

McDonnells: How a dry curry sauce pasted the market

Boys and Girls & MindShare



AGENCIES



CLIENT



AWARD

FMCG
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COMPANY PROFILE

Boys and Girls is a creative agency founded in 2009 on the principle of “Daring Simplicity”. We believe that the simpler an idea, the more it resonates and the more it inspires action.

Over the last six years we have grown rapidly, and now produce award-winning campaigns for a range of clients from indigenous brands, to large international companies as far afield as the Caribbean, the USA and Europe.

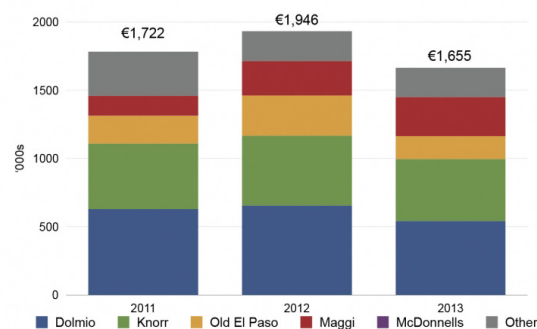
We work above the line, below the line, through the line, in areas where there is no line, in both analog and digital. Wherever we work, we believe that ‘Great work, works’.

Mindshare was established in Ireland in 1999 and since then has been Ireland’s leading media specialist agency. We believe in an integrated media world, where technology brings new life and opportunity to every medium. Our role is to help our clients (big, small, local, global) navigate those growing opportunities to deliver real results for their brands. We do it through Adaptive Marketing – adapting to today’s technological world, changing cultures, consumers and our clients’ business needs.

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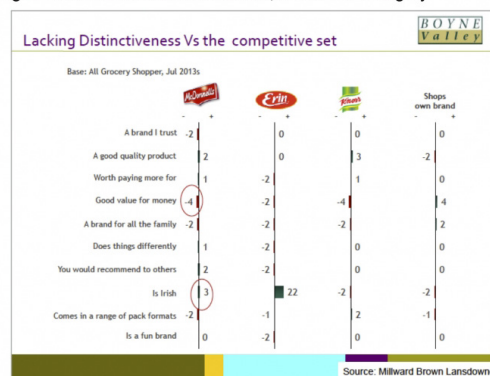
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Fig 1. Spend By Advertiser



Source: Nielsen/Mindshare

Fig 2. No distinctive characteristics, a 'Me Too' category



Source: Millward Brown Lansdowne

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

When Irish people think of curry – not kormas, tikka masalas or Thai reds, but Curry (Capital C) – what they are thinking of, whether they know it or not, is McDonnells Curry Sauce.

Curry Chips, or chips drowned in curry sauce, has been a mainstay of every Irish local town chip shop for nearly 40 years now.

Served at home with chicken and rice, it's the curry sauce that Irish people have been brought up on.

Up until recently, McDonnells had been the untroubled kingpin of the category (dry curry powder which becomes curry sauce), and as such, had never had any need to invest in any advertising communications.

It was a successful product but, practically speaking, an invisible brand - having never been advertised. Everyone knew curry sauce. Far less were aware it was McDonnells. In fact, even those who knew McDonnells saw it as being indistinctive versus its competitors.

Whilst it was a profitable business, which is amongst the reasons the Boyne Valley Group (referred to as BVG from hereon in) purchased it back in 2011, it has been in recent decline for a number of reasons:

- ▶ Its format – a dry powder that required more cooking than other, more convenient 'pour over' jars or other wet curry sauces – was fighting against the general trend of 'ease of preparation' when it came to home cooking. The overall dry curry powder sector was in decline by 6% YoY.
- ▶ Its packaging was tired, unchanged and unloved – essentially a generic style red tub.
- ▶ Worse still, and unsurprisingly given the potential size of the prize and the low barriers to market entry, the dry curry powder sector had begun to attract a number of cheaper branded alternatives and own branded look-a-likey competitors.

