

## It's a pain analyzing headache market

*Spending down for first half of year; exec says upfront market was active*

By Geoffrey Foisie

**S**ome think the early stages of a marketing battle among over-the-counter pain relievers such as Tylenol and Advil is under way, with the newest "analgesic" product, Aleve, said to have put \$50 million into TV network coffers.

Others disagree that an "analgesic war" has begun. One TV network executive says there was a lot of pain-reliever spending in the upfront advertising market for the fourth quarter, but it hasn't carried over heavily into the scatter market. Although some advertisers increased spending, others "came out" of the market, he says.

According to Competitive Media Reports, TV advertising spending for pain relievers, sedatives and sleeping preparations was down 7%, to \$146.1 million, in the first half of the year. Of that, the broadcast networks received almost 75%, with the remainder split in slightly descending amounts among cable, syndication and spot.

Petry National Television President William Shaw says his firm has seen better results than the CMR data, but many "corporate" medicine buys are "volume." They tend to be more price-sensitive, and thus more easily bumped in a tight market, he says.

David Schwartz, senior vice president, domestic sales, Seltel, says his firm has noticed recent avail activity targeted to demographics such as 35-plus and 50-plus.

At least two new products were launched this summer: Tylenol Extended Relief and Aleve. Tylenol is by far the most popular pain reliever, according to point-of-sale data compiled by Information Resources Inc.

A spokesman for Procter & Gamble, which distributes Aleve, would say only that the product is marketed on both broadcast and cable television. The drug is manufactured by Palo Alto, Calif.-based Syntex Corp.

There is at least one wrinkle in Aleve's marketing strategy: a lawsuit against Procter & Gamble filed last month by American Home Products, maker of the second-largest brand-name product, Advil. The suit alleges that the Aleve campaign is false



**Drug wars:** New pain-relief product Aleve, left, faces a suit by the maker of Advil, mentioned above in yet another competitor's ad. The suit, filed against Aleve distributor Procter & Gamble, accuses Aleve of false advertising.

advertising and disputes the ads' claim that Aleve is a longer-lasting pain reliever.

Other marketing methods being used for the new drug reportedly include couponing, direct-mail sampling and crosspromotion with at least one other P&G product. There also are ads produced for medical professionals, but that campaign will not use television or radio. ■

### Clear Channel buys Albany station

After four years on the block and at least two failed deals, Fox affiliate wxxa-TV Albany, N.Y., was sold to Lowry Mays's Clear Channel Communications for \$25.5 million.

wxxa-TV owner Heritage Broadcasting reportedly was under pressure from its lenders to sell the station. Heritage President Mario Iacobelli disagrees. "The banks have been behind us all the way," he says.

With its estimated \$2.5 million-\$3 million 1994 cash flow, noted as "respectable for that market" by one industry observer, wxxa-TV sold at a multiple of eight-and-a-half to nine times.

"It's a fair price," says media broker Larry Wood, one of four who tried to sell the property. He had lined up Clarence McKee, a one-time partner in WTVT(TV) Tampa, Fla., to buy the station for \$23.5 million, but the deal collapsed.

Ben LaRue of H.B. LaRue Media Brokers, also was enlisted to sell the station. About a year ago, he brought in Stephen Cannell of Cannell Communications and

Marty Pampadour of ML Media Partners to look at wxxa-TV. But neither owner wanted to pay \$25 million for a station that was worth \$20 million, LaRue says.

Without a news operation, wxxa-TV turned off many potential buyers. "It bothered people that they would have to invest about a million dollars in a newscast before they would see any return," LaRue says.

However, the past six months have seen dramatic change in the value of network affiliates. The affiliate wars have prompted a surge in station prices and sales. Fox football better positions the station in the Albany market, which is loyal to the N.Y. Giants. And Albany's ADI rank will strengthen from 52 to 49 in January 1995 because of the inclusion of additional counties.

"We feel the station has a lot of upside," says Clear Channel President Dan Sullivan. Clear Channel plans to invest \$1.5 million-\$2 million in a 10 p.m. newscast "as soon as possible," Sullivan says. —JAZ