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## Claritin

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the last several years, the OTC allergy market (over-the-counter antihistamines) has been driven by the launches of prescription drugs.

CLARITIN launched as an OTC in 1990, and by the mid 90s was market leader. (Editor's note: see CASSIES I.) In early 1995, Reactine took the OTC route. It was the #1 prescription drug, and it invested massively in launch advertising, outspending CLARITIN 2:1. By the end of 1995, it was within a hairsbreadth of CLARITIN's #1 share – a serious threat.

In 1996, CLARITIN counterpunched. The case shows how a four point plan re-established our lead, with all key elements driven by advertising:

- **Surprise** Launching the first winter allergy campaign in early 96. This broke category patterns, which had previously concentrated on the ragweed season.
- **Differentiation** Creating 'Don't Drowse and Drive'. We could not draw attention to Reactine's obligatory caution—not to drive on their medication—but nothing could stop us appropriating 'driver friendly'.
- **Innovation** Launching indoor allergies, also a first, in Fall 96.
- **Continuity** Changing the market from Summer focus to year-round relief.

Over the course of 1996, CLARITIN re-established an average 10 share point lead over Reactine. All 'softer' measures were also strong, and there was no activity other than advertising to account for the resurgence.

### SITUATION ANALYSIS

In early 1995, CLARITIN was the antihistamine OTC market leader, with a 40%+ national dollar share. Then Reactine launched in the OTC market. It was the number one prescription antihistamine, with a 50%+ share of prescriptions. And it was the doctor's #1 choice.

Reactine was a formidable threat. NEW equals hope for the allergy sufferer, and OTC switches automatically lead to high trial. Ontario, with more than 50% of the antihistamine market, would be the main battleground.

During 1995, Reactine invested heavily while CLARITIN 'retrenched'. As a result, CLARITIN was outspent 2:1. In August 95, in the peak allergy season, Reactine took over the ad awareness lead in the key Toronto market – (see [Figure 1](#) and [Figure 2](#))

Reactine was positioned as Canada's most prescribed allergy remedy, now available without a prescription. In a market hungry for news, the business responded. By the end of 1995, Reactine nearly caught up to CLARITIN's national share. And in Ontario it edged into the #1 spot – (see [Figure 3](#) and [Figure 4](#))

Very concerning, Reactine had high 'next purchase intent' scores – [Figure 5](#). We had to stop this momentum. But how? We could not expect sales promotion, pricing and distribution to be swing factors. We had no 'new and improved' story. We had to re-think how the market worked.<sup>1</sup>

Several factors were on CLARITIN's side. We had Schering Canada's commitment to success. We had CLARITIN's excellent profile for efficacy and lack of side-effects. And Reactine could not be classified as 'non drowsy'. In fact, it had to carry a warning insert: Caution should be exercised when driving, or operating heavy machinery.

This was the leverage we needed. While 'non-drowsy' had become the price of entry for the category – and taken for granted by most allergy sufferers – it was the opportunity for a new strategic direction:

**Reactine's weakness would become our strength.**<sup>2</sup>

## STRATEGY AND EXECUTION

CLARITIN had lost share of voice dominance in 1995, and we expected competitive spending to stay high in 1996, so spending levels could not be the basis of our counter-attack. We decided on four strategic elements: Surprise. Differentiation. Innovation. Continuity.

### **Surprise: Introducing 'Winter Allergies' – February 1996**

For years, advertising in the category had concentrated on April to August. To pre-empt Reactine, we broke this pattern with a first-ever wintertime allergy campaign. The idea was to build CLARITIN's top-of-mind awareness before the 96 Spring allergy season. We knew we would have a receptive audience, because as many as 60% of sufferers have indoor/year-round allergies. But Canadians think about colds, not allergies, in the winter. So to take advantage of this, we used a 'Cold or Allergies' approach.

#### **Execution**

There is nothing funny about allergies, but our launch had proved that humour breaks through.<sup>3</sup> We aired three pointedly funny :60 radio spots, featuring contemporized fairytale heroines – Ms. White, Cindy, and Little Red Miniskirt. They desperately needed relief from cold-like symptoms. (see [Figure 6](#))

The commercials rotated for four weeks in February 1996 in key antihistamine markets, mainly Ontario. We used radio to generate high GRPs and frequency. The objective was to deliver the new message and a call to action. As expected, we had 100% share of voice.

### **Differentiation: The 'Don't Drowse and Drive' Campaign.**

As the allergy season (and Reactine's advertising) was on its way, we developed a new advertising strategy. We could not draw attention to Reactine's obligatory warning because of Canadian Drug Advertising Code restrictions. However, nothing could stop us appropriating 'driver friendly' to support CLARITIN's non-drowsy benefit –and Reactine could not follow us onto this terrain. In other words:

**Although we did not have a 'new and improved' CLARITIN, we did have news: the ability to drive safely.**<sup>4</sup>

#### **Execution**

To dramatize non-drowsy driving, we created an action hero/spy in two television :30 spots: 'Car' and 'Truck'. He gets into dangerous situations, where he can't afford to be slowed down by anything – especially his allergy

treatment. This sets up 'Don't Drowse and Drive'. The creative ran in early Spring, and for the ragweed season in August. Media concentrated on high volume antihistamine markets, mainly Ontario.

To bridge the television flights, we ran outdoor in Toronto. Because outdoor is a 'driving' environment, the copy plays off the phrase 'don't drink and drive.' We also captured the 'consumption' environment, running posters in bar and restaurant washrooms. This effort ran mainly in June and July.

In Ragweed August, we stimulated purchase with three weeks of heavy radio in Toronto. 'Pollinator :60' and 'Critics Corner :60' reinforced the television campaign.