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Fig 3. "Me-Too"



INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

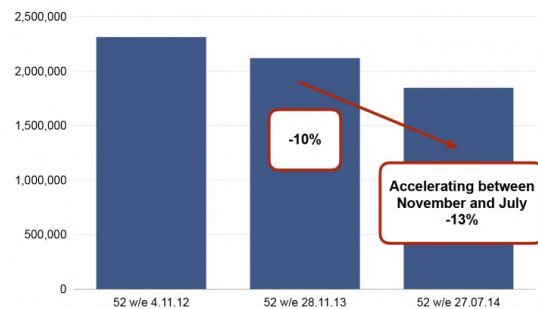
- ▶ Most significantly, Erin launched a 'me-too' in 2013, followed in 2014 by Aldi, Lidl, Dunnes Stores and Tesco.

The result of all of this meant that by mid-2014, McDonnells were losing 9% YOY, faster than the market decline of 6% (mid-years figures showed McDonnells' losses were actually accelerating to 13%).

Overall, we were staring into a potentially very bleak future.

This is the story of how Boyne Valley faced this adversity and transformed McDonnells from a great product into a great brand solely through advertising.

Fig 4. : Rapid Value Decline: McDonnells Sales Performance €



Source: Nielsen/Multiples

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Fig 5. Aggressively squeezed from all sides

PRIVATE LABEL



29% SHARE



Source: Nielsen, EY, Dunnhumby

BRANDS

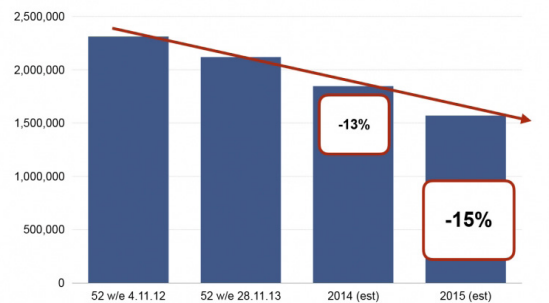


Launched H213



Feb 14
c 25% share*
* Tesco & Sainsbury

Fig 6. Best case scenario, it was predicted by BVG that by doing nothing different, another 15% of sales would disappear



Source: Nielsen/Multiples

* mean rate of decline since early 2012

MARKETING OBJECTIVES

BVG had a decision to make in the middle of 2014.

McDonnells was in long term decline, 9% YoY by that stage, and under increasing attack from aggressively promoted and priced branded and own brand competitors.

The recently launched discounter own brands were selling me-too products at nearly half the price, and had gained 29% market share.

Faced with this incredibly bleak background of rapidly declining market share in a declining market, BVG had three options:

- ▶ They could continue to manage its decline. McDonnells was still profitable and they could continue to milk its fading cow. (Figure 6)
- ▶ They could fight its cheaper competitors where it was being attacked – on price and on promotion – decreasing its profitability but in all probability slowing its decline.
- ▶ Or, most bravely, they could invest in building the brand to justify its market position and maintaining its price premium.

BVG took the decision to invest in building the brand, and in May 2014 they appointed Boys and Girls as their agency partner.

Spicing our task up even further was the fact that BVG had another significant commercial plan at stake here.

BVG had purchased McDonnells with an eye on expanding its range. Currently it was an 'orphan brand' with only one product type, Original Curry Sauce, and a couple of SKU's.

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Fig 7: The campaign had a very limited time to prove itself

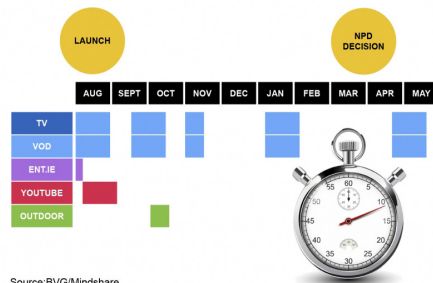


Fig 8. Commercial Objectives: Key Dates to Hit

	OBJECTIVES		
DATE	Aug 2014	Mar 15	Oct 15 (new data)
ACTION	Campaign launch	Go/No Go on NPD Launch	Evaluate
SUCCESS MARKERS	STARTING POINT	Aug-Mar 15 GO IF +1% YOY	52 W/E +6%
DESIRED EFFECT	Jan-Jul 14 -9%	SWING SALES BY +10% pts from -1% decline	ADD GROWTH + another 5%pts

