



G R A I N E Y P I C T U R E S

“It’s the emotion they want, the connection they want” said Mr. McLean about the brand. “And ‘Clean Break’ was designed as a vehicle to create that emotional bond with Schick Hydro consumers.”

Introduced in 2010, Schick Hydro culminated what the brand claimed was its largest research and development investment ever. Available in a three- and five-blade version, advertising for the razor has focused largely on a “gel reservoir” on its head that exudes aloe and vitamin E, which the brand claims reduces irritation better than typical moisturizing strips.

Schick is a perennial also-ran against Gillette, the dominant Procter & Gamble brand, but marketers said the Hydro would help it gain ground. Schick did, in fact, have a 15.1 percent share of the men’s razor and blades segment in 2011, up from 11.2 in 2007, according to Euromonitor International, a market research firm. Over the same period, Gillette’s share of the men’s category dropped to 70 percent, from 71.5 percent.

While Schick, again, never appears in “Clean Break,” the concept for the series — getting men to break away from their normal routine by exposing them to something new — is exactly the attitude that the brand aims to cultivate in men when it comes to shaving. The brand hopes that men who may have been using Gillette since they were taking algebra will give the Hydro a try.

“We think there’s a synergy between the two,” said Mr. Harrison, of Schick, referring to the message of both the brand and the series. “We have a competitor who has been the dominant player for many, many years, and we’re saying to guys, ‘You’re in kind of rut — why keep using the same old razor when there’s one that’s better?’ ”

David Vinjamuri, author of “Accidental Branding” and an adjunct professor of marketing at New York University, reviewed a “Clean Break” episode and was impressed.

“I like the idea of finding ways to use content to tell stories that personify the brand,” said Mr. Vinjamuri. “It is clear that these guys can’t visualize themselves somewhere other than where they are,” Mr. Vinjamuri said, referring to the everyday lives of the three men in the series. “And that’s the problem that Schick has in the category: People can’t see themselves moving away from Gillette, which they may have been using for 20 years.”

