

The Star / The Sun

Advertising proposals

Advertising before the launch of the newspaper will be designed to build anticipation and interest.

A stylised star (or sun) will be designed as a graphic brand for the new paper and make its first appearances in thinsheet posters displayed at future dealerships. The design will be built around a bold rendering of the brand image and a catchy tagline, such as “A Star is Born”, “Bright Star Rising”, “Catch a Rising Star”, “Star Quality”, “Wish on this Star”. (There are an equal number of aphorisms we can use to support the idea of The Sun).

Supporting television will consist of short ads featuring the brand, rendered in 3D, pulsing gently with an inner light and slowly, ever so slowly, spinning on a field of white. The text above wipes on, then is replaced with “Coming Soon” or “In your hands, September 1”.

Upon launch, the sheet posters are torn down.

One month after launch, we proceed with a television campaign of street interviews of Star readers, capturing their excitement about the new publication. These new ads will have a verité, “met you on the street” approach, with readers talking excitedly about their favourite aspects of The Star.

Finding our place in the firmament

Why do people buy newspapers? If it were only to get news, they would listen to radio or watch CNN. Newspapers represent the zeitgeist of their readers, their sense of themselves and their perspective on the world.

They read to be informed about developments in their world. That world is defined by their interests, their peers, their hopes and their dreams, but ultimately, it is a world of their own making and their own perception.

Newspapers represent the prospects of their readers. It is why they react badly when there is a spate of murders, rejoice when the lost are found and laugh when people make fools of themselves in public.

They will embrace a newspaper that speaks their language and understands their world and reject one in which they find nothing of interest.

For many decades, the Guardian has represented the best hopes of the majority of the people of Trinidad and Tobago. Raised to pursue education and embrace knowledge, they saw in the Guardian a place where those aspirations were justified.

The writing was exceptional, photographs were illustrative of all that was proper and the world more successfully aspired to noble ideals. The Guardian is still, for most of its readers, still that newspaper, even when we stretch and bend the boundaries of the past.

The Express most neatly embraces the thoughts and dreams of the modern reader. In that newspaper, the world is only slightly polished by the skill of writers and photographers. The vibe is real and the pages pulse with a sense of the streets.

There's enough good writing to satisfy those who would have come to the Guardian in the past and enough boldness in its coverage to prompt a sense of excitement in its younger readers. But there are places it won't go.

Not so with Newsday. Newsday is raw and bloody, a jagged reminder of the world as it is. This newspaper doesn't cover its communities, it immerses itself in them, probing the people and finding the petty and human bacchanals that make for riveting reading.

Like a car crash, the paper draws people in crowds, but confront many of them about their choice and they will become sheepish and evasive. It's a guilty pleasure but a popular one.

This is the market into which we will be introducing the Star, a newspaper that must, from early on, indicate to its readers its style, intent and appeal.

Target Market

The Star's market lies in the space between The Express and Newsday, and its success will depend on pulling readers from the lower end of the Express and the upper end of Newsday.

It must do so by playing to the strengths of both newspapers and mixing them with a bright, energetic sense of style.

Newsday pulls readers with brisk, pointed stories and a broad sense of community. It covers Trinidad and Tobago with enthusiasm, showing up for shows, performances, cocktail parties and meetings. There sometimes seems like there is no event too small to warrant a story and a picture.

The news and features are big on photographs and short on words. It's not unusual in Newsday to find a story that takes up less space on a page than its headline.

The Express covers news with insight and savvy, offers features with bold, bright photography and good writing and delivers a package which never fails to make bold use of good pictures.

To succeed, The Star must make use of these clear selling points and present a package that appeals to a new generation of readers.

The Star's audience will be defined less by age than by need. These readers want stories that get to the point quickly. They have no time for long, involved explanations.

They want to be shown as well as told. They demand bright, innovative photography that illustrates and illuminates their world.

Show them colour, show them tragedy, show them excitement and drama and they will be a part of the Star.

Presentation

The Star will emphasise bold, high quality photography of current events. These photographs may dramatically illustrate a situation or give the reader a special view to which they would not otherwise have been privy.

The Star's photography will drive its image, looking for photographs that effectively compete with television coverage by holding readers for a second look.

Stories will be driven by human interest, exploring the "people" side of events; who is involved, what happened to them, where are they now, how do they feel?

Readers should be drawn into the action and feel compelled to return and discover what else is new in their world with each edition of the paper.

Distribution

Selling The Star will be most effectively done on a person to person exchange. Building an effective sales force will be a key component in getting the newspaper to readers. Potential sellers will be sought in community centres, youth groups and NGO's such as Servol.

We are ideally looking for someone young, unemployed and with a fair basic education who can't seem to make a start for themselves.

They will be coached on effectively approaching potential purchasers and other methods of successfully launching a career as a Star salesperson.

In-house competitions will reward sales goals for street sellers and drive a more effective effort at in-person sales.