This activity was generally head to head with Reactine, mainly in Ontario. Share of Voice is in [Figure 10](#).

## **Innovation: 'Indoor Allergies' – November 1996**

We were very encouraged by the results of 'Winter Allergies' on radio in February 96. There was nothing stopping us from innovating again, so we decided on indoor allergies, this time using our hero on television. As with winter allergies, we featured the 'Cold or Allergies' storyline.

### **Execution**

In 'Indoor Allergies :30' our hero is in another critical situation. This time, CLARITIN Extra Allergy & Sinus saves the day. Alert as ever, he escapes on a motor cycle, reinforcing 'Don't Drowse and Drive'. Creative ran in major markets – mainly Ontario – in November and December 96. As with winter allergies, share of voice was 100%.

## **Continuity: Re-engineering the Market<sup>5</sup>**

We had introduced winter and indoor allergies in the 'off-peak' seasons, and given new meaning to the non-drowsy benefit. This gave Canadians year-round relief, and staked out CLARITIN as the source of that relief.

## **RESULTS**

The immediate effect on the business can be seen nationally and in Ontario. CLARITIN quickly reversed the 1995 share trends, and re-established a steady lead over Reactine in the 10 share point range.

Tracking in Toronto showed that we had also re-captured the lead in advertising awareness. This was not surprising in the off-peak seasons—when we had 100% share of voice – but it held up through the peak season, where share of voice was in Reactine's favour – [Figure 9](#) and [Figure 10](#).

Ms. White, Cindy and Little Red Miniskirt won a Grand Global at the 1996 Global Awards in New York. The Globals award the best in worldwide healthcare communication, and CLARITIN won with radio, against the best international television commercials in the competition.

## **ISOLATING ADVERTISING AS THE VARIABLE**

There is risk in establishing new ideas, and we needed rapid intelligence from the market to assess 'winter allergies', 'indoor allergies' and 'safe driving'. Cossette has a tool for this – Tracking Efficiency Studies – and we used them at various times in Toronto to help develop and evaluate the campaign. The information helps cement the case for the advertising.

### **The 'Winter Allergies' Effort**

Ms. White, Cindy and Little Red Miniskirt generated very high levels of unaided advertising awareness at 50%. Comprehension was at 44%. Appreciation was at an outstanding 93%. This correlated precisely with the increased offtake in the JF 96 Nielsen period – [Figure 7](#) and [Figure 8](#).

### **The 'Don't Drowse and Drive' Effort**

The hero character clearly broke through. Unaided awareness was at 71%; specific comprehension of non-drowsy at 30%; and appreciation at 85%. The 'Don't Drowse and Drive' billboard delivered 71% Well-Noticed and 83% Appreciation. (Comprehension was not measured.) These results correlate with CLARITIN's share strength through the Summer – Figure 7 and Figure 8.

### **The 'Indoor Allergies' Effort**

We measured the impact of 'Indoor Allergies' in Toronto after four weeks on air. Awareness was again high at 52%, with Appreciation at 86%. This correlates with the share bump in ND 96 in Ontario, the main market for the advertising – Figure 8.

### **Advertising Awareness**

CLARITIN re-took the advertising awareness lead from Reactine, in line with the widening share lead – Figure 9 vs Figure 2.

### **'Safe Driving' Brand Differentiation**

CLARITIN clearly staked out 'Safer to Drive' – [Figure 11](#). In addition, we shifted a 'parity' impression. Up to the end of 1995, there was virtually no perceived difference between antihistamines. But a 1996 survey of allergy sufferers showed that CLARITIN's non-drowsy rating had grown from 7.6 in 1995 to 8.4 in 1996 – a statistically significant change. At the same time its safe image increased from 7.7 to 8.4 – both of these being #1 ratings.

### **Advertising Spending**

We re-established competitive media levels in 1996 after our 'retrenched' levels of 1995. This resulted in a national SOV of 60% to Reactine's 40%. While this will have played a role in CLARITIN's success. Reactine's advertising spending also increased in 1996 (+13% according to A. C. Nielsen), so we still faced stiff competitive pressure. Plus, offtake for CLARITIN in 1996 was immediate, indicating that consumers were responding to the new message, rather than the media weight.

### **Other Variables**

There were no significant 'non-advertising' variables. Promotion, distribution and in-store activity all stayed in the day-to-day ranges for the category. There was some pricing action because of the intense competition, but it did not alter the relative pricing between the two brands:

**TABLE 1: TYPICAL IN-STORE SELLING PRICE**

	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>% Change</b>
CLARITIN Allergy	\$12.84	\$12.04	-6%
REACTINE	\$13.21	\$12.40	-6%

These results show conclusively that the advertising reversed Reactine's momentum and re-built CLARITIN's market leadership.

### **CONCLUSION**

CLARITIN looked well outside the box for this plan. They tell us that we don't just have the summer to suffer – we have the whole year! Then they tell us that CLARITIN is the solution. Brilliant.

Note that the 'winter' and 'indoor' innovations were not invented out of thin air – they were there to be taken

advantage of – similar to 'Litmus' on Dove, and 'Indulgence without Guilt' on Philadelphia Cream Cheese.

## ENDNOTES

1. Counterpunching. See Canadian, Budweiser, Disney, Outward Bound, all of which were in turnaround situations.
2. Digging for Insight. See also the note after Conclusions.
3. Humour in a 'serious' category.
4. Creating news with no 'new and improved' to work with. See Dove. Also see Buckley's, which over the years has made a virtue of not having news.
5. Breaking conventions. Re-engineering how a market works.

