

“Once upon a time, Batey was like the Beatles”

● David Tang on Batey's decline, page 18

ANALYSIS 1

Stengel looks to a life beyond Procter & Gamble

The former head of global marketing at the world's largest marketer prepares to make his mark on his own. By Asiya Bakht

PROFILE

When you've taken on the biggest job in marketing — and done so to wide acclaim — what do you do next? For most, the question is academic; for Jim Stengel, former global marketing officer of Procter & Gamble (P&G), it's his next career move.

While at P&G, Stengel commanded an ad budget of US\$6 billion, and is credited with transforming the company's marketing function into one of the most consumer-centric, innovative and even creative in the business. It was Stengel who, famously, led the ‘Proctoids’ to Cannes in an attempt to beef up their creativity.

Now he is swapping the corporate machine of the world's largest advertiser for his own business (named after himself), in an attempt to “make an impact beyond P&G”. He certainly has lofty ambitions. “Look at the state of marketing right now,” he says. “Brands could be much healthier. Agencies are sometimes confused about what is important and are unable to understand what their role is. There isn't a common measurement. I think all these things are opportunities and I can help address them coming from my position of experience and reputation.”

With the new venture and a book due out in 2010 — titled *Packaged Good*, it is designed to raise standards in the industry — he is clearly relishing his new life. “In the corporate world you have so much responsibility — there are too many things you are involved in. Now I will still have day-to-day business but I will be able to float around to different activities that I think will help me reach my goal.”

It's easy to see why Stengel, who came to Asia to speak at the Global Brand Forum in Malaysia in December, rose through the ranks in his 25 years at Procter & Gamble. He likes to listen to others and build consensus rather than court controversy — in person, he can seem like an affable professor rather than a hotshot marketer. The head of one P&G agency de-



Stengel... after 25 years at P&G, he is writing a book and has set up his own consultancy, giving him the freedom to move from one business project to another

scribes him as “incredibly refreshing, open to outside learning and stimulus sources”. In conversation he is patient and calm, interested and focused — an excellent mentor, you might think.

A highlight of Stengel's time with Procter & Gamble was introducing innovative thinking, or “an openness to better ideas” in its marketing. In practice, that involved benchmarking “admirable companies” such as Nike and Google with whom P&G started exchanges and shared learning. “We changed many of the ways we work,” he says. “We changed agencies, we changed how we think about innovation. We started to think more about total innovation, not just product innovation.”

Stengel helped change the compensation model for ad agencies to link it more closely with sales. But at the same time he helped put cre-

Jim Stengel's CV

- 2008** Founder, Jim Stengel
- 2001** Global marketing officer, P&G
- 2000** Vice-president, global baby care strategic planning, marketing and new business development, P&G
- 1997** General manager (rising to VP), Europe baby care, P&G
- 1995** General manager, Czech and Slovak Republics, P&G Europe, Middle East and Africa
- 1993** Marketing director, US cosmetic products, Hunt Valley, P&G
- 1991** Advertising manager, shortening and oils, Olestra, P&G
- 1983** Various roles, Jif and Duncan Hines brands, P&G

ativity at the heart of a marketing function known for dull-but-effective work — hence the trips to Cannes, and the introduction of agencies such as Wieden & Kennedy onto its agency roster.

Stengel is reluctant to spend too much time talking about his former employer, though he does believe that the group's ‘Asia one’ initiative, which centralises operations across the region into a single unit, will raise its game in the region. “The whole purpose behind it is to make Asia stronger,” he says. “This is the most important region of the future. We have a lot of talent here, and are developing more talent here. There is momentum and innovation and buzz. India and China are the big ones but you see P&G investing a lot in Malaysia, the Philippines and Australia.”

Stengel really comes alive when looking ahead. At P&G he devel-

oped a reputation for his candid thoughts on the breakdown of traditional advertising. He's still convinced that “the old model no longer exists”.

So is there a new model? “I am not sure,” he says. “There won't be one answer. You have to put more importance on the creativity of the organisations. When I was young, advertising was pretty standard. Marketing is going to get more and more differentiated, a place of ideas that come from organisations in touch with their consumers.”

And as his life of consultancy begins, that is his key message: that the best marketers will be those that allow themselves to be guided by consumers. “You have to have an aspirational goal about what impact you are trying to make. You have to be driven by something beyond,” he says. “Think of coming to work for a higher call.”

CHATTER

“We hereby declare a ‘four nos’ policy: We will not watch it, appear on it, listen to it, or talk about it.”

A group of 22 academics and lawyers launch a campaign against Chinese state TV.

“It's a slap in the face to show this young woman because she'd never have the money to shop there, whereas I do.”

A 50-year-old woman in a UK survey points out the key flaw in using young models in luxury brand ads.

“One needs to acknowledge that more often than not you are interrupting private conversations.”

Moray MacLennan, president of the UK's Institute of Practitioners in Advertising, spells out the problem with social media.

“There's a underlying sense amongst some of us in the Apple community that [Steve] Jobs may never return as the company's CEO, and that he's slowly saying his goodbyes.”

Kasper Jade, editor of Appleinsider.com, predicts that Apple has seen the last of Steve Jobs.

“That's going to stop.”

New Yahoo CEO Carol Bartz tells armchair analysts in no uncertain terms that their advice is no longer welcome.