

Silver: New Campaign for Existing Product or Service

Meteor-ic Rise:

How a Carefully Executed Advertising Strategy can Grow a Brand's Market Share in Under a Year

A CLEARLY FOCUSED ADVERTISING STRATEGY FROM PUBLICIS QMP HAS FIRMLY ESTABLISHED METEOR AS THE CREDIBLE NUMBER 3 PLAYER IN THE IRISH MOBILE MARKET. AND ALL IN THE SPACE OF A YEAR.

This case study demonstrates how a carefully executed advertising strategy can propel a brand's market share from 13% to 19% in a mature market in just over 9 months. (July 05 - April 06)

BACKGROUND – 2001 - 2004

The mobile network market is dominated by two main brands Vodafone and O₂, however between launch in 2001 and the end of 2004 Meteor had, through strong price led acquisition, gained a 13% market share.

Meteor's initial growth had been driven by attracting young consumers purchasing mobile phones for the first time. However over the years the market had moved rapidly to full penetration and by 2005 it was at 96%. Meteor chose to adopt a new growth strategy which shifted their focus from recruiting new users to attracting customers from competitor networks, i.e. getting people to switch. High inertia in the category made this a very challenging task.

2005+

Having won the creative account in Dec 2004, Publicis QMP were tasked with providing the communication strategy to drive the brand to 20% market share by 2008.

TABLE 1: QUARTERLY SHARE

Qtr 3 2004	7.1%
Qtr 4 2004	9.0%
Qtr 1 2005	9.8%
Qtr 2 2005	10.5%

Source: Comreg

TABLE 2: SHARE AS AT JULY/JUNE

July '03	5%
July '04	9%
July '05	11%
Jun '06	18%

Source: Comreg

However, a closer analysis of the figures (Table 1) showed that the year on year growth rate was slowing and this was exaggerated in analysis of the four quarters running up to June 2005

Given the aggressive growth ambition (business objective) of the company this was of serious concern.

Further analysis led us to understand that a flattening and fall off in brand consideration (one of the key drivers of brand choice & sales) was the critical issue.

Analysis of qual and quant found three main factors driving this downward trend in share growth and consideration.

1. Negative brand image for image conscious consumers – chasing new younger users with constant price led activity resulted in the rest of market viewing Meteor as a cheap 'student' network.

2. Vodafone and O₂ users – the users we needed to switch were used to brand/image communication and equity. Our user group and price promotion was driving us out of their consideration set.

3. Increased price competition – we had obviously awakened the sleeping giants. Vodafone and O₂ began to retaliate with like for like price offers. Thus making the price differential increasingly smaller.

BUSINESS OBJECTIVE

- Drive share to 20% by 2008

MARKETING OBJECTIVES

- Turn around the declining brand consideration from 41% to 45% by December 2005
- Re-initiate consideration to 65% amongst 'potential switchers'
- Increase market share growth by 1% per quarter

TASK

- Develop a campaign platform that by driving consideration would drive brand sales
- Meteor needed to re-position for future growth

WE FACED TWO CORE ISSUES

- Brand image - Broad market had poor brand image associations for the brand
- Difficult growth environment - Saturated market place and inertia

STRATEGIC SOLUTION

We started by answering the following questions:

WHERE IS THE GROWTH OPPORTUNITY?

In simple terms we had to expand the credibility and 'chooseability' of the brand outside of the price conscious 18-24 year old market.

The obvious place was to seek to upage the brand into the 25-34 year old cohort, without alienating our existing 15-24 year customer base.

Analysis had shown that Vodafone and O₂ had significant volume amongst these users that we felt was in play due to a lack of relevant communications.

CORE QUESTION:

What would convince 15-34yo O2 & Vodafone customers to consider and choose Meteor?

HERE'S WHAT WE FOUND

- The category insight and benefit was centred around the Social Bonding
- Neither of the dominant brands had directly grabbed this territory

INSIGHT:

There is a deep seated desire amongst the 15-34 age group to stay in the loop and therefore remain popular (this makes even more sense today if you look at Bebo, myspace etc...)

Eureka - Our task was now clear: grab ownership of the category insight by migrating our 'social' equity to a positive one while continuing to leverage our strong value credentials.

PROPOSITION:

- Meteor allows you to stay more connected, more in the loop

BENEFIT:

- If I'm more in the loop I'm more popular

CORE SUPPORT:

- Full service value network for less

BRIEF

Create a credible brand image for Meteor that makes the value offering the hero allowing our customers to stay more in touch.

WHAT SUCCESS WOULD LOOK LIKE?

- Brand image - Increased acceptance of the brand amongst 25-34 year-olds without alienation of current users.
- Value is a positive hero rather than short hand for cheap.
- Increase appeal and consideration.
- Drive sales/share and share of new acquisitions.

THE IDEA

We now had a clear proposition based on a powerful insight that was not being leveraged by our competitors. There were a number of other variables that would influence creative development:

We were the only mobile phone brand that didn't import international creative work; we should always endeavour to use Irish actors/themes to connect with our Irish consumers.

Based on the insight, showing friends interacting socially was a mandatory for the advertising

The challenge we faced was to create a campaign that would resonate strongly with the target audience and carve out a unique brand image that would differentiate Meteor from the category competitors. The communication also had to establish the sociable personality and positioning of the Meteor brand, whilst making the offer an integral part of the communications. Based on key insights of how our targets interact with their phone, we had to develop a campaign that tapped into their psyche.

THE CAMPAIGN.

The "Girls & Guys" campaign was developed based on a theme similar to that of the programme "Friends". We created two female and two male characters for Meteor to represent our targets busy social lives and reflect their desire to be in the loop. The girls and guys are friends, perhaps sometimes rivals, who thanks to Meteor's great value offers and the power of the network use their phones to create and maintain the social connections that are so important to them.

