

# Marketing to the 'sixth' sense

Fuel technology leaders, Shell, have developed a promotional activity set to raise the bar in experiential marketing. Tailored to educate consumers of the benefits of their flagship unleaded fuel, Shell V-Power, the Shell V-Power Experience combines all five senses into a sixth - the emotional sense.

The Shell V-Power Experience will be unveiled to the public at key shopping malls throughout Southern Africa. Starting at Gateway shopping centre in Umhlanga Rocks, Durban on 24 August, followed by activations at Eastgate and Sandton in Johannesburg, Canal Walk in Cape Town, Game shopping centre in Gaborone, Botswana and Maerua Mall in Windhoek, Namibia.

Fuels Brand Manager of Shell Southern Africa, Thobile Vumazonke, comments, "This promotion is part of an integrated communication strategy put together to bring the Shell V-Power brand closer to consumers. Our challenge is to engage consumers in the communication of our brand benefits rather than to merely inform, and I believe we have achieved this with the Shell V-Power Experience."

Conceived by Shell's below-the-line agency rmg:connect and Exp.Momentum, this first of its kind marketing demonstration in Southern Africa takes consumers on an innovative journey. The first stop is a digitally enhanced 3D show incorporated into this season's German Grand Prix - Hockenheim 2004. Technologically designed to be the closest thing to actually being at an F1 race, the demo allows a person to witness helicopter views, pit stop action and overtaking manoeuvres. The incorporation of 3D glasses and five-way sensory headphones creates the impression of being in a Grand prix, experiencing all the speed, excitement, action and performance.

The second part of the journey consists of a technical demonstration, educating the consumer of the benefits of Shell V-Power to their vehicles such as improved performance and engine cleaning abilities. The final destination is known as the "Power@Play Zone" and encourages consumer participation. The pressured atmosphere of the Pit Stop Challenge allows participants to work as a pit crew, competing against the clock, as well as each other. They can then face-off against each other in a scalextrix race - a replica of the Brazilian F1 circuit.

Complementing the fun elements, the promotion will also be highly educational - reminding consumers of the looming deadline of the phasing out of leaded fuel in 2006, and explain how to be prepared. While participating, consumers will be briefed on whether their model of car can use Shell V-Power, or if they require a conversion. Upon meeting the requirements, consumers will have the opportunity to obtain an official Shell V-Power certificate of unleaded petrol use.

Experiential marketing is about getting consumers to escape with the brand. The value for marketers lies in the opportunity for brands to breach the 'emotional gap' and create sustainable brand bonding opportunities in a market, which is becoming increasingly sophisticated, yet ever cynical, competitive and suspicious.

Participation in a live session makes consumers more receptive to connecting with a brand's key messages. Consumers often perceive brands like petrol as "Oh so ordinary" with little (if any) product or brand differentiation. Shell and their V-Power brand see things very differently and are proud to highlight the distinct and real differences offered by their brand and how this has been brought alive through their extremely successful relationship with Ferrari.

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