Source: Nielsen Scantrack

Fig 9. Marketing Objectives

	KPIS	FROM	TO
SUCCESS MARKERS	Increase penetration	30%	36%
	Recruit more ABC1 shoppers	35%	40%
	Increase Market Share	53%	60%

Source: Kantar/Reach

MARKETING OBJECTIVES

But BVG had been developing potential McDonnells' NPD concepts and products, which critically would only make commercial sense to launch on the back of a strong profitable master brand.

So if the campaign, and therefore the brand, failed to deliver sustainable (i.e. non-promotional driven) growth of 1%, there was a view that there would be no point in pursuing a new product route.

The NPD decision was required to be made by the end of March 2015, just 9 months after the launch of the campaign, so we needed to demonstrate success, fast. (Figure 7)

Commercial objectives

Our two main commercial objectives were both simple and substantial:

- ▶ To turn around the current 9% YoY decline and get the brand to a stable position of nominal growth. 1% growth between August and March was the key figure we needed to hit – a 10% swing in sales. March was when a key decision on the possibility of NPD was needed.
- ▶ Secondly, they had set an ambitious 52 W/E growth figure, measured in October '15 (moving the brand another 5% on from the March target).

Marketing objectives

To achieve the commercial objectives, we would need to increase penetration and overall market share. Secondly, with one eye on the future of the brand, we needed to increase the ABC1 profile of the brand.

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MARKETING OBJECTIVES

Communications objectives

From a communications point of view, we needed to win over the Irish public, both emotionally (through our approach) and rationally (with our message).

We had to increase brand KPI's so that McDonnells could compete on something outside of and beyond price.

Research (pre-campaign formal Millward Brown research and informal Boys and Girls pitch conversations) had shown that there were five key consumer concerns or issues blocking consideration that we needed to drive trial:

- ▶ Taste
- ▶ Quality
- ▶ Main meals (not just curry chips)
- ▶ Ease of preparation
- ▶ Reverse the old-fashioned perceptions

We also knew that humour and modernity would be key in getting our message across.

All of this combined led us to agree the value statements (listed opposite) that we could look to move in order to measure our success.

Fig 10. Communication Objectives

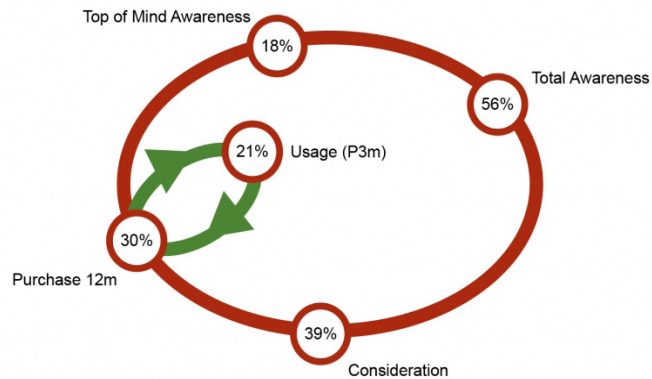
Source: //Reach

KPIS	FROM	TO
Makes food taste great	42%	47%
Quality	44%	49%
Easy to use/prepare	56%	61%
Real meal/curry dish	57%	66%
Old-fashioned	34%	29%
Sense of humour	13%	30% (Stretch 40%)

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Fig 11. Bumps all along the Customer Journey
Pre Campaign



Source: iReach

THE TASK

Our task at its simplest was twofold:

- ▶ Firstly, we needed to turn McDonnells from a product people who consumed it enjoyed (often without knowing it) into a brand they loved and were prepared to pay a premium for.
- ▶ Secondly, we needed to convince non-buyers that the brand was relevant to them.