As a reflection of life today, their mobile phone is a natural and essential part of who they are. We used the same characters throughout a series of commercials so that the girls became a familiar face to consumers, allowing consumers to get to know them and hence build affinity with the Meteor brand.

The social element of the campaign differentiates it from any other communication in the category. By entrenching the characters, humour and executional situations in Ireland, it gave Meteor a definitive Irish personality.

THE COMMUNICATION ACTIVITY

Five commercials have been produced in the series to date. The TV campaign was also complimented with Outdoor, Press and Radio.

TV

Punch Up	July 2005
Orang- utan	October 2005
Lap Dance 1	November 2005
Lap Dance 2	December 2005
Restaurant	January-April 2006

MEDIA STRATEGY

The media strategy was very clear: connect with consumers across as many multi format mass media as possible to establish the campaign. If we were serious about taking on our international rivals, the media we chose had to give the campaign a big brand feel and cut through the competitor activity

Due to the nature and construct of the campaign, multi format outdoor and a heavy press presence were employed to establish our visual characters and reinforce the value offering.

Radio was also employed to complement and establish an Irish humour and unique tone for the brand.

THE RESULTS - OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH.

The campaign immediately grabbed 'thought leadership' in the category and despite big brand leverage Meteor was seen as the 'stand out campaign in the category' according to TNS research

ADVERTISING EVALUATION

Strongest advertising scores registered to date

• Contained new information about Meteor	78
• Made Meteor seem more appealing	70
• Points made where believable	79
• Aimed at people like me	69
• Company for everyone	68
• A company friends would use	69

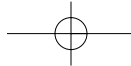
Made particular inroads into the 25-34 year-olds market over the course of the campaign without alienating our core volume (15-24 year-olds).

Recall

	Pre campaign	Txt/Talk	Girl lap	Boy lap
15-24	74	74	83	84
25-34	58	64	75	81

Source: TNS

This led to a growth in prompted ad awareness from 61% to 89%.



Meteor

IMPACTING BRAND IMAGE

Leading with this execution the 'Girls' campaign had significant shift on brand equity.

1. Value a positive hero / Make offer at the heart of the brand - driving sales at POS.

Competitively priced	+ 4
Best for value for money	+ 4

2. Drive consideration by increasing appeal across broader community - direct correlation to brand share growth.

Company friends would use (affinity)	+10
Company I would recommend	+3

IMPACTING CONSIDERATION AND SHARE GROWTH

The campaign had a dramatic and immediate impact on consideration levels, both amongst the broad population and amongst switchers. Meteor experienced an immediate rise in the growth rate of sales and share over the QTR's since the launch of the campaign. This has continued across the last six months to the effect that the brand is now growing at its fastest rate year on year.

THE ROLE OF ADVERTISING IN DRIVING MARKET SHARE:

PRICE

Price was not the key driver of market share. In such an aggressive and fiercely competitive market there is essentially a level playing field with minimal wins being scored in the short term as competitors match prices almost immediately.

DISTRIBUTION

Equally, distribution was not the key driver of market share. During the course of the advertising campaign the number of Meteor stores increased from 15 to 23 (at the back end of the campaign - early 2006 onwards) while the number of other Meteor channels remained constant. At this point in time the advertising campaign had already had a significant impact on consideration and brand image scores

Without the shift in consideration and improved image scores the brand would not have been in the consideration set of our broader target audience and sales/share growth could not have been achieved. Increased distribution facilitated the growth in market share but as this case study proves, it was the advertising campaign that drove it.

PAYBACK

Overall the Meteor 'Girls' campaign resulted in a €92.5 million increase in revenue for the brand. Over 250,000 new customers joined the network over the period of the campaign, the end result is a net increase twenty times that of media investment.

CLIENT QUOTE

According to Michael Hayes marketing director at Meteor "The Girls & Guys campaign has been a tremendous success for the Meteor brand and has made a direct and significant contribution to our sales & market share growth since its launch in July 2005.

The campaign has delivered significant improvement in our core brand image attributes and has created a distinct, highly recognisable and campaignable advertising equity for the Meteor brand in a very cluttered mobile market.

In summary the campaign has been key in positioning the brand as a real and credible alternative to the big two competitors in the market."

**Michael Hayes, Marketing Director,
Meteor Mobile Communications Ltd.**

BIOGRAPHRIES

Claire Corbett, Account Director, Publicis QMP

A graduate of DIT, Claire holds a Diploma in Business Management, a BA in Marketing and MSc in Advertising. Prior to joining Publicis QMP in 2005, Claire worked in McConnells for over 5 years where she worked on a diverse range of accounts including, BMW, The Irish Times, Unilever, Masterfoods, Irish Ferries, ESB and IDA. With Publicis QMP, Claire currently works on the Meteor and SPAR Accounts.

Damien Heary, Strategic Planner, Publicis QMP

Damien joined the planning team at Publicis QMP in June 2005 and works across a range of client's business including Meteor, Tiger Beer, Vhi, Dublin City Council and Bord Bia. Damien graduated from U.C.D. with a B.Comm in 1995. He worked with Diageo Ireland for 5 years, across several brands and specifically as brand manager for Carlsberg. He also worked in Consumer Planning and Innovation. Damien went on to work with Carlsberg Breweries as Global Brand Manager, based in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Clare Connolly, Account Manager, Publicis QMP

Clare graduated from D.I.T. Aungier Street with a degree in Business Management and Marketing. She joined Publicis QMP in 2003. Clare currently works as an Account Manager on Meteor, SPAR, Tiger Beer and Failte Ireland.

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