CLARITIN took a taken-for-granted category benefit—non-drowsy—and turned it into a point of difference. Oh Henry! did the same in CASSIES II. Amazingly, none of the gut-filler candy bars had staked out 'satisfying hunger'. Oh Henry! seized on this, and created the 'Oh Hungry' campaign. Share jumped to #1, and Oh Henry! won the CASSIES II Gold for Packaged Goods

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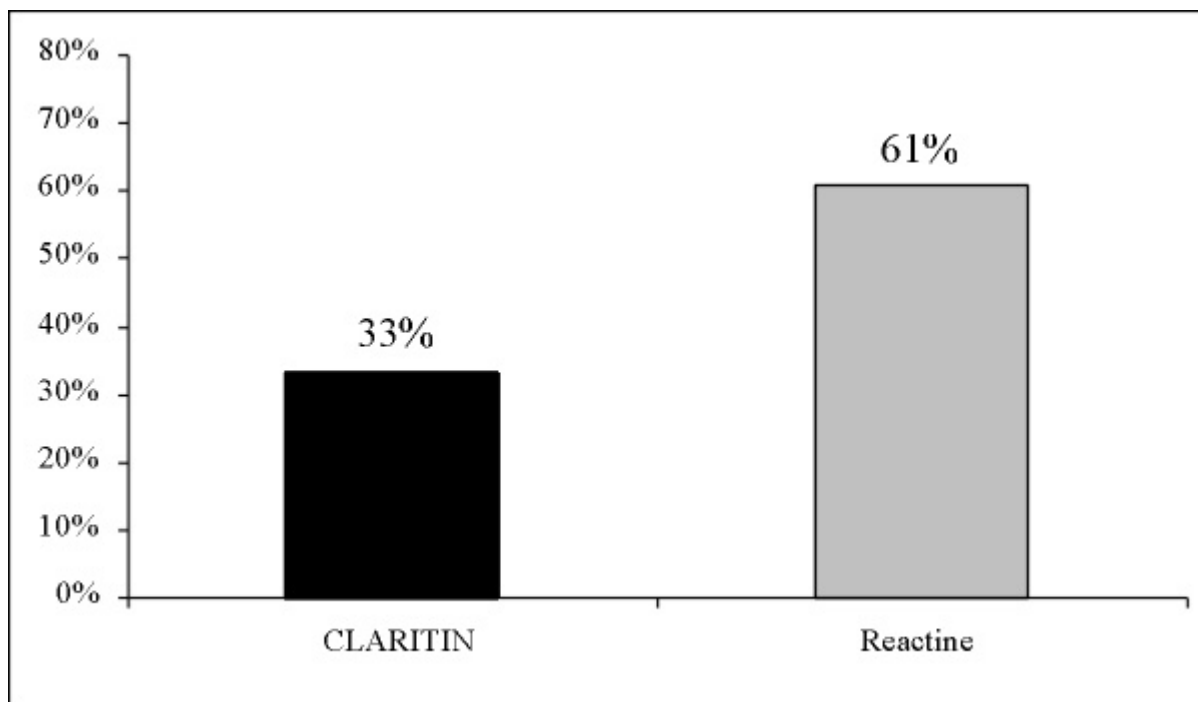


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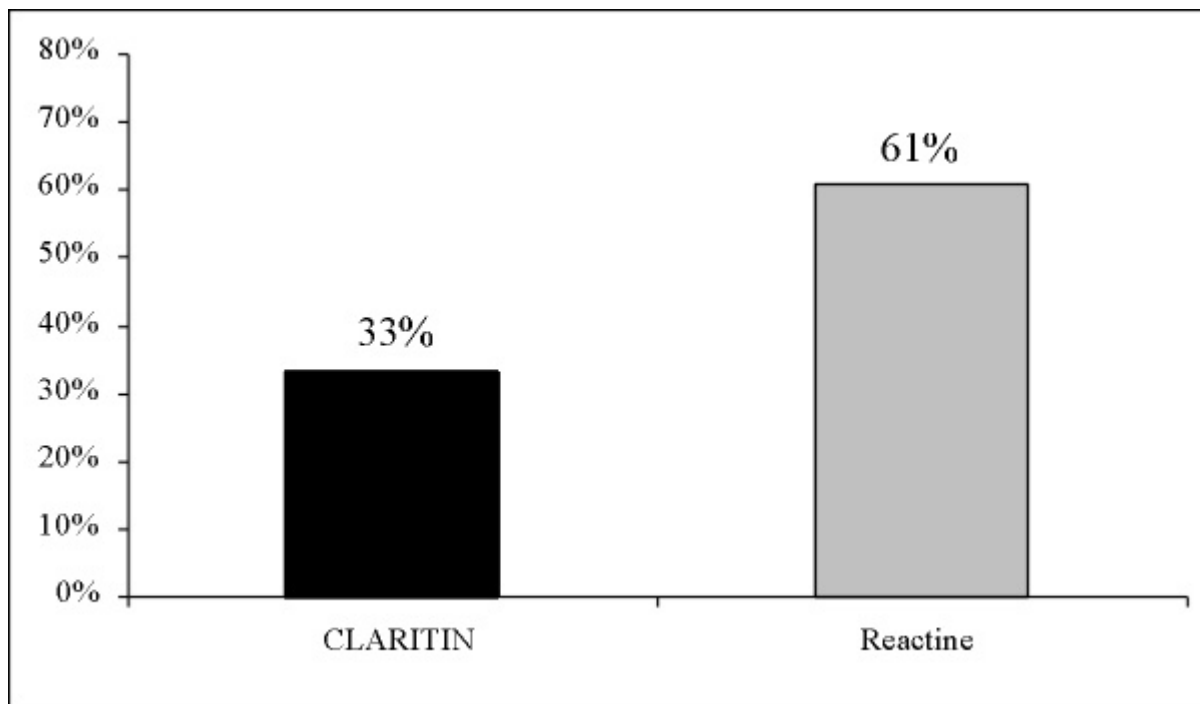
## NOTES & EXHIBITS

