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PRINT

JUNE 2007

PROFESSIONAL

marketreview

Stand-out Mainstays

Changes in labels, inks & adhesives help boost product presence

NCESSITY IS FREQUENTLY called the “mother of invention.” Even when new products evolve into cultural mainstays, there’s always room for improvement or re-positioning in the marketplace. Breweries in the United States, for instance, have been up and running since 1663, when Nicholas Vartlett opened one in Hoboken, N.J., according to the Hoboken Historical Museum and Cultural Center. Almost 400 years later, companies making and marketing beer still seek ways to maintain market presence. And no matter how successful the daily deluge of direct mail continues to be, upping response rates by adding personalized notes and incentives has become an increasingly popular advertising technique. Liquid Crystal Resource/Hallcrest—with United States facilities in Glenview, Ill.—and Middleton, Wisconsin-based NASTar have found ways to improve the visibility of these two dependable American products.



Revelation

For beer distributor Molson Coors Brewing Company, a new twist on its ubiquitous Coors label is due to premiere this month. The company selected Hallcrest’s ChromaZone thermochromic ink for its national 2007 “Chill ‘n’ Reveal” campaign. The trademark snow-capped mountains on the company’s 12-ounce Coors and Coors Light bottles will turn from the standard white to blue when the beverage reaches prime drinking temperature.

Similar campaigns (including one for Coors Ultra Light cans) have previously launched in the United Kingdom, *Aluminum Now* reported, but ChromaZone is exclusively

By Maria Raha

offered by Hallcrest in the United States. In addition, Coors is the nation's first beer to implement a campaign as large-scale as "Chill 'n' Reveal." As for Hallcrest, it specializes in the manufacturing of color-changing inks, products and dyes, and has also supplied ink to clients such as Coca-Cola, Burger King, Kellogg's and Target, noted Scott Szafranec, Hallcrest sales manager, ChromaZone products.

Coors and Hallcrest first crossed paths in 2003, but successful reproduction initially required comprehensive testing. "Not only did we have to ensure that the image changed color, but that it was vibrant and reproducible. We worked extensively with Coors and the label manufacturer in refining the ink and production process for the label," said Szafranec.

ChromaZone can be produced in either powder or dispersion (slurry) form. Coors specifically requires a water-based gravure ink for its campaign. The optimal combination of printing and ink forms, though, ultimately depends on the function of the final product. Szafranec gave the example of a black surface which changes to a rainbow when touched. "You would not be laying down enough thermochromic pigment to cover the image [with offset or flexo printing]," he said, "so [the] application would require screen printing." ChromaZone's adhesion process is also dependent on

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— SCOTT SZAFRANEC, LCR/HALLCREST

the product's substrate.

Similar to the delicate discovery of correct substrate and printing process combinations, ChromaZone inks must be treated with additional care to maintain color-changing effectiveness. Though guaranteed for one year, the quality of the color change can be affected by a number of factors, such as overexposure to UV light or improper storage. The handling might require extra maintenance, but the indication of correct drinking temperature is a marketing technique bound to catch on with other domestic beer branding efforts.

While some consumers may still contend that beer needs no improvement, both Coors and ChromaZone have found a way to imaginatively make an interactive product out of one of the nation's oldest favorites.


Impermanent Vacation

NAStar, Middleton, Wis., a manufacturer of pressure-sensitive specialty products, has watched the rise in popularity of its temporary adhesive. Founded in 1988, NAStar began by servicing the laser label industry,

according to NAStar marketing manager John Short.

"Temporary adhesive' is kind of an anomaly in its name," Short explained. "It's removable, repositionable. Unlike many removables, it will not become permanent over time, and the scope of that adhesive also varies greater than a removable." The "hydrophilic" adhesive can stick to a variety of surfaces, including glass, wood and moist surfaces, he continued.

NAStar's line of SellNotes, consisting of MailNotes and NewsNotes, can be affixed to a variety of direct mail items or newspapers, respectively. MailNotes are pattern-coated with temporary adhesive and can be applied to magazines or envelopes. "[Our flag pattern is] United States Postal Service-approved, [and it has] one strip of adhesive," he described. "We could do a pattern [however a client would] like, but the postal service has approved the flag pattern in both high gloss as well as uncoated yellow, which is more like the traditional Post-it Note."

Necessity might have always been the mother of invention, but today, reinvention is a necessity. 



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