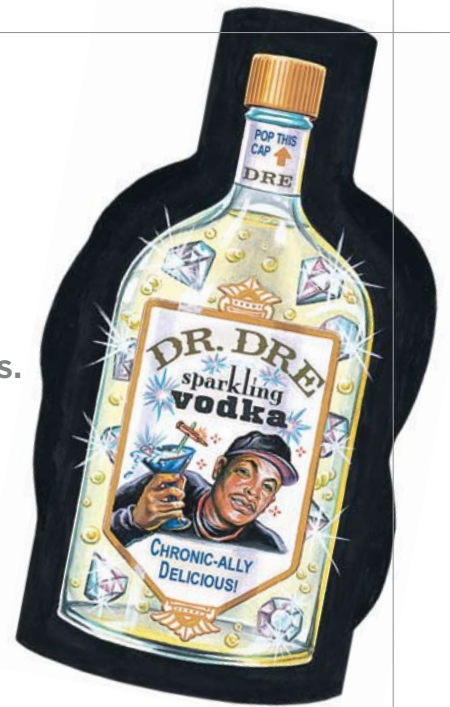


NOT SO FAST

Bill Barol

License to Run Amok

Lashing your brand to another may be the easiest—and oddest—way to create new products. Can you pick which items are real and which are fake?



The East Coast–West Coast aperitif wars are just a memory (although who can forget DJ Yella's Mella Yella Limoncella?). Now the turf battle is clear spirits. Ciroc Vodka's deal with Sean Combs hinted that the East might win without a fight. But hold on: This fall, Drinks Americas Holdings, maker of Willie Nelson's Old Whiskey River Bourbon, will debut **Dr. Dre's sparkling vodka**. Dre promises to "put the best product out there, because that's what I do." His brilliant move—carbonating vodka—could deflate the firm's planned "50 Cent's In Da Club Soda."

REAL FAKE



The **Reebok Kool-Aid Collection** is the answer to a riddle as old as footwear itself: What if your sneakers smelled like grape drink? The collection launched earlier this year with logo-branded shoes sporting aroma-infused sock liners in scents such as grape and lemon-lime. Kool-Aid "has such recognition that it's a natural fit for a company such as Reebok to partner with them," says Christian Stegmaier, Reebok's head of lifestyle. Plus, the sneakers provide extra traction when bursting through walls.

REAL FAKE



"Young men these days grew up with character goods," a Sanrio spokesman told the Associated Press, explaining the launch of **Hello Kitty products for men**. "That generation feels no embarrassment about wearing Hello Kitty." Unembarassing mens' sportswear is a \$75 billion business, and indeed, the shirts, bags, and watches sold out when introduced into trendy boutiques in Japan and on the West Coast.

REAL FAKE



Never miss a minute of pulse-pounding, glucose-raising action, thanks to the **Nascar Ultraportable Diabetes Testing Kit**, created in partnership with Accu-Chek. "Nascar is America, and America has a diabetes problem," says a Nascar spokesperson. "It's right for our brand." The "Dale Earnhardt of diabetes meters" comes emblazoned with the logos of some of Nascar's most popular corporate partners, including Coca-Cola, Mars Snackfood US, and Kellogg's.

REAL FAKE



It's a trippy time warp back to the mid-90s with **Puck's Explotastic Caffeinated Peanut-Butter Popcorn Bars**. The roguish bike messenger of MTV's *Real World: San Francisco* teamed with Cliff Bar to market this "awesome energy bar with a badass attitude." Says Puck (real name: David Rainey): "It's like they took my personality and pressed it into a bar or rectangle of some kind."

REAL FAKE

ANSWER KEY: REEBOK (Real); HELLO KITTY (Real); DR. DRE (Real), DJ Yella and 50 Cent (Fake); NASCAR (Fake); PUCK (Fake) **SCORE: 4-5 CORRECT:** You're a dream consumer. We're so sorry. **2-3:** You're an average person, but you're not spending enough on body sprays. **0-1:** You're a Trappist monk. Nice job with the jellies.