**FIGURE 1: 1995 SHARE-OF-VOICE. YTD NOVEMBER 1995 – NATIONAL**



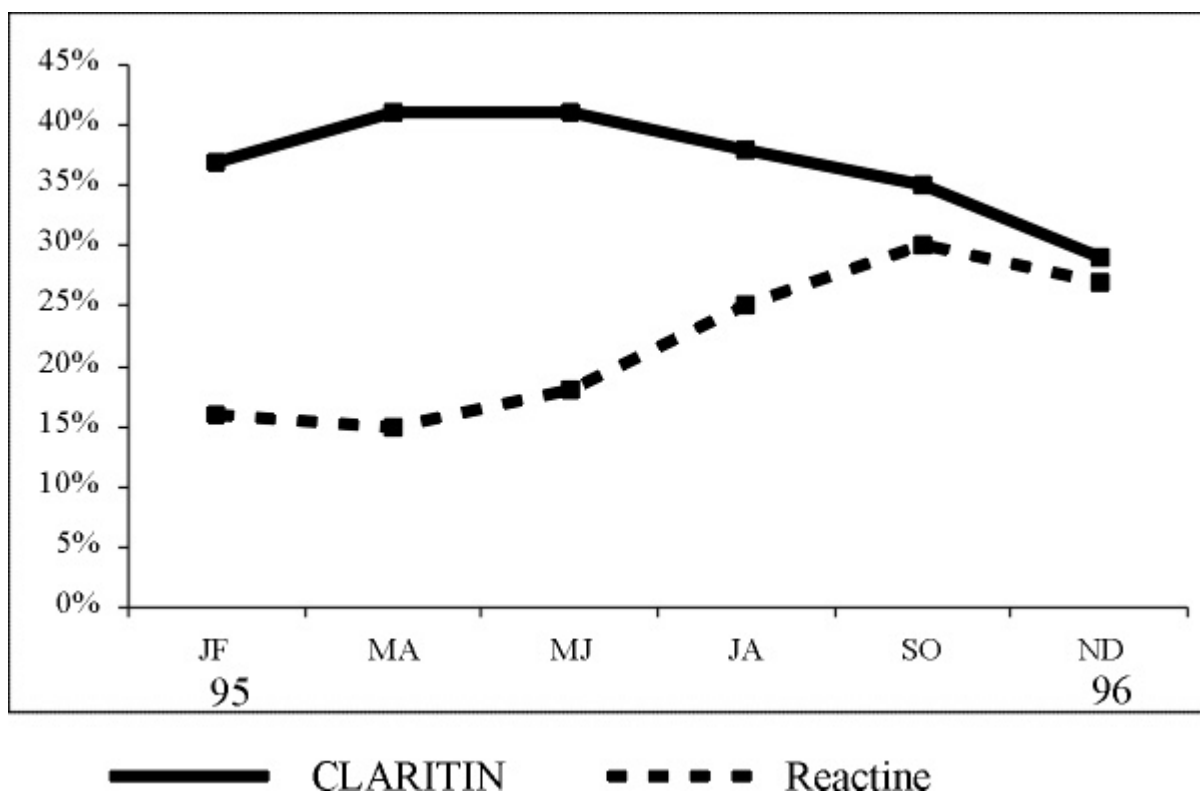
Source: AC Nielson 1996

**FIGURE 2: 1995 ADVERTISING AWARENESS – TORONTO**



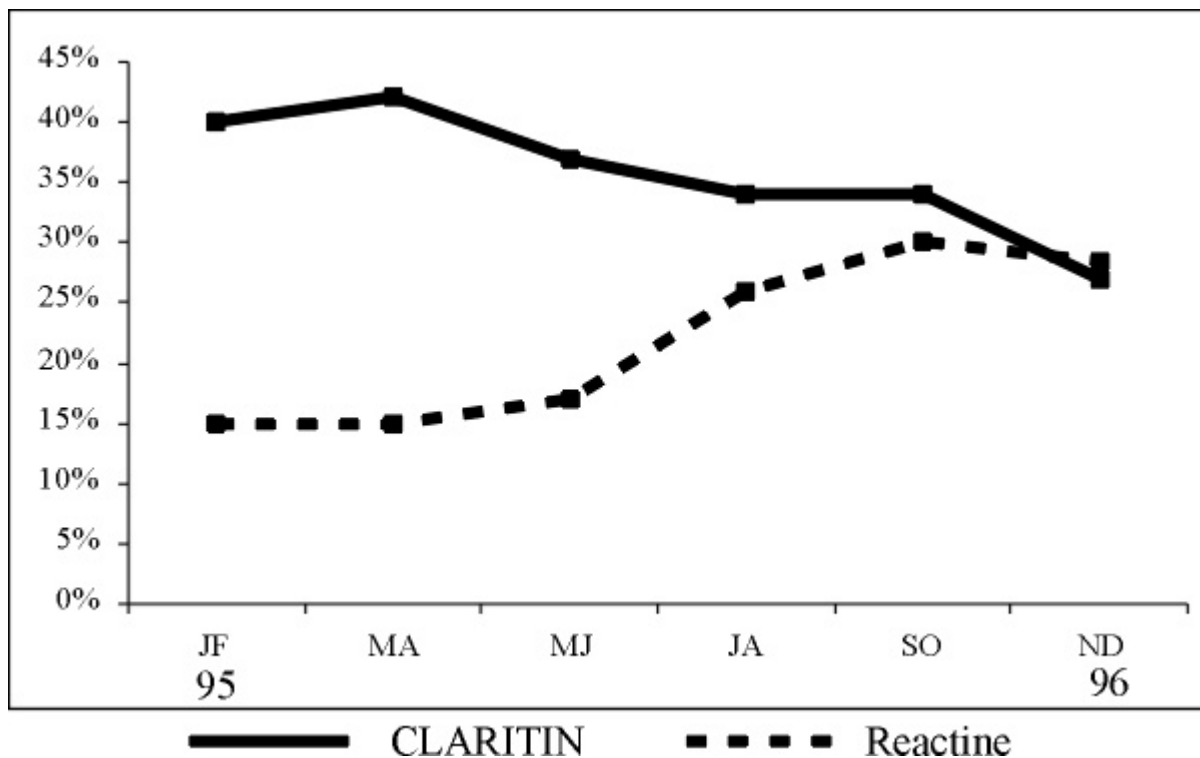
Source: Tracking Efficiency Study (TES) 1995

