

THE DIRECTORY

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October 2012 to March 2013

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- Updated profiles of 31 leading agencies
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WHAT MAKES A BRAND ICONIC?

We asked InterbrandHealth's executive creative director, R. John Fidelino, to take a retrospective look at some of IBH's branding projects from the early '90s...

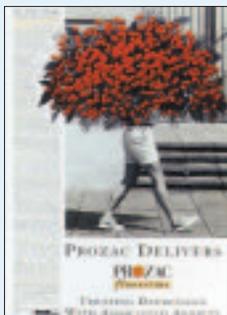
R. John Fidelino
 is executive
 creative director,
 InterbrandHealth



This ad illustrates Humalog's more humanistic attitude by showcasing people imagery and the "human" in Humalog



Humalog underwent a brand repositioning which transformed its authoritative and robotic logo to one that is a more humanistic, handwritten 'signature'



Many ad campaigns have helped make Prozac 'iconic'. In '99 a series of press ads by Lane, Earl & Cox took the theme 'Prozac Delivers'

HUMALOG

When it first launched in '96, Humalog was the wunderkind of biotechnology. It was the first insulin analogue to be launched in the world, improving upon regular insulin by providing greater glucose control. This greater control, in turn, had the benefit of offering more flexibility and convenience compared to traditional insulin.

At launch, Humalog's branding clearly focused more on the fact that it was a technological feat than any of the higher order benefits. The icon was a wireframe of a human being. Though ostensibly intended to express a patient on successful treatment it more capably conveyed engineering and technology. The figure appeared robotic, the color palette seemed more authoritative than approachable, and the typeface - though italicised, presumably to appear as if it were in action and 'on the go' to reflect the ease of use of the drug - seemed generic, heavy and non-expressive.

The overall look and feel of the brand was consistent with pharmaceutical branding at the time. Rather than evoking

emotional benefits, Humalog, like many other contemporary drug brands, focused on the science, its function and utility. It wasn't until the 2000s, when Humalog experienced competitive threats from other insulins, that it took the radical step beyond communicating its functional purpose.

Humalog underwent a brand repositioning and refresh to create a new attitude towards insulin. A more humanistic, handwritten 'signature' replaced the robotic and heavy icon/word mark; a vibrant colour palette was introduced and a stylish set of people imagery replaced the copious charts and graphs.

Rather than being a drug that one grudgingly injected everyday, Humalog was presenting itself as a solution to the deleterious effects of the disease. The new branding encouraged patients to embrace treatment by underscoring the 'human' in Humalog.

Brand positioning and identity design are key tools to navigating competitive markets and championing a new brand vision.

PROZAC

Prior to the '90s, pharmaceutical brand names sounded like chemicals. They had a consonant-vowel-consonant-vowel construction and usually ended in an -ol, -on, -in or -al. As a result of their names, drugs appeared to be for 'professional use only' and it was a time when patients were unlikely to discuss their treatments with their doctor. When a physician would prescribe a medication, the patient could not relate to it, let alone pronounce it.

Prozac by virtue of being a short, snappy brand name distanced itself from the traditional pharmaceutical set and encouraged new dialogues around both the treatment and the disease it treated. Before Prozac, mental health was not discussed openly. Those who were depressed were often alienated by society and had their condition hidden by their families.

The Prozac effect was to break down boundaries to discussion. With language

that people could use to discuss treatment, new dialogues could take place. Further, given the positive uplifting message behind the name, Prozac diminished the negative connotations of the disease.

Visually, Prozac also pulled away from the typical pharmaceutical presentation. The visuals were bold and bright and unabashedly communicated that this drug represented a new day in pharma, as well as a new hope for patients. The net effect relieved the stigma of the category and opened the door to a new generation of branding.

Other drug categories have been influenced by Prozac's ability to create new dialogues. Pfizer's Viagra and Celebrex and Merck's Gardasil are illustrative of the power brands can have in bringing attention to disease areas and encouraging discussions to take place between physicians and patients.

To see which brand campaigns have made their mark in pharma's 20-year history - and to nominate one yourself that we shouldn't leave out - go to www.thedirectorylive.com/smart_thinking/iconic_brands