

## SILVER



McDonald's  
Cawley Nea \ TBWA

Eurosaver – Hold Me Now

### COMPANY PROFILE

An ideas company pretty much sums up what Cawley Nea\TBWA is all about.

We've brought together the most passionate and creative people to be the architects of great ideas for our clients' brands. We don't think we're the best at what we do, we think we're the only people who do what we do.

That's because we use the power of Disruption and Media Arts to find big brand ideas for clients, these ideas ultimately become the advantage our clients have over the companies they compete with.

Cawley Nea\TBWA is part of the TBWA network with offices in 77 countries.

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This is the story of one of Ireland's highest profile campaigns of 2007. It is a story that ends in commercial success for McDonald's, and one of the greatest comebacks ever for Eurovision song contest winner, Johnny Logan.

The Eurosaver Menu is the McDonald's low price menu that is used to drive penetration amongst teens. It is a strategic tool intended to get more teens coming to McDonald's more often and buying higher ticket items.

The Euro saver Menu became a victim of its own success. It was achieving its strategic objective of driving teens in-store, however it was doing so based on a price only platform. This is a short term strategy and McDonald's began to observe concerning figures such as declining penetration – less teens visiting McDonald's and declining frequency – less teens visiting less often. These figures are illustrative of declining brand loyalty amongst a core target audience.

This indicated to McDonald's that a shift in focus was needed to engage with teens on more than just price in order to build affinity, loyalty and to protect the long term health of the brand.

The Euro saver 'Hold Me Now' campaign had two objectives – it had to deliver on ambitious sales objectives in terms of net sales and also build affinity with teens.

The story you are about to read describes our innovative research programme that led us to two key insights, which in turn gave life to the Hold Me Now idea and the creative campaign that captured much more than just the attention of teens!

## THE MARKETING OBJECTIVES

Although they are not the highest spending consumer, teens are too important an audience for McDonald's to ignore – they are the future of the brand.

The marketing objectives were:

### 1) Get more teens coming to McDonald's

Teen visits to McDonald's had been in decline for some time- equating to a 21% decline from 2004 to 2006.<sup>1</sup> The rate of decline had marginally slowed in 2006 due to the successful Nonsense/Sense campaign and the 2007 campaign was charged with arresting decline and injecting growth into the number of teens visiting metric. This was a significant challenge.

### 2) Get more teens coming to McDonald's more often

This metric had also been in decline for sometime and recently had seen a fall in average visits by teens to McDonalds of -0.19 from late 2005 to late 2006.

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1. Calculated using average monthly number of transactions and TNS/McDonald's metric of teens visits per 1000 population to IEO

The campaign was charged with arresting the decline and injecting growth into this frequency of teen visits metric.

### 3) To increase loyalty amongst teens

A relationship based on price alone does not engender loyalty. McDonald's had a key metric to monitor loyalty. A measure of the campaign's success would be a shift in our 'loyalty ladder'. The objective was to grow the number of true teen loyals from 6.75% to 8%- a significant jump which would have a big impact on our sales objective.

- True Loyals: love McDonald's most and visit most often
- Behaviour Loyals: prefer somewhere else, come most often
- Competitive Loyals: prefer another, and go somewhere else more often
- Attitude Loyals: prefer McDonald's but go to another most often

*(Source: McDonald's Fast Track 2007)*

### 4) To grow affinity with teens

A core objective of this campaign was to get teens to participate with the brand and to grow specific metrics which are affinity indicators. These are:

- The ad campaign made you think McDonald's is for someone like you
- It's the sort of campaign you'd talk about with friends
- The ad campaign had improved your opinion of McDonald's
- The ad campaign made me more likely to buy from the Euro saver Menu

All four objectives are closely linked and if achieved, would balance success in the short-term, while protecting the long term equity of the brand. Teens increase incrementally in value to McDonald's by becoming students, then work-based adults, then someday parents who are the highest spending consumers.

## THE TASK

Euro saver was already a big success – the 2006 campaign had successfully delivered on the business objectives it had set out to achieve. It had been recognised creatively by industry awards and had high awareness and cut through with teens. Teens got our value message loud and clear. The challenge for us therefore was to follow an award winning campaign with one that would deliver even more than the last. No pressure!