**FIGURE 3: 1995-1996 BI-MONTHLY MARKET SHARE (\$) - NATIONAL**



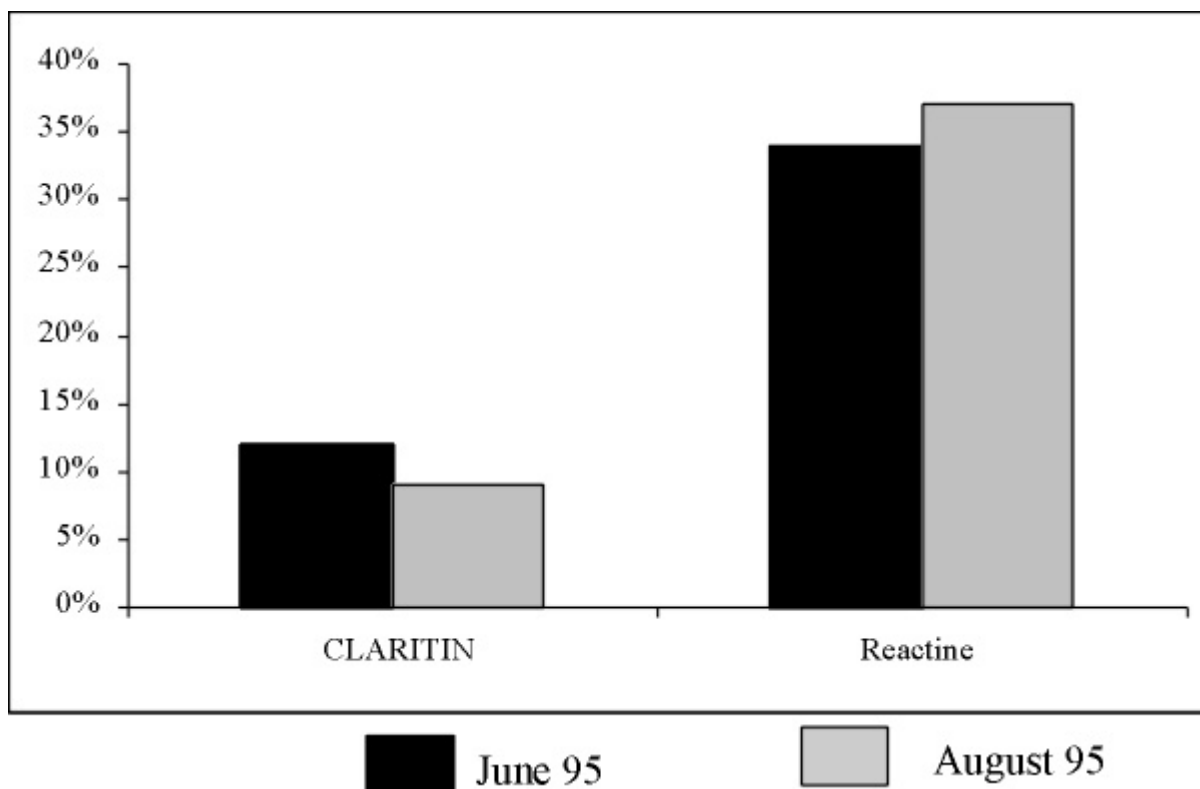
Source: AC Nielson, Drug Pharm. 1995-96

**FIGURE 4: 1995-1996 BI-MONTHLY MARKET SHARE (\$) - ONTARIO**



Source: AC Nielson, Drug Pharm. 1995-96

**FIGURE 5: 1995 NEXT PURCHASE INTENTIONS - TORONTO**



Source: Tracking Efficiency Study (T.E.S) 1995

**FIGURE 6: CLARITIN RADIO 'MS. WHITE'**

This is a story, and is, of course, fictitious. While maintaining its fairy tale integrity, it is delivered in a matter of fact, modern, tongue in cheek tone of voice

NARRATOR Once upon a time there was a single whit female.  
Let's call her Snow White.

Ms. White: That's Ms. White to you

NARRATOR And she fell in love with a guy who was only two  
foot two.

Dwarf: That's two foot two and a half, buster.

NARRATOR: Let's call him vertically challenged.

Dwarf: Fine then.

NARRATOR: He also had multiple personalities.

Dwarf: Seven to be exact.

NARRATOR: ...and one really bad cold. For weeks, his cold  
made him 'Grumpy' and 'Sneezy', his medicine  
made him 'Dopey' and 'Sleepy', and it became  
Ms.White's goal to make him 'Happy'

Ms. White: Honey, I hate to see you felling so low.

Dwarf: Easy.

Ms. White: Easy.

NARRATOR: Eventually, this never-ending cold put an end to  
their short..

