



## Retail management and marketing

*PR in retailing*

### **BRUCE MCLACHLAN:**

Fever PR is a consumer. PRH&C. We handle a number of consumer entertainment food and drink retail brands. Our client base includes such diverse brands as Canon, Toshiba, Warner Brothers, American Express, and Amazon.co.uk. I think the way in which a retailer manages its brand reputation or the way it's perceived by its customers, its potential future customers and its shareholders is of huge significance. One of the big implementing factors in consumers buying from a particular retailer is a sense of brand loyalty that it's important to consumers that they feel that the retailer they are purchasing from shares their values or offers products that are right for them and their lifestyle. And one of the most effective ways that a retailer can manage those perceptions is through public relations. I think the first stage in any public relations campaign is to look at what the business objectives are. What does the business want to achieve. So in the case of Amazon, it may be increased awareness with certain demographics. It might be that they want to be known for being particularly good value or having good delivery services in particular areas that they retail in. And in the second stage is to work out which channels are available to communicate to customers, to different stakeholders, what's the best way of using those channels and which are the best messages and means of communicating via those channels. Ideally PR should be part of an integrated marketing approach. And what I mean by that is that what happens in the public relations channel should follow the same principles and create guidelines as the activity that happens in the marketing channel or the advertising channels. So for example over the last few years as green issues have become more prominent, that's another filter that consumers are applying when they choose where they are going to shop or where they are going to buy their products. As such, consumers increasingly expect companies to be acting responsibly in that area. Of course it's one thing to be acting responsibly in that area, it's another to make that sure the public, the consumers, the customers know that you're acting responsibly in that area.

### **JANE POWELL:**

My name is Jane Powell and I work for The Green Shop in Bisley in Gloucestershire. It's a sustainable building, we sell sustainable products. Over the years, the words green, environmental, eco came more and more onboard but that's how we started it off, selling from anything as I said, bars of soap, cleaning products, anything to do with sustainable products, eco-products, local, organic, whatever we could find, you know we would sell, obviously we would look into all the products in a really deep way, but that's how we started it off.

### **JOHN VINCENT:**

This is Ludgate Circus Leon, which used to be a pub and I'm John Vincent and I start a Leon with my friend Henry and also with my friend Allegra about 6 and a half years ago now. When it comes to ethics and whether we can change food culture and change food industry. There is this institution imperative and it's very difficult for a CEO to turn around to set of shareholders within McDonalds and say, "we're going to add 3 or 4% points to the cost, in order to be more ethical" and it's very difficult for them to do that. However, I cannot see, given the installed base that all these people have. I think that change will come as much from them copying us, as it will from us growing. We see it already, I think the biggest impact that we've made, I think, is not just through the 50,000 people we serve each week, it's through the change that is being made, that affects the millions of the people that already shop, at McDonalds or Sainsbury's or Tesco, and I think that they are, those companies are changing what they do because of what the small players are doing. So I think inherently, those companies are a moral. I'm not saying they're immoral but those companies are a moral, they will only do what is right for the bottom line, and they will only do what the consumer makes them do through their wallet and through their spend, and if we can influence the consumer behaviour and the consumer attitude so that they force those a moral,

not immoral but those a moral companies to change, I think we'll have as bigger impact on society through doing that as we will on growing organically ourselves.

**JANE POWELL:**

We had this building built, we wanted to know what our carbon footprint was per member of staff, so I actually worked it all out, it was pages and pages of questions I had to work out and basically our carbon footprint is 1.34 tonnes per member of staff. Whereas an ordinary office or an ordinary shop is between 3 and 4 tonnes per member of staff. So we're really really pleased with that, we've got our carbon footprint right down.

**JOHN VINCENT:**

We are part of an organisation called the Sustainable Restaurant Association. As part of that, one of the things you measure is the carbon footprint of the entire business. In terms of the carbon footprint, one flight, it's almost like 7 weeks of carbon dioxide produced by the entire business. I think in terms of the actual business itself, the very fact that it comes through a single chain; the very fact that before it comes to that chain it's been sourced mostly within the UK and that it hasn't been flown has a big impact.

**BRUCE MCLACHLAN:**

I think the focus on social responsibility, corporate social responsibility, has probably died down a little in the last 2 years as the recession has, has taken hold because consumers have, are more focused now on price, than they are on maybe, companies environmental or social credentials, but it's only going to become more important in the future, and it's going to be a very very big issue for the retail industry in particular.