

BRAND IDENTITY:
STEWART'S IS A WELL-KNOWN
NAME WHEN IT COMES TO
UPSCALE SODAS.



times of root beer and orange creme is the major attraction to consumers.

New to the super premium soda market is Hansen's from California. Although Hansen's has been in the beverage business for more than 60 years, Mark Hall, senior vice president, reports that its latest beverage, Hansen's Signature soda, is considered an "upscale alternative to traditional sodas."

Hall says two things are different about Hansen's. One is the all-natural ingredients and the second is the packaging. The company uses a unique bottle design to catch the consumer's eye. It is a proprietary bottle that looks and feels like clay.

"We have tried to give the product a rich feel and taste and create a nos-

algic feeling. By using pure cane sugar, it has a distinct flavor. We're trying to create a Heineken of sodas if you will."

Continues Hall: "We looked at the market of new age beverages and saw that the consumer is paying a premium for a non-carbonated beverage. So we concluded they will pay the same for a quality carbonated product. It's a home entertainment product. It's intended to be a sweet treat or indulgence."

Cable Car Beverage Co. also believes that the overall desire of today's soda market is a retro trend, returning to a simpler time but with a twist. Says Ellen Gibson, the company's director of marketing, "The trend of the '90s has been to go gourmet and Stewart's allows this."

Interestingly, Cable Car's Kaufman calls the higher price "almost part of the appeal. There is nothing like drinking from a frosty glass bottle. So people spend a little more on the product because they deserve it."

QUALITY ALWAYS RULES

All of the manufacturers agree, however, that it's the quality and taste that keeps the consumer coming back for more. Myron Stadler, CFO of Cable Car, admits that while packaging makes a difference, catching the consumer's eye, "it's the product inside that gets the repeat buy."

Another major league premium soda producer is Briar's USA Inc. Says Guy Battaglia, the company's vice president: "We know that when

a consumer walks into the store he takes about 10 seconds to make up his mind. So if we can get people to taste our soda, we want to make sure the taste is in the bottle. We have to make sure that what's there will make the consumer want to buy it again or try one of our other flavors.

"If we can take care of that part of the business, the rest of it will follow in terms of the economies of purchasing. I think all too often manufacturers make this business complicated but it's really not. It's simple. If you open up a bottle of something, you drink it and you like it, you'll buy it again.

"People are always looking for something different," Battaglia continues. "Our drinker is a consumer who is not so conscious of the cost per say. Our taste is different than traditional sodas, the image of the brand is different and that's attractive to some consumers." ■

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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PREMIUM SODAS— ESTIMATED WHOLESALE DOLLAR SALES



(p) = preliminary

Source: Beverage Marketing Corp

STEADY RISE:
THE PREMIUM SODA CATEGORY
CONTINUES TO DEEPEN.



FINDING A NICHE:
BRIAR'S SEES ITSELF AS
AN UP AND DOWN THE
STREET BRAND.