Dwarf: Hey!

NARRATOR: Sorry big fellow, relationship. And he sought  
medical advice.

Dwarf: 'Doc'! You gotta help me

NARRATOR: He begged himself.

Dwarf: We want CLARITIN EXTRA.

NARRATOR: He advised himself

Dwarf: For winter allergies, and extra nasal and sinus  
congestion relief

Ms. White: You're so clever.

Dwarf: I know

NARRATOR And so he got CLARITIN EXTRA. And not only  
did it relieve his yucky symptoms, he also got  
back together with Ms.White, finally got hitched,  
then got a bungalow in the burbs and named their  
seventh son.

White/Dwarf 'Bashful'.

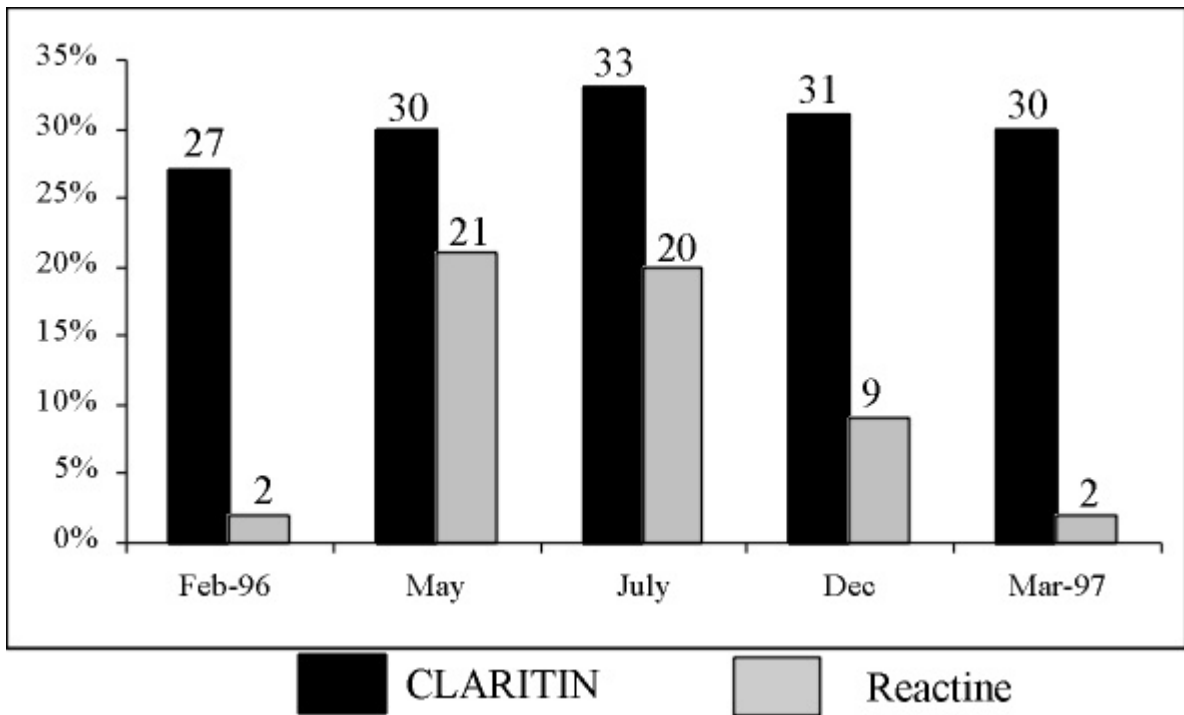
NARRATOR 'Bashful' yeah!

SPONSOR: This Claritin tale has been brought to you by  
CLARITIN EXTRA. and now get two packs for  
the price of one, at participating pharmacies, so  
that your winter sniffles have happy endings

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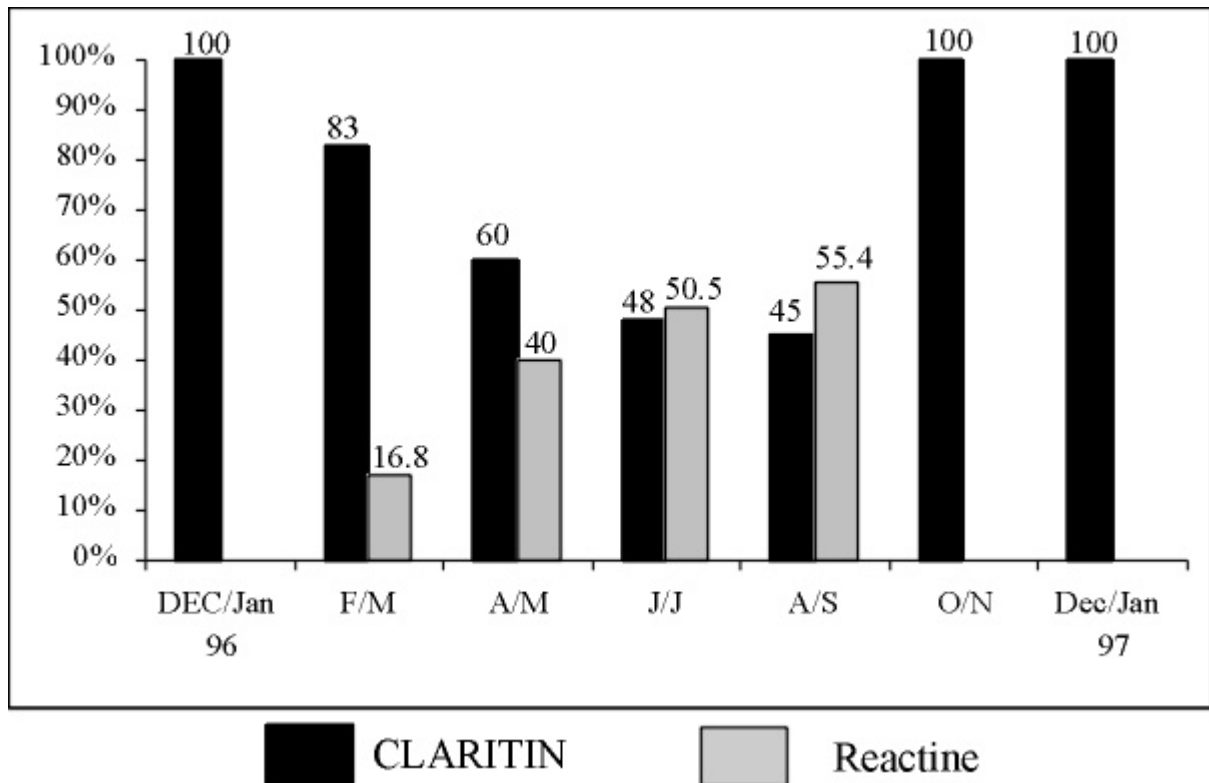
**FIGURE 9: 1996 ADVERTISING AWARENESS - TORONTO**





