemented the TV ads and sold more packs. The agency picked Radio Rentals as its partner in a 'make your own commercial' campaign

Radion's first on-pack promotion is still live. Final judging of the videos does not take place until July 1992, so it will be a while before Radion yields up its treasures.

An initial comment from Peter Holloway, however, augers well. "Any promotion which promotes itself is onto a good thing." Like others, Sue Short from the ISP doesn't care for the TV ads but says the beauty of the promotion is its sheer simplicity. Radion has kept a low profile lately: but come the summer it is sure to bounce back as brash as before.

Source

Promotion: Le Picnic d'Anais Anais - a free picnic basket available to customers who bought a 50ml eau de toilette spray, retailing at £18.95.

Client: Cacharel, which is owned by Prestige and Collections, in turn, the fine fragrance arm of L'Oreal

Live: Summer 1989

Agency: Source

Budget: Undisclosed

Object of promotion: to shift 80,000 units and boost sales by 1000% (yes really).

It is almost enough to let the figures speak for themselves. This promotion met both its objectives and in those terms it can be judged a success. The key was to capture the imagination of the consumer, but be relevant to the mood of the times. The only dampener on this scenario might be from the retailer's perspective. Space is a valuable commodity for retailers and storage is scarce. Le Picnic d'Anais Anais would have taken up a lot of that valuable space. But at the end of the day, you can't argue with the figures.

Boots/BR

Promotion: Two-for one ticket offer

Client: InterCity and Boots

Live: 20 September - 10 December 1991, and 13 January - 29 March 1992
Eights weeks total.

Agency: Option One

Budget: Undisclosed

Object of promotion: to boost awareness of BR's new InterCity timetable which, with the launch of the new fleet of 225 super speed trains, it is billing as the Best Ever. Customers have to spend £5 in Boots stores before being eligible for the free ticket.

BR is waiting until the second chunk of the promotion has run its course before making a final evaluation. But BR's senior product manager, Richard Todman is happy to talk about early evaluation statistics.

"So far we reckon to have made around 1.5 to 1.75m seat reservations and there have been some 400 to 450,000 free travellers in the first period. We hope to more than double those figures in the second half."