

One giant jigsaw

Three heavyweights in a unique data-sharing scheme. But how does the Jigsaw Consortium keep all the pieces together? By **Holly Acland**

Liz Harlow believes she has a unique job. "No one in the UK has a job like mine," she says. "No one in Europe in fact," she adds, warming to the theme. There's a pause. "No one in the world," she finishes dramatically.

So what is so singularly different about this woman's job? Firstly, Harlow boasts around a quarter of the top 100 grocery brands as 'clients'. She manages a database of ten million people and has an ongoing relationship with one million through a magazine. She was the first employee of the Jigsaw Consortium, the UK's most ambitious FMCG data warehousing project ever.

So, while 'unique' is a much abused word, in Harlow's case it is a fair descriptor. She joined Jigsaw in 1999 as general manager having already earned her spurs in the marketing industry as relationship marketing manager at WH Smiths, overseeing the launch of its Club Card.

"When I joined, it was envisaged that staff would grow to a maximum of five people," says Harlow, who became managing director in January. "Today we have a budgeted team of 18."

The premise behind the launch of Jigsaw was straightforward but surprisingly ahead of its time in the FMCG sector. Four like-minded but non-competing companies, Kimberly-Clark, Unilever, Cadbury-

Schweppes and Bass, came together in 1997 to discuss the value of sharing customer data.

They were united in a common problem – how could relationship marketing deliver a return on investment with products of low value? They rightly recognised that in order to make CRM work for a brand of deodorant, chocolate bar, or sachet of soup, it would have to be on a collaborative basis. Although Bass subsequently sold its leisure business and pulled out of the Consortium as it no longer shared the key Jigsaw audience of mothers with children, the initiative has flourished.

The primary vehicle for data capture and relationship building is a quarterly magazine *Voilà!* which is ABC audited and ranks as the second largest woman's lifestyle/fashion title behind Boots' *Health and Beauty* magazine.

The magazine contains a detailed questionnaire and includes features around the themes of cooking, health and beauty and activities. The content is tailored to the individual and includes coupons and offers which again are linked to the information Jigsaw already knows about the recipient.

"I couldn't count the levels of segmentation that we do," says Harlow "It's as many different types as can physically be done on the production line."

'It's as many types of segmentation as can be physically done on the production line'

Liz Harlow, managing director, Jigsaw Consortium



Harlow: overseeing a database of ten million

She says that not only are recipients "totally clear about the value exchange", but research has shown that they enjoy filling out the questionnaire. "They are chiefly housewives looking after their families and rushing around supermarkets picking products off shelves either through habit or because of offers. It is interesting to them to sit down and reflect on what they do and where their money is going."

Harlow will not be drawn on the subject of response rates conceding with a small smile that results are "pleasing" and around double that of the solus mailings they have conducted.

However, an extranet site, Jigsawwisdom, charts all mailing activity

off the back of the database and includes detailed information about response rates. "Members can go in, see what has been done before and learn from other company's experiences. It is very much a shared learning culture," says Harlow.

So, how effectively are brands using the wealth of data available to them? A recent example is the rebranding of Jif to Cif to bring it into line with the rest of the world. Lever Fabergé used the Jigsaw database to identify people who had already bought Jif from across its repertoire of spray, mouse and liquid products.

They were sent a mailing inviting them to 'C the difference' and including the offer of a free eye-test at Dollond & Aitchison to consumers who purchased a product from the range. But Lever Fabergé also used the database to reach new customers. By identifying characteristics that linked existing buyers, the company could match this against the rest of the database and target a second wave of 'unconverted' consumers. Different creatives were used and a total of two million people were targeted – all off the Jigsaw database.

Kimberly-Clark also tapped into the Consortium for its £10 million relaunch of feminine hygiene brand Kotex. In last month's edition of *Voilà!*, 500,000 people (half of the entire circulation) received a 30p money-off coupon and a sample of the new product along with a competitor product. The coupon was personalised and coded so Kimberly-Clark was able to track coupon redemption to an individual level and conduct follow up activity.

According to Jigsaw communications manager Gareth Waterman Kimberly-Clark

"The breadth and depth of information is phenomenal. This is seriously refined targeting"

Gareth Waterman, communications manager, Jigsaw



Voilà! includes targeted offers and questionnaire

identified seven groups of people it wanted to target with Kotex samples, adding that much deeper segmentation is possible. "The breadth and depth is phenomenal. It's not 'we want to reach female pet lovers' but 'we want to reach female pet lovers who like skiing, shop in Tesco and eat a certain number of jars of Chicken Tonight in a year. This is seriously refined targeting,'" he enthuses.

Waterman joined Jigsaw in July last year after a six month secondment to Kimberly-Clark as acting relationship marketing manager from direct marketing agency Simpson Mahoney Parrock. Part of his remit is to look into online data collection ideas including a digital version of *Voilà!* on the Web, WAP-based initiatives and interactive TV.

Harlow recognises the potential of new media channels but is taking a cautious approach to the emerging interactive world. "We are currently doing an extensive programme of testing and will be doing something online later this year. But we're very aware of our core competencies and are not going to rush off and collect email addresses unless we know exactly how we're going to use them and link that to current activity."

For the moment she believes there is much more that could be done with the existing data the Consortium holds from category management to media planning and new product development.

"It is a tremendously exciting project," concludes Harlow. "An investment was made by three very brave companies and that will give them a safe passage into the new world of CRM." ■