Teens are a notoriously difficult audience to engage with. They are cynical of marketing messages and are expert decoders of advertising messages. They are hyper critical of brands that try too hard to be their mate or who try to be 'down with the kids'. Our challenge would be to unearth an insight about this audience that was credible for McDonald's to respond to.

We would have to be invited to participate in their world. So all we had to figure out was how to be invited!

## THE STRATEGY

In order to truly understand the teenage mindset, we needed to be rigorous in our research, and so embarked upon a highly innovative programme of primary and secondary research.

### Secondary research

We began with desk research, looking internationally and domestically; searching for insight on the social implications for teenage life in response to the huge change that had taken place in Ireland over the last decade.

### Primary research

We used a combination of traditional research methods and more innovative, anthropological research techniques in order to learn about their thoughts and feelings rather than lifestyle and consumption habits. The research programme included:

- Teen focus groups x 4
- Teen workshops x 2
- Video diaries x 6
- In-depth interview with behavioural psychologist

### Insight – McDonald's is a safe haven for teens

The research revealed the very unique role that McDonald's could play in teens' lives. McDonald's was a place where they could meet to hang out with friends, to laugh and talk and be themselves. They were always welcome in McDonald's unlike in other restaurants where they were often asked to leave immediately after finishing their meal, or where they would be chastised for being too loud. McDonald's was one of the few places they could always rely on to welcome them.



Silver Award - FMCG  
McDonald's Euro saver - *Hold Me Now*  
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Teens felt comfortable discussing McDonald's and their lifestyle in a group situation, however it was the video diaries that unearthed our second deeper insight. The footage we received was worlds apart from the focus groups – they were in the comfort of their own homes, free of being judged and the result was an openness and honesty which led us to our second insight.

### **Insight – teenage angst is alive and well in Ireland**

Our key insight was that despite how different teens today are to teens of the past, they are fundamentally the same – fraught by teenage angst. They have daily dramas that often seem like the end of the world at that moment in time. To teens, it often seems like the whole adult world is against them.

### **Strategic thought: McDonald's is an emotional ally through teenage years**

These two insights led us to believe that McDonald's was an emotional ally through the tough teenage years. We would invite teens to accept McDonald's as a place of refuge, a safe haven from the angst-ridden world they had to contend with and the Euro saver Menu would provide the comfort.

### **The idea and communications activity**

The moment of truth for this campaign happened during an internal creative workshop consisting of the full McDonald's team of planners, creatives and project management. The insights outlined above were discussed and the strategic thought of McDonald's as an emotional ally led us to the thought of teens being in a 'Hold me Now' needstate during their formative years.

That sparked the idea to creatively use the father of 'Hold Me Now', Johnny Logan. It was an idea original and crazy enough to have the potential to gain kudos with teens of today who by and large had not even heard of this 80's heart-throb. And so a famous campaign was born.

## **THE STARTING POINT**

Because McDonald's was a safe haven for teens, so too was our lead medium – a place far away from the prying eyes of the adult world. The internet. We would engage in dialogue in this space and encourage participation with teens. For the first time in Euro saver's history, TV was not the lead medium.

We created Johnny's very own Bebo site where teens could interact with other

Johnny fans, and the brand. They could ask Johnny questions and advice online; they could take part in a quiz and could read 'Johnny's rules to life'. They could download skins containing Johnny and Euro saver imagery and invite friends to join the community.

They could exclusively view the next Euro saver ad, decide which would be shown on TV and could send them virally to friends. Johnny also had pride of place on the McDonald's website. In addition, a four week campaign was run whereby teenagers could upload videos of them recounting their own 'embarrassing moments' to win a prize.

The campaign was also supported by online advertising including banners, skys and islands. McDonald's were also first to market with the latest online advertising format - a banner that appeared at the bottom of videos played on Beboers' profile pages.

## TV

We produced three TV executions featuring Johnny. The creative executions depicted 'traumatic' angst-ridden moments in teenage life (a cancelled free house for a misfortunate bunch of girls, a mishap with 'tinted' moisturiser for an unsuspecting young man and a break-up by text for a love-struck youth). In their hour of need, Johnny would appear with a Euro saver bag to be at their side, to hold them now.

The films were launched online virally. The chosen executions were primarily aired during low cost months- three weeks on, two weeks off, in order to continue to allow the viral element of the campaign to take hold and to enable teens to vote. McDonald's used a low frequency strategy in order to prevent wear out and keep the campaign fresh.

