

# **UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND**

**FACULTY OF COMMERCE**

**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

**MAIN EXAMINATION PAPER**

**MAY 2015**

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<b>TITLE OF PAPER</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS</b>
<b>COURSE CODE</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>BA 328 / BA 527 FULL TIME</b>
<b>TIME ALLOWED</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>THREE (3) HOURS</b>

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**INSTRUCTS :**

- 1. TOTAL NUMBER OF QUESTIONS IN THIS PAPER (6)**
- 2. SECTION A IS COMPULSORY**
- 3. ANSWER ANY THREE (3) QUESTIONS IN SECTION B**
- 4. THE MARKS TO BE AWARDED FOR EACH QUESTION ARE INDICATED ALONG SIDE THE QUESTION.**

**NOTE :**

**MARKS WILL BE AWARDED FOR GOOD COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH, AND FOR ORDERLY AND NEAT PRESENTATION OF WORK. FURTHER MARKS WILL BE AWARDED FOR USE OF RELEVANT EXAMPLES.**

**SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: NONE**

**THIS PAPER SHOULD NOT BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION TO DO SO HAS BEEN GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR.**

## **LABEL LUNACY IS ENOUGH TO GET PARENTS IN A FROTH**

**A week of back and forth to establish what lies behind warning notice on kiddie bubble bath.**

It's a consumer health warning. But its not accurate. Well, its kind of accurate, depending . If you are already bamboozled or irritated by the above, I don't blame you.

It pretty much sums up what came from my inquiry into a warning on the bottle of my child's new colour changing bubble bath, an important caution I spotted only 10 minutes into her bath.

In tiny print on the back of HG's Magic Bubble Bath is a "Warning" and "Sun Alert" that states: "Because this product may make your skin more sensitive to the sun, be certain that you apply a broad spectrum sun screen of at least SPF 15, and for at least one week after you discontinue use.

Stunned, I had my child out of the purple water and sprayed down with fresh water within seconds. A little over the top? Not in my book. My daughter has fair skin, prone to sunburn. She never spends a day in the sun without a UV-protection rash vest, including at school.

I have a hereditary skin condition, made worse by the sun, which I don't wish to pass on to my offspring. What ingredient was the problem, I wondered? And why didn't my daughter's favourite bubble bath, carry the same warning?.

Turns out the ingredient in question is critic acid, an alpha hydroxyl acid (AHA) used in personal care products to adjust the acidity of the product, or to promote skin peeling and re-growth in various skin care products. Citric acid is naturally found in citrus fruits and juices and is commonly used in cosmetics, including baby products, shampoo and makeup, to adjust the acid balance.

So why the scary warning? Gavin Godfrey, merchandise direct for Heneck Sacks, the Cape Town based distributor of the HG product, said the sun alert was included as a preventative measure. He said the bubble bath was the product of input and guidance from an industry body, the Cosmetic Toiletry and Fragrance Association of South Africa.

In a statement the association's technical manager, Janine Wilson, said AHAs were known to sensitise the skin slightly at high concentrations but that the HG warning was a conservative one to show the company was ethical and concerned client safety.

"The citric acid is used in standard pH adjusting percentages ..... and does not imply any additional safety concerns to the consumer", the statement read. A conservative warning? I asked Wilson for clarity. Seems the warning should not have been on the product in the first place. It was neither mandatory nor even necessary, Wilson said, as the bubble bath carried no risk to consumers.

She said the perception that a warning statement was required on products of this type was prompted by previous industry codes that were subsequently found to be over prescriptive,

overly ethical and overly cautions. She said the old code had erroneously prescribed the labelling of all cosmetic products containing AHAs when, in fact, only AHAs used as exfoliators for facial skin peels needed to carry such a warning. Studies reveal that AHA peels can increase sun sensitivity by between 18% and 50%. “Citric acid when added to bubble baths has a pH lowering function and is entirely safe in such circumstances, with no exfoliation role on the skin whatsoever,” said Wilson.

When an AHA is used for facial peels, [it is] used in high concentrations as skin exfoliators. But when used for pH adjustment, it’s used in very low concentrations. The HG bubble bath would contain only very low levels of citric acid and bubble bath was not a product that stayed on the skin anyway, but was rinsed off, she said. “A warning label has never been used on bubble baths elsewhere in the world and in this particular case, the message concerning risk got lost in translation,” she said.

Godfrey said the warning would be removed on future labels. Oh So Heavenly’s manufacturer, Durban based Canway, meanwhile agreed there was no need for an unnecessary and confusing warning relating to the negligible concentration of citric acid in its product, which varied from 0.5% to 0.7%. Our product is fully compliant to both SA and EU legislation, and has been tested and proven to be safe for use, said company spokeswoman Christie Slatter.

The US’s FDA recommends a sun alert warning only on AHA containing products that were topically applied to the skin, Slatter said. I asked Cancer Association of South Africa what it made of the issue. Head of health Professor Michael Herbst said the precautionary principle should be used “whenever there is the slightest doubt.” “A sunburn alert, according to my view would be appropriate” said Herbst. “Children’s skin is also far more sensitive than that of adults.”

He noted that the labels on both the bubble baths did not provide information on the percentages of ingredients, which made it much more complicated for consumers to make informed decisions. It took me almost a week of back and forth e-mails, calls and research to get to the bottom of the sunburn warning, it does not bode well for the ordinary consumer. Suppliers and industry bodies should take more care.

The Power Report. Megan Power. Sunday Times. January 25,2015. Page 14.

## SECTION A

Q.1 Was there a need to have such communication on the package, and why?

(10 marks)

Q.2 Would you have reacted the same way as the Parent did, and why?

(10 marks)

Q.3 When are such communications over board and why? (10 marks)

Q.4 What should be the objectives of label communications (10 marks)

#### SECTION B

Q.1 Brand naming is critical to the success of any brand. With examples, discuss the brand naming process.

(20 marks)

Q.2 Packaging is another essential element of a brand. To a large extent packaging is the brand. Discuss with examples the process of evaluating the package/packageing.

(20 marks)

Q.3 What are the different types of on-premise signs ? Discuss with relevant examples.

(20 marks)

Q.4 Discuss with examples the different functions of advertising.

(20 marks)

Q.5 Typically a company has a few alternatives when it comes to advertising. With examples discuss these advertising function alternatives.

(20 marks)