

News monitored for: Pepsi - Brands

## Hindu - Metro Plus

# More fizz in his life

**OFFBEAT** Check out who's ousted the popular pencil sketch icon Fido Dido

**W**hen the lovable Fido Dido was launched in India as the 7UP mascot in 1992, he defined cool like no other.

In 2003, he came alive a second time with a new tagline, and a few 'Fidosophies'. But what's one to do when facing competition from a film celebrity? The pencil sketch has given way to Sharman Joshi as the new brand ambassador of PepsiCo's lemon-flavoured drink. Ask Sharman about having replaced the cool quotient of the 1990s, and he says: "I was a huge fan of Fido Dido too. I never thought I'd be the one replacing him!"

The brand has also roped in film director Rajkumar Hirani to direct the commercials (two) around the theme *Gussa Hatao, Chill Machao* — the drink promises to cool you down when it matters the most.

Sharman says: "It is summer, and things tend to get hot under the collar. Worse still, there are moments of sudden provocation. The idea is to keep your cool and let the moment pass. Thinking without anger gives us immediate solutions."

The first TVC revolves around a man who has mud splashed over him by a speeding truck, and gives the truck a chase on his two-wheeler to teach the driver a lesson! The second is about a fight that breaks out between two fans of rival soccer teams while they are watching a match. Interestingly, neither of them belongs to the countries at play.

Sharman says it was the brand and the fact that Rajkumar Hirani was directing the ads that hooked him. "After '3 Idiots', this has been my first chance to work with him (Rajkumar) again. I also liked that the brand wanted to focus on a concept that should be popularised nowadays — anger management," says the actor.

He confesses: "I had a foul temper .....

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when I was in college. It never helped ease situations. Nowadays, the situations may be the same, but I tend to mull it and then react. That's the best way to see reason."

Sharman is currently working on his next film "Ferrari Ki Sawaari" under Vidhu Vinod Chopra's banner and director Rajesh Mapuskar. The film is about a child's desire to play at the Lords after seeing a cricketer's Ferrari. Sharman is tight-lipped about the controversy on the lead (Kareena or Katrina) cast opposite him. "Only the producer can answer," he says.

### Forever young?

The father of two still gets roles as a collegian mouthing witty one-liners. Considering his website has shirtless, body-strapping pictures of his, is he trying to get rid of the stereotype? Sharman laughs. "I'm trying to show a side not known to many. I have been gymming for many years now, and I continue to maintain myself. But, I am in no urgent need to change my image. I have the luxury to pick and choose my roles and campaigns. I just take up things that excite me," he says.

HARSHIKAA UDASI **THE NEW FACE** Sharman Joshi