The TV communication resulted in 97% of 15-19 year olds (283,000 people) seeing a Euro saver ad at least once and on average 22 times each across the year.

95% of 15-24 year olds (595,000 people) saw an ad at least once and on average 21 times each across the year. (*Source: Mediaworks*)

## Cinema

Cinema was used during the high cost TV months, when the Euro saver campaign would not appear on TV. The ads were seen approximately 4.56 million times across the year.

**Outdoor**

Outdoor was run concurrently with cinema when the campaign was off TV and radio. In order to tightly target teens, bus shelters outside third level institutions and posters in shopping centers where they congregate were used extensively.

**Radio**

Radio ran in alternate weeks to the TV and cinema/outdoor in order to support and give longevity to each burst. The ads would only air after 11am for relevant timing of food message.

**PR/media coverage**

Johnny became a media darling and he was featured, along with the Euro saver menu, on radio, TV, newspaper and magazine articles. He also appeared on the Late Late where he talked about how both he and McDonald's had become relevant to a whole new generation of teens.

## RESULTS

The McDonald's Euro saver campaign achieved all and exceeded most of the objectives that were set out.

**1) Get more teens coming to McDonald's**

The Euro saver Hold Me Now campaign managed to not only arrest decline but injected positive growth in teen visits for the first time in five years.<sup>2</sup> This meant that a 21% decrease in teen visits had been turned around to a 5% increase.

**2) Get more teens coming to McDonald's more often**

The Hold Me Now campaign also halted the decline in frequency of teen visits on a monthly basis to McDonald's, increasing by .36 average teen visits per month in late 2007.

**3) To increase loyalty amongst teens**

The campaign recruited an extra 3.5% of teens upwards to the most loyal tier – increasing their value to the McDonald's business, with the number of most loyal teens jumping from 6.75% in 2006 to 10.25% in 2007.

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2. Calculated using average monthly number of transactions and TNS/McDonald's metric of teens visits per 1000 population to IEO

#### 4) To grow affinity with teens

A number of factors have shown that we managed to build affinity with the teen audience, and moved the relationship away from strictly price-related.

##### - Bespoke Tracking Study

The results were as follows amongst 15-17 year olds:

- 40% agreed the ad campaign ‘Made you think McDonald’s is for someone like you’.
- 46% agreed it was ‘the sort of campaign you would talk about with friends’.
- 45% agreed it ‘Made you more likely to buy from the Euro saver Menu’.
- 30% agreed the ‘Ad campaign has improved your opinion of McDonald’s.’

##### - Online Metrics

Teens participated with the online element of the campaign in huge numbers. By mid 2007 the Bebo page had over 25,000 hits, Johnny had over 1200 friends, 10,000 questions had been asked, and Johnny skins were viewed 100,000 times. (*Source: Agency.com*)

32% of all 15-17 year olds were aware of Johnny Logan’s Bebo page and of that 32% 1/3 of those had become aware of the page because, ‘*A friend invited me to become Johnny Logan’s friend on Bebo*’.

Teenagers were acting as brand ambassadors passing on the campaign virally.

##### Meeting sales objectives

The Euro saver campaign also managed to over-deliver on its ambitious sales target.

## RETURN ON INVESTMENT

The campaign caught the imagination of the nation; Johnny Logan enjoyed renewed pop success and McDonald’s affinity scores with teens increased dramatically. Most importantly, the campaign achieved hard business results for the McDonald’s brand, proving that an insightful, integrated idea can result in short-term business results while moving the brand’s image from cheap and price oriented to one of relevance.

##### Discounting other factors

The above results were achieved solely as a result of the communications campaign. We can discount two possible contributing factors:

**Seasonality:** the measurement of teen visits is a year on year comparison; seasonality was not a contributing factor to the increase.

**Eurosaver menu offers:** were 'softened' in Q2 and Q3 (*Source: McDonald's*), and penetration of teens **still** increased year on year at this time, proving that it was not the food offers which drove teen visits to McDonald's.

We have calculated the ROI for the campaign by looking at the additional sales increase and PR value garnered from the campaign against the total investment, which showed that the Eurosaver 'Hold Me Now' campaign delivered 2.4 times return on investment.

