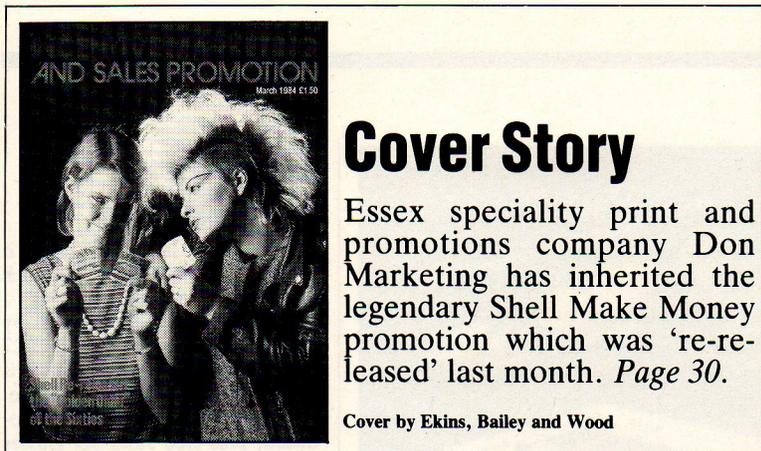


INCENTIVE MARKETING AND SALES PROMOTION

March 1984 £1.50



Shell Re-releases
the "Golden Oldie"
of the Sixties



Cover Story

Essex speciality print and promotions company Don Marketing has inherited the legendary Shell Make Money promotion which was 're-released' last month. *Page 30.*

Cover by Ekins, Bailey and Wood

What about the tiger tails?

One begins to wonder just how observers of the future, morbid social historians and wistful aged grannies alike, will gaze back and judge the 1980s.

We've had the Gay Twenties, the Depression Years, the years of hope and restrained development in the Fifties and the boom and excited exuberance of the 1960s. The Seventies were sobering years when the world learned that the promise of the 1950s and the innovative fulfilment of the 1960s had to be paid for.

Three years in and the Eighties seem to be a very dull decade indeed.

Quite apart from the doom-laden and dismal political climate which seems to hang over us all like a grey pall, the 1980s seem to lack the adventure and optimistic zest for the future which marked the first two decades following the fighting 'Forties.

Innovation, if and when it occurs, tends to be either imitative or laden with nostalgia for the halcyon days earlier in the century. Our telly screens these days are filled with some excellent drama — but nearly all of it is related to decades now viewed through rose tinted cathode ray tubes. And pop music, not everybody's taste by any means, seems to have stuck firmly in a groove dated 1969.

Twiddle the knob on a transistor radio and sooner or later out pour the tuneful sounds and lyrics of the 1960s.

Below the line activity, we tell ourselves, is the communication discipline of the 1980s meeting the new tougher requirements of the marketplace. Well, some of us do. Not, it seems, the folk at Shell.

How terribly dull and 'Eighties' of the oil giant to re-release its great hit of the 1960s. How equally dull and predictable for its competitors to launch a defensive price war.

Who knows — Esso might start giving away those wretched tiger tails again. Still, the 1980s version of Make Money is not *quite* the same as the 1960s parent...

No envelopes this time, just fold-overs with perforations similar to those old-fashioned GPO Lettercards. And the prizes are bigger — one Aberdonian has already won £10,000 but refuses to let Shell get the valuable PR spin-off because he is afraid of getting begging letters from the nation's tabloid newspaper readers.

Roll on 1990. Please.

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Volume 19

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Contents

- 6 Promotions in Action
- 10 Advertising Gifts
- 12 Diary
- 16 1984 ISP Award Nominations
- 19 Incentive Travel
- 24 Guidelines for users:
Alan Owens on using Incentive Travel
- 26 Guidelines for users:
John Williams on Sales Promotion technique
- 30 Shell's Make Money returns
- 32 Using AV to Motivate
- 39 Tabloid Press look-alike Bingo Promotions
- 51 Sales Promotion and The Law

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FORECOURT PROMOTIONS

The 1984 version of the famous Shell Make Money campaign has set alight the battle among the petroleum companies, and could lead to a renewal of the sort of promotional campaigns that were so familiar in the late 1960s.