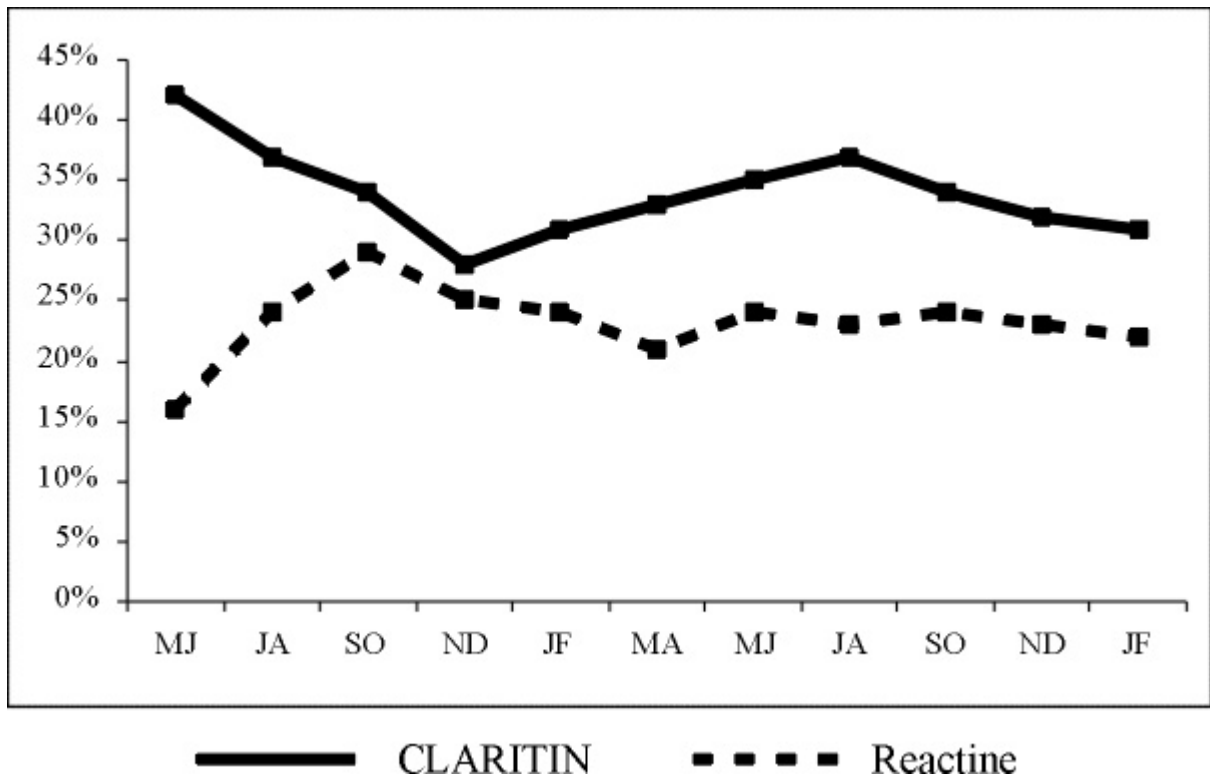
Source: Tracking Efficiency Study (T.E.S) 1996-1997

