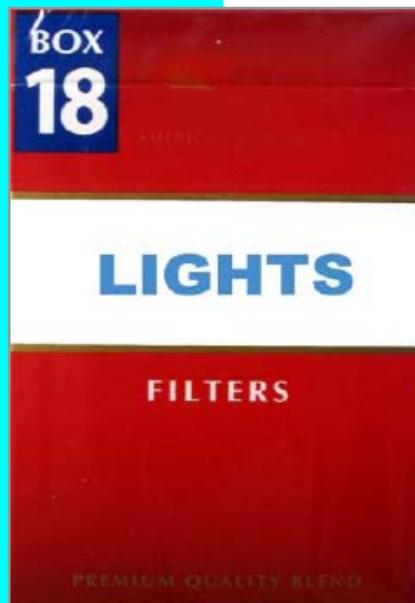


Tobacco Industry Tactics



Cool but Deadly



How Cancer is Packed
in Malaysia, the Philippines
and Vietnam



Introduction

As countries in ASEAN are gradually implementing Article 13 of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) which comprehensively ban tobacco advertisements, sponsorships and promotions, the tobacco industry has devised new strategies to promote its products with innovative pack and product designs. These can be seen as one of the last channels in which the industry can reach out to the consumers.

Tobacco industry uses the pack as:

- a vehicle for creating a presence at the point-of-sale,
- a means to communicate the image of the brand, and
- a means to create a product that contributes to the identity of the smoker.¹

The pack can be said to be a versatile advertising medium and it is carried by the smoker most of the time. Furthermore, new packaging is a device to appeal to the younger group.^{2,3} Creative cigarette packs are designed to appeal to these potential purchasers and targeted to those already smoking the brand, those smoking other brands and those not yet smoking but who might be persuaded to take it up. This is the reason why the industry is thwarting any attempt to place graphic health warnings on the large surfaces of the pack.

Besides having attractive packs, the industry also manipulates the cigarette or tobacco product such as introducing a new flavour, tube dimension (referring to the dimension of cigarette stick), filter type, a new category or subcategory of “light”, “mild” or “low tar” cigarette. Studies have found that these descriptors are deceptive because they convince smokers that there is a safe alternative to quitting.

The Tobacco Journal International, a publication of the tobacco industry, has recently stated that:

“

A radical change in the design of the packaging may be the easiest and cheapest way to make a significant impact in the marketplace.⁴

”

The above statement is not new but highly pertinent to the current situation when the venues in which the industry can advertise and promote have been drastically curtailed by the FCTC. Packaging and product design have been used in countries like Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam because advertisements are now restricted at the point-of-sale (POS).⁵ This report presents results obtained from monitoring of cigarette packs and product designs introduced by the tobacco industry in these three countries in year 2007. Malaysia has the most variety of innovative pack designs and appears to be the testing ground for the industry in ASEAN.

FCTC Article 13:
Tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship

Parties recognize that a comprehensive ban on advertising, promotion and sponsorship would reduce the consumption of tobacco products.

Malaysia: The ASEAN 'Central' Market for Pack Design

Monitoring of the tobacco companies since 2006 revealed that the industry optimized the use of the cigarette pack by introducing:

- special editions in conjunction with festival events,
- attractive pack designs targeting the young, and
- pack with promotional items and expanded size packs.

On an average there were about three to four new designs every month.

In 2006, Dunhill introduced the first 'wallet pack' which used the inner surfaces of conjoined packs as an advertising medium. This is also an ingenious way to circumvent graphic health warnings that is printed in the front and back panels of the pack.



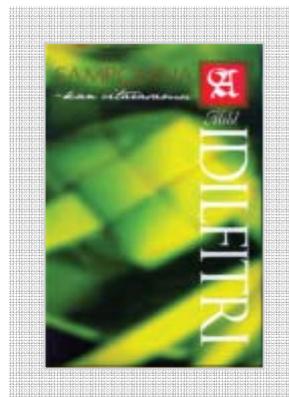
Tobacco advertisements on the insides of the wallet pack(2006).

Festival and Event-Related Design

BAT Malaysia and Philip Morris have engaged in "occasion marketing", using cultural and religious festivals such as Chinese New Year, *Hari Raya Aidilfitri*, and Deepavali as opportunities to run special promotions offering reduced-price cigarettes as a bonus with the aim to strengthen brand equity.



Marlboro release this special edition for the October 2007 Motor GP.



