



Sustainability: point of purchase points the way

MIKE FARLEY, GROUP MANAGING DIRECTOR of POSC (Point of Sale Centre) in New Zealand and SPOS in Australia has a dream. He wants to lead the way and become the expert on sustainability. Why? It impacts all major retailers, brands and producer-suppliers of retail merchandising solutions used in marketing at retail: everything from advertising posters to temporary, semi permanent and permanent displays, product and substrates used in the manufacture, from transport to location and disposal.

In Australia and New Zealand we are aware that sustainability is an extreme concern encompassing limited water resources, energy and requires exemplary global citizenry. It has a great impact on the way brands, retailers and producer-suppliers source materials, develop manufacturing and packaging processes, and deliver their products.

Farley's vision is to provide industry decision-makers with insight and strategies to improve their environmental performance to meet consumer demand for more environmentally responsible products. It is a call to action for business innovation and better design to use less resources, recyclable materials and lower costs, resulting in more competitive solutions.

Farley has dedicated an internal research team within POSC and SPOS to globally research best practice in marketing at retail. With the valuable information gathered, SPOS conducted three sell-out breakfast seminars on sustainability at retail in Melbourne and Sydney. The seminars were attended by all major brands and retailers eager to learn best practice, gather information and take away some thoughts and guidance on how to be more corporately responsible, especially in the area of merchandising and marketing at retail.

Farley continues his quest to gather and disseminate sustainability knowledge through global research gained from best practice of Tesco, Wal-Mart and Marks & Spencers. In Australia and New Zealand he has worked closely with Deloitte Corporate Responsibility Practice who has facilitated sustainability workshops to define the objectives in each country.

After some 210 brands and retailers attended his Australian events, Farley realised that the sustainability issue was something the industry association, POPAI (Point of Purchase Advertising International) Australia and New Zealand needed to tackle.

The immediate past chairman of POPAI Australia and New Zealand and currently a very active director, Farley chairs the POPAI sustain-

ability committee, has developed the environmental policy for the industry association and developed a strategic plan to launch this sustainability initiative.

The Association's charter is to drive environmental initiatives within the point of purchase industry and influence the decision-making of retailers, brands, manufacturers and display manufacturers encouraging careful consideration of all issues such as biodegradability, litter evidence, recycle ability, plastic goods production and freight.

Sustainability experts were approached to give their time and be part of the POPAI Sustainability Committee. The response has been overwhelming with the majority of people approached willing to serve on the committee. Everyone echoed the same desire of wanting to participate to help make the Association's sustainability initiative a success.

The New Zealand committee is currently being formed and has attracted some of the best talent in the country, including: Richard Manaton, general manager, Strategic Planning Progressive; Rob Guild, design manager, Foodstuffs (Auckland); Anthony Ford, services channel manager, Noel Leeming Group; Lisa Douglas, retail environment manager; Warehouse Stationery, John Moroney, national sales manager, Kimberly-Clark and Kate Porter, communications manager, McDonald's New Zealand.

Other industry Associations have been invited to join the committee – these include the Institute of Store Planners, Shopfit Association, NZ Food & Grocery Council, Packaging Council of NZ and NZ Retailers Association. All are expected to participate and to give guidelines on sustainability to their membership.

One of the keys to Farley's success in forming the POPAI Sustainability Committee was the engagement of Deloitte Corporate Responsibility Practice in Australia and Deloitte Climate Change and Sustainability Resources team in New Zealand. 3media Group is also involved, with editorial director Toni Myers representing the company on the POPAI Sustainability Committee.

POPAI Australia and New Zealand will be hosting 'The Future's So Bright Green' conference in Sydney on 22 October 2008, focusing on sustainability at retail. A similar event is being planned for later in the year in Auckland.

For information on POPAI, the sustainability initiatives, joining the committee, seminars and events, Mike Farley can be contacted via email michaelfarley@popai.com.au.

The New Zealand committee's initial goals will be to:

- Report on the current state of sustainable point of purchase (POP) in New Zealand.
- Find and communicate examples of POP change and innovation which reflect sustainability.
- Produce examples of 'best practice' reporting from overseas and encourage New Zealand members to follow, as well as producing a checklist for companies to assist with their sustainability reporting.
- Engage others in the sustainability issue in the POP supply chain such as brand owners and retailers.
- Play an educational role within the POP industry conducting educational sessions and speaking at educational institutions for design students.
- Engage the general community in debate and discussion regarding sustainable POP in New Zealand.