**FIGURE 10: 1996 BI-MONTHLY SHARE-OF-VOICE - NATIONAL**



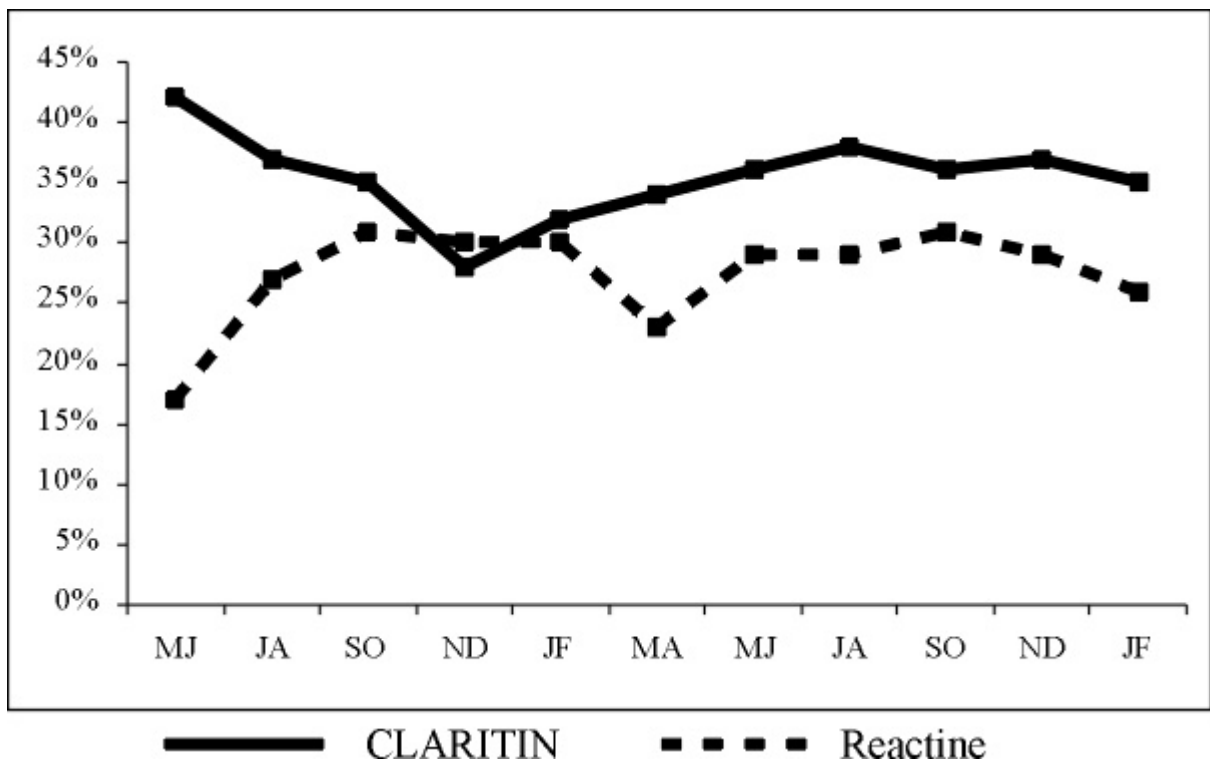
Source: AC Nielson, Drug & Pharm, 1996-1997

**FIGURE 7: 1995-1996 BI-MONTHLY MARKET SHARE (\$) - NATIONAL**



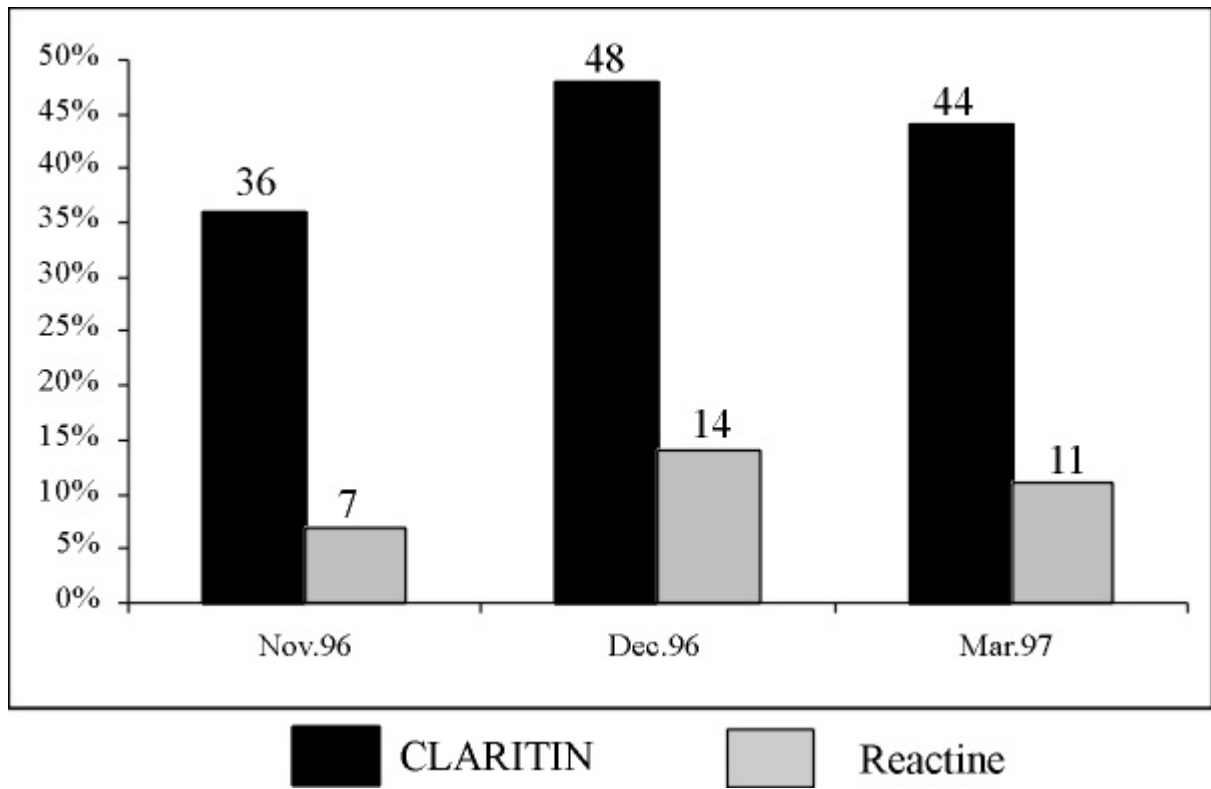
Source: AC Nielson, Drug & Pharm, 1995-1996

**FIGURE 8: 1995-1996 BI-MONTHLY MARKET SHARE (\$) - ONTARIO**



Source: AC Nielson, Drug & Pharm, 1995-1996

**FIGURE 11: ALLERGY BRAND 'SAFER TO DRIVE' - TORONTO**



Source: Tracking Efficiency Study (T.E.S) 1996-1997

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