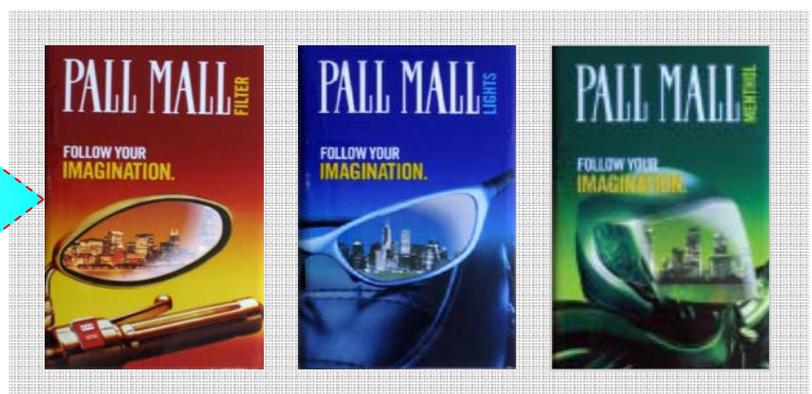
Sampoerna produced a festive pack with exotic design for *Hari Raya Aidilfitri*, 2007.



Marlboro twin packs in a hexagonal tube container for Chinese New Year in 2007.

Attractive Pack Designs Targeting the Young

BATM marketed Pall Mall, its value brand with a series of three designs targeting the youth with the tagline 'Follow your imagination' in January 2007.



Packs with Promotional Items

The legislation bans gifts with cigarettes and thus it is not illegal for cigarettes to come with lighters, ashtrays or any other items that one has to pay for a token sum.



Dunhill's limited edition gift pack for *Hari Raya* comes with a greeting card, lighter and a case. (October 2008).

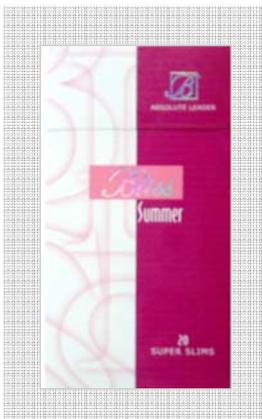
Expanded Size Pack

Tobacco industry has been using enlarged packs to make a pack more visible and prominent on the display shelves.



Pall Mall limited edition pack with 23 sticks priced at RM6.80 (US 2.13).

The industry has produced flavoured cigarettes (other than menthol and kreteks) because there is no legislation - not only in Malaysia - that bans the production of exotic flavoured cigarettes like strawberry, cherry, orange, cappuccino and others. They obviously target the youth especially women with the deception that these products are harmless. Undeniably, it is a growing prevalence in Malaysia and youth fancies such products because the flavour masks or reduces tobacco odour.



Bliss targets female smokers with its slimmer and longer cigarettes that look more elegant when held in the hand (2006).



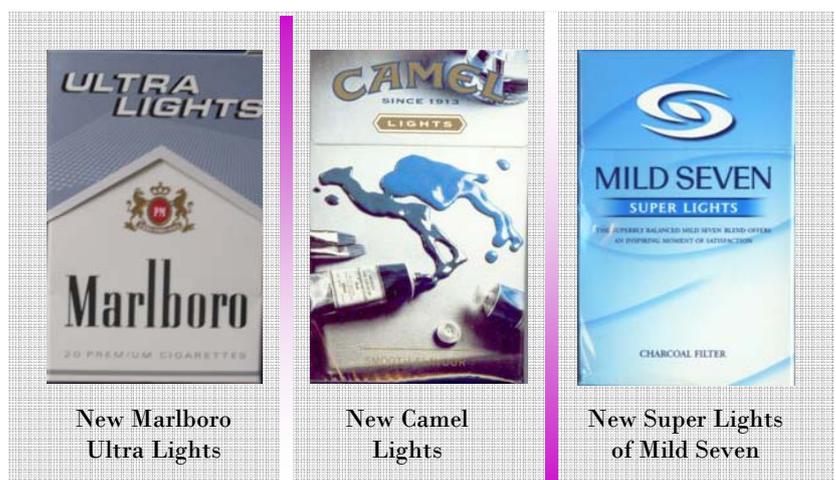
'John' cigarette with normal diameter and size meant for male smokers.



SKL imported strawberry flavoured cigarettes but other flavours are also available.

L&M has produced 'special blends'; Dunhill has the 'Platinum' series and 'top leaf' cigarettes; and Marlboro came out with Mint flavour, Ultra Lights and Mild Seven, Super Lights. It demonstrates that there is a divergence from the norm of just using 'Lights' and/or 'Mild'.

