

presents an exciting opportunity for graduates. By **Hannah Foxcroft**



Justin Basini, brand development project manager at Added Value

John Lawrence

'It's fascinating work'

Justin Basini, 25, graduated from the University of Bristol in 1995 with a First in biochemistry. He now works as a brand development project manager at Added Value.

"When I left university I worked in rural project development in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa, for a year, and then joined Procter and Gamble as a product manager in health and beauty. In a big company like Procter and Gamble, we tended to very much focus on one product or one category, so I started on the Pantene brand and then I moved to the Oil of Olay brand. Procter does a lot of work trying to understand consumers and taking

that consumer understanding to develop products and brands. My last year at Procter was all about new brand development.

"What I really wanted was a broader range of experience. I am very glad that I had two-and-a-half years training at Procter and Gamble because it is an excellent company and the training is second to none, but I am also glad that I made the move in 1999 to Added Value, a marketing agency. I wanted to make that big move from client side to agency side. On the agency side you tend to get a broader experience with different markets.

"At Added Value, we develop brands for a range of clients including Uni-

Lever, Pedigree and Shell. But the more exciting arena of e-work, which Added Value is increasingly involved in, is really where it's at for me. We did the brand strategy for EGG, for instance. The e-work is a key area of focus for me and the team I work for.

"I work on brand positioning and development projects, taking consumer insight and understanding the consumer better - both from the qualitative and quantitative point of view.

"I'd like to do an MBA in the States. I want to get training on how to run a business and then I want to do something myself. But for the moment I'm working in a great company. It's fascinating work and really fun."

ability to work well in a team and take on a wide range of tasks. Problem solving and analytical skills will also be required. But there is no substitute for experience, which is by far your best bet in trying to skip a few rungs of the ladder.

The assistant brand manager is the most typical role for today's graduate entering branding. This is the most junior position within the brand management team and consists of assisting the brand manager through the various day-to-day processes. You will no doubt find yourself taking on increasing amounts of responsibility, although you are unlikely to be responsible for a particular brand. It is a job that gives those with little experience an opportunity to build up

region of £21,000, according to 1999/2000 Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) Reward Survey.

In a few years time, you'll be enjoying an average salary of £27,625 and the next move up is to a senior brand manager or a marketing manager, depending on the structure of the company. The prospects for those in senior management are similar to those in any industry, and the salaries (£35,000 plus) are representative of the hard work and dedication that it takes to get there.

With a few years experience in brand management, some decide to go for something completely different. Rather than pursuing a career in the client side, they have a stab at the agency side of branding.

merged with SmithKline French to become SmithKline Beechams, claims that they paid millions to a branding consultancy to decide which bits of the two corporate identities should be integrated. "It was important for them to employ a company that did not have a vested interest," she explains.

Ondigital, the digital TV network, employed an agency to come up with its identity. Mandy Aldridge, Ondigital's marketing executive, explains: "At the beginning we were called BDB. But we felt that for a company trying to break into a new market place, it was really too stuffy. Brands have become more fashionable, they have got to be hip and modern which is why people rebrand and relaunch themselves."

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