

12 Sep 2023 | Interviews

Flarin's Philip Lindsell: UK ITV Backing Could Provide Springboard For International Expansion

by [David Ridley](#)

Flarin Holdings recently secured £5m (\$6.2m) investment from UK television company ITV's Media for Equity fund in return for a minority stake in the company, which markets analgesic brand Flarin in the UK. The investment could be a springboard for international expansion, including in the US, Flarin's managing director Philip Lindsell tells HBW Insight in an exclusive in-depth interview.

Backing from a UK television company's investment vehicle will provide a springboard for the international expansion of fast-growing analgesic Flarin, hopes Flarin Holdings Ltd's managing director Philip Lindsell.

With the firm already in dialogue with the US Food and Drug Administration, Lindsell says in this exclusive interview with HBW Insight that, if all goes to plan, Flarin might be looking at a 2026 US launch for its lipid-based ibuprofen brand.

In the US and elsewhere, the company is looking for partners to commercialize Flarin, and has appointed advisory firm Capel Thompson and Homer LLP to assist.

ITV Funding

Flarin recently announced it has secured backing from ITV's Media for Equity investment fund, ITV AdVentures, of up to £5m (\$6.2m) for advertising inventory across ITV's UK TV channels, in return for a minority equity stake in the company.

This agreement, which is being supported by an additional £1.83m investment by existing backers IW Capital, will enable Flarin to build brand awareness by bringing the Flarin brand to



FLARIN'S PHILIP LINDSELL

Nurofen.

The new investment – the first in consumer health for AdVentures – therefore “fits the profile of our business really quite accurately,” Lindsell pointed out. “Our biggest investment is in TV. It has proven effectiveness.”

The investment should also be a good fit for ITV, Lindsell argued. Despite having only a small team behind it, Flarin – which, thanks to its lipid-based mechanism, is claimed to be less harsh on the stomach and more efficacious than standard ibuprofen – is a “mass brand with a large addressable market,” he said.

Furthermore, the annual scale of the investment, equivalent to about two and a half times the firm’s TV budget for 2022, Lindsell revealed, is a “big step up.”

“It’s really important for us. It should enable us to get an equivalent sales boost

millions of UK viewers via ITV platforms, the firm says.

“Thousands of consumers are already finding that Flarin delivers better relief from their joint and muscular pain,” Lindsell noted. “The ITV investment will enable us to drive much greater awareness of the Flarin brand. This operational boost and the further financial support from IW Capital are of strategic importance to the company’s future development.”

TV Proves Effective

Launched in 2018, TV advertising has been key to Flarin’s fast growth in the UK, allowing the brand to hold its own in competition with heavy hitting analgesic brands like Haleon’s Voltarol and Reckitt’s

OTC Marketing Awards

Flarin’s creativity with the TV medium helped the firm secure a prestigious UK OTC Marketing Award last year in the hotly contested Best OTC Audio-Visual Advertising category.

One judge described Flarin’s TV advertising, created with the support of PNK28, Shynee Digital, Guerillascope, and The Nursery Research, as a “fabulous result” in a “highly competitive market.”

“An innovative product message, powerful strapline, simple execution and cost effective yet targeted media strategy has help build distribution, sales and market share,” the judge said.

and grow awareness of the brand longer term.”

Social Media, Retail Support

Alongside the new TV campaign – which will be created with advice from London based media agency, Guerillascope – Flarin will continue to leverage the power of online advertising and sales channels, while optimizing Flarin’s bricks-and-mortar presence.

Building on the general sales list (GSL) launch of Flarin in 2020, the firm also recently introduced a 16 capsule GSL version. (Also see "[Infirmit Launches GSL Version Of Flarin Lipid Ibuprofen In UK](#)" - HBW Insight, 16 Jul, 2020.)

Last year, the company struck a deal with UK supermarket giant Tesco to stock Flarin Joint and Muscular Pain Relief in its stores. Having an extra SKU will help it gain a more impactful presence in supermarkets, Lindsell said.

“We don't dictate where Flarin ends up on the shelf,” he observed. “But I think, as we grow in sales, helped by the TV investment, I would expect the negotiations on where we sit on shelf to be more successful.”

TV-driven UK growth will hopefully also give a boost to Flarin's international ambitions, Lindsell hoped. “The fact that we are already a commercial success in the UK and expect to ramp up, really supports our international push, because it supports our credibility in other countries.”

International Strategy

With patent rights for Flarin’s lipid delivery system in 27 countries including “major economies of the world,” Flarin has always pursued its long-term strategy “on an international basis,” Lindsell noted.

Flarin recently announced that it had appointed advisory firm Capel Thompson and Homer LLP to assist in seeking international partners for Flarin, including the US, where “regulatory

Another said that the marketing “shows what can be done on a relatively modest spend level with excellent creative cut through.” (Also see "[OTC Marketing Awards 2022: What The Judges Said About The Leading Entries](#)" - HBW Insight, 29 Nov, 2022.)

Now in their 28th year, the OTC Marketing Awards celebrate the best and brightest of the British consumer healthcare industry.

This year’s event is supported by UK consumer healthcare association PAGB and sponsored by HH Global, Inspiros Consulting Solutions, Dexcel Pharma’s Pyrocalm Control and Skills In Healthcare.

The deadline for entries to this year’s Awards has passed, but there is still time to secure your seat at the event. Head over to the [OTC Awards website](#) to book a table.

procedures are already underway,” according to the accompanying press release.

“It’s really a two-pronged approach,” he continued. “We’ve initiated the process with the FDA. We’ve had a successful pre-IND meeting and received some pretty clear guidance on the pathway going forward. And we’re looking for partners to commercialize Flarin in the US.”

“It’s not going to happen quickly,” he pointed out. “As long as things go according to plan, we could be in the US as early as 2026. That’s feasible. That’s by no means a confirmed plan, but it’s an indication of the sort of timescales that could be possible.”

“So, cycling back to the most recent round of fundraising, the push we can expect to give the brand is very much a validating factor in taking it elsewhere. The two things go together.”