In those days the petrol majors ran a succession of massive campaigns, most of which were based on collectables. Esso's World Cup and FA Cup Centenary medals, Texaco's regimental badges and Cleveland's historic campaign medals were examples. But Shell's campaign was certainly the most successful, boosting the company's petrol sales by a staggering 30 per cent, and becoming a sales promotion legend in the process.

Shell is not expecting its current promotion to equal that sort of achievement.

For one thing, it probably could not cope with the extra gallonage, and for another, the promotional environment has changed a lot since the 1960s. As Shell's retail advertising and services manager Mike Beach puts it: 'There is a lot more promotional noise now than there was then, and consumers are rather more hard-bitten than they were.'

Nevertheless, the promotion is on a massive scale, costing Shell more than £2m and involving the distribution of more than 60 million game pieces through more than 2,000 of Shell's sites. And its attraction to the public, with more than a million prizes and top prizes of £10,000 (100 times bigger than the top prize in 1966) should ensure massive public response.

Like the original game, the 1984 version is based on giving drivers half a note, printed like a banknote, when they visit Shell stations.

If they can match the note with another half collected on a later visit to a Shell forecourt, they win the amount shown on

A return to the Sixties — an 18 year old legend is back with us again; but times have changed and Don Marketing had to trim the old technique to meet the needs of the more hard-bitten consumers of the 1980s.

Shell is back making money

the matching halves.

No purchase is necessary.

Filling station staff will give one game piece per day to the driver of any motor vehicle, including motorcycles.

In 1966 the game caused something of a fever among the public even leading to a spate of ads in the classified columns as people advertised for matching halves. This time, as well as the top £10,000 prizes, there are others at £1,000, £100, £10, £1 and 50p.

There are some other important changes in the game, apart from the value of the prizes.

Don Marketing, the Hornchurch based promotional games specialist, has structured a much more sophisticated game piece, involving a high level of technological innovation to remove the risk of fraud — so necessary with the large

amounts of money involved.

Don also undertook the massive and complex task of ensuring an even distribution of winning notes — not easy when the numbers are so great that, if the pieces were stacked one on top of each other, the pile would be nine miles high!

The reasoning behind Shell's surprise move back into promotions is explained by Beach:

'After so many years of price cutting, the past year has been relatively stable where the majors are concerned, even though some of the minors have continued to cut hard.

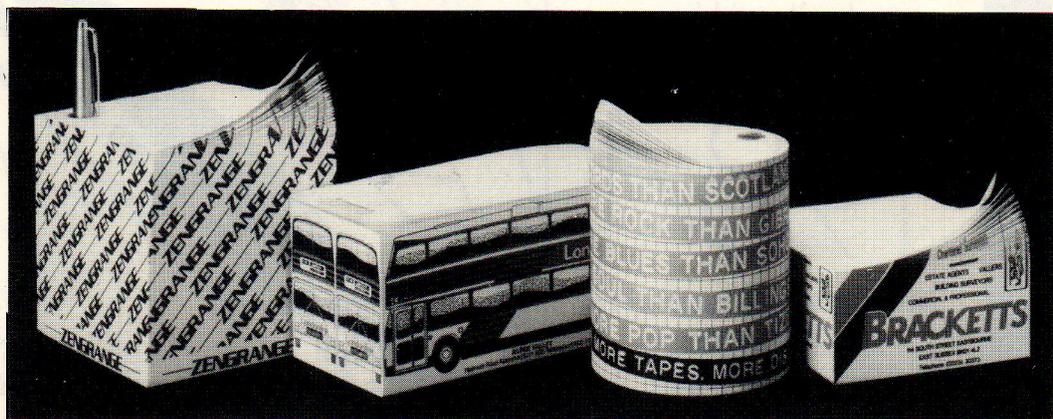
'We hope for a continuing stability in the coming year, and there is clearly some growth in the market. There is an increasing number of cars on the roads and petrol is now a good buy.