After more than 90 years in the market, Camel has reinvented itself by introducing a 'light' cigarette with a new pack design colored light blue, visually enhancing the smooth and mild image in January 2007.



New Marlboro Ultra Lights

New Camel Lights

New Super Lights of Mild Seven

The Philippines: The Way To Go

In July 2007, the Philippines' health department ordered local government units to remove all outdoor advertising of cigarettes in line with a ban that took effect a month earlier. Despite the law, some tobacco manufacturers have defied the ban on billboard advertising and have filed a suit to challenge the prohibition.

However, by July 2008, tobacco industry in the Philippines would not have the liberty they are enjoying now in putting up outdoor and indoor advertisements. However, promotions at POS will still be permitted. With a ban on posters and other channels of advertising, tobacco industry has produced some innovative methods of advertising. Their attention has begun to shift to the cigarette packs, promotions and POS.

Kiddie packs are easily available and about 30 million of the 85 million population are smokers of which 12 million are adult men and 4.5 million are children aged between 13 and 15.

Single sticks are also available in the Philippines and this aggravates children smoking prevalence, particularly those living in poverty.

Cigarette packs with innovative designs and flavoured cigarettes were common targeting at the young and the new smokers.



Marlboro in 4 pouches of 5s strapped together and strung up for display. The reason given is that the flavour is sealed in. However, retailers are known to remove the strap and sell the pouches individually.



Kiddie pack in 4 sticks are available in the market.



A Marlboro special edition pack with attractive multi-colour pack design.



A Dunhill wallet pack with advertisements—Digital lifestyle... Get a twin pack of Dunhill and participate in a competition found on the pack to win digital products.



Handmade flavoured cigarettes like chocolate truffles and cappuccino are few of many flavours.



A Winston special expanded size pack design to promote a concert sponsored by Japan Tobacco International (JTI) company as well as promoting a contest to win a trip to Dublin, Seattle or Stockholm.

Vietnam: Emerging Trend

Both direct and indirect advertisements have been banned, including at POS. Being unable to advertise any longer, the industry has still been able to produce twin packs, promotional packs, packs with sleeves, kiddie packs, multi-pack discount, and sale of single sticks.

A study that monitored point-of-sale in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi revealed that the most popular form of promotion is multiple pack discount on many brands including State Express 555, White Marlboro, Craven A and Vinataba.⁶ Other promotional methods are discount on single packs and providing gifts (such as key chains, lighters, ashtray, cap, calendar and tee-shirts).

Imported Dunhill Platinum series of cigarettes and the more expensive 'top leaf' pack appeared on the display shelves of Vietnam. Top leaves are leaves growing at the top of the tobacco plant and they are also known as 'tips'. These narrow and pointed leaves often have higher nicotine content than other leaf positions.⁷ It is a premium quality brand and more expensive.

State Express 555 brand comes as International, Classic and Light whose flavour denoted by its pale yellow, almost to white pack. Triple five is among the top sellers for imported cigarettes in Vietnam. Other flavours available include mint and honey flavours.



A pack with a lighter as a promotional item.



Imported Dunhill Platinum series with metal casing been sold in celebration of its 100 year anniversary.



Pall Mall in a flip top hard plastic casing.



555 Express comes in an attractive plastic casing.



Coffee flavoured Craven A cigarette.
Expanded Dunhill pack with 20 sticks arranged in a row to make it more salient and visible.

Best Practice Recommendations

Implement Article 11 of the FCTC on packaging and labeling of tobacco product.

It is recommended that the tobacco control legislation should emulate Singapore and Thailand in introducing graphic health warning that covers at least 50% of the top front and top back panels of the cigarette packs.

Misleading information should be banned.

Misleading information refer to:

- 1) Emission numbers (e.g. tar, nicotine and carbon monoxide numbers) because these do not reflect the actual level of risk
- 2) Descriptors such as Light and Mild. They are misleading because smokers tend to compensate the level of their nicotine requirement by taking more puffs, inhaling deeper, or resorting to smoking more cigarettes.

Ban on flavoured cigarettes.

Cigarettes with flavours such as strawberry, orange, cappuccino and others are targeted at young smokers and they mislead them to think that flavoured cigarettes are less harmful.

Banning the display of cigarette packs.

The cigarette packs should be kept below the counter and not in cabinets above because, as Thailand has experienced, the POS may leave the doors of the cabinet ajar to expose the cigarette packs within.

Ban the use of promotional items as incentives that encourage the purchase of tobacco products by the public.

The law on tobacco advertising ban should include the ban on discount packs and kiddie packs as well as ban on use of promotional items.

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