'It takes fewer hours of work to earn the

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Don Marketing managing director John Chambers with the new Make Money.

money to pay for a gallon than it did 20 years ago — even though that is not how it is perceived — and cars have better fuel economy.'

At the same time as the market was stabilising, Shell came to the end of a massive programme of rationalisation, refurbishment and conversion to self-service, so that it was in a strong position to handle a big promotion successfully.

'In this situation', says Beach, 'we felt it was important to re-establish the Shell brand, following more than a decade in which we have not promoted it, either above or below the line, other than through price.'

'Our advertising has been purely corporate in nature.'

Beach explains that after so long a gap any promotion had to be a real blockbuster.

'We looked at collectables, but they were not big enough in impact, and Make Money has the advantage that it is intrinsically ours and there is lots of residual affection for it among the public.'

'We could not find anything better, and we finally accepted the argument Don Marketing had originally put to us in its favour as much as two-and-a-half years ago.'

There are, of course, a number of important differences between the 1966 and 1984 games.

In the first place, where the half note was contained within an envelope in the earlier version, this year it is printed on the inside of the envelope, which represents a big cost saving.

But Don Marketing director John Chambers lays more emphasis on the improved security of the new version.

He explains that nobody had used a similar type of envelope game for many years, and this meant that its security had not been tested against the much greater

sophistication of today's consumers.

'We had to be sure that, with all the electronic gadgetry at their disposal, they could not find a way of beating the system. And with the big increase in the value of the top prizes that was an important consideration.'

That is why the game incorporates eight different security devices. For instance, the smaller denomination winners are being paid out on the forecourt (those of £100 and upwards are being handled by Don), and the Shell dealers can check their validity by activating a special fugitive ink incorporated in the note.

And where the big denomination notes are concerned, a special secret code will even make it possible to trace the area of the country in which they were handed out.

The envelope can be opened only by tearing along perforated lines, and, to prevent see-through, special printing techniques were used. The reverse is printed in silver, and the inside front of the envelope incorporates a special design that makes it impervious to light.

Complex mathematics and printing arrangements were necessary to ensure that the right number of winning notes was printed, and that they were distributed in such a way as to ensure that each filling station gets a fair share of winners. With more than 60 million game pieces this called for a high level of expertise.

The printing operation itself was carried out under conditions of tight security.

The plates for the winning half notes were held in the printer's local bank, and never left the sight of Don Marketing director Don Redhead from the moment

they left the bank right up to the moment when the necessary number of halves had been printed and the plates were broken up.

Both Shell and Don Marketing were delighted that a British printer, Dobson and Crowther, was able to do this sophisticated work, even though, at one stage, the threat of a national printing dispute put this in doubt.

Don Marketing chairman John Donovan, who has extensive experience of sourcing print requirements from all over the world, reckons that very few companies could have coped with either the technical requirements or the time pressures of the Shell job.

'You cannot go to just any printer and expect it to turn the tap on for a job like this,' he explains.

The promotion is being backed up by a national TV advertising campaign through Ogilvy and Mather that is aimed at reaching 80% of motorists at least five times on average. This is being supported by full pages in the popular national dailies and by a £1.4m campaign on radio, aimed at catching motorists while they are on the road.

During the promotion, there will also be press advertising and a public relations effort announcing the big winners. Presentations will be held on the forecourts of the fillup stations that have given away the big winners, and these events will be supported by local TV and press coverage.

The campaign is being reinforced by an incentive campaign based on Bonusbonds which will be awarded to staff on retail sites. When they pay out a prize to a motorist, they write their name on the half note and send it in to the appropriate Shell regional office to take part in a weekly draw.

And, of course, all participating sites receive a full POS kit including a poster to mount on a free-standing sign, hose nozzle stickers, stanchion flags, shop door stickers, cash till wobblers, change mats, staff badges and car stickers to give away.

Mike Beach is hoping that, after some limited initial price cutting by competitors, the battle will settle down to a promotional battle rather than a price battle.

He would simply like the best marketer to win, and that promotions will offer a way out of the crippling expensive cuts of recent years. The cost of even a major promotion like Make Money is far smaller than taking pence off petrol, and Make Money should bring some fun back to the driver's life. □