From a metric perspective it went without saying that purchase was the critical number to shift. We needed to reverse a 9% YoY decline.

To achieve this, we had to make the brand more present and relevant in their lives.

Given the fact that the brand had no marketing support in living memory, there were understandable issues at every stage of the consumer journey that we needed to overcome in order to move these scores.

On top of this, the marketing function on BVG was very new. There were no existing brand assets or positioning. There was no existing website, social media or any other digital presence.

Also turning the heat up was the fact that we had 7 weeks to get a campaign on air from final briefing to the August airdate. And we didn't even have the luxury of throwing money at the problem, as we were working with a pretty limited production budget.

No pressure then. Seven weeks to produce essentially a single execution campaign that has to turn a product in long term decline - with an apparent format issue, an increasing number of successful me-too products on offer at a much cheaper price, no brand positioning, no brand assets, no digital channels and a limited budget - into a brand that people knew and loved.

Tick tock indeed.

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Fig 12. See Back of Pack for details!



THE STRATEGY

For a long existing brand, we had as close to a blank canvas as you could imagine.

Many of the usual places food brands mine for insight gold were empty. There was no motivating brand history. There was no ingredient story to tell (see pack for details) and McDonnells is made in Drogheda, not Delhi, so there was nothing in provenance.

But McDonnells was a popular and tasty product – the most popular curry sauce in Ireland. Those who knew it loved the taste. It's a taste associated with home, comfort and Ireland. It's the unique taste of Irish curry, made for the Irish palate. And it transforms food – the humble chip becomes a delicious curried chip, chicken goes from bland to a taste explosion.

We needed to tell the current consumers that the unmistakable taste of Irish-style curry sauce they loved so much was McDonnells. We needed to take our rightful place - to become the brand synonymous with Curry Sauce and to make them love the McDonnells brand in the process.

To succeed, we needed to get the brand onto the tables and plates of families and students – these became our main targets.

The larger prize would come by winning with mums, and we have already outlined all the rational reasons she might reject McDonnells.

We then tried to delve deeper into her loves and hates around cooking for her family.

Not surprisingly, the research told us that cooking family meals is a bit of a pain in the arse.

It is a practically endless cycle of planning, shopping, cooking, cleaning and repeat.

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THE STRATEGY

Then, when you've gone to all that work, the food is often rejected by unconscionably ungrateful kids on the basis that it's 'boring' or 'yuk'. We found this led our shoppers to oscillate between feelings of desperation and thoughts of violence (N.B. thoughts of violence are no guarantee of actual violence).

It therefore also came as no surprise that she dislikes advertising that implies that planning and preparing dinner is the highlight of her day. Or that cooking something delicious is simple.

Insight

The truth is that many of our main shoppers – both the household main shopper and our students – lack the culinary skills or time to make even great ingredients into anything other than boiled or baked blandness. In their (largely) unskilled hands, meat is just a block of tasteless protein. Vegetables are cooked into submission.

Opportunity

We began to see the powerful, simple opportunity for McDonnells, in the advertising world that was populated by luscious, lingering food photography, heavily emphasising food quality and farm to fork messages.

We were none of those things.

Our opportunity was to become the antithesis to those brands that portrayed meal preparation as fun and suggesting that every meal has to be a fine dining experience. We would tell the truth about the blandness of meat and veg.

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Fig 13. Daringly Simple: Communications Ladder

The Insight	Making dinner is not a rewarding experience. Stop pretending it is!
Product Truth	McDonnells is made for the Irish palate and makes everything from chips to chicken taste better.
Why should I care?	Because the little (and big) Ingrates in my life will lick their plates clean.
Approach	Avoid cliched mum advertising, be brave like the brand.
DARINGLY SIMPLE IDEA	McDonnells is the curry sauce make even the dullest food taste great

THE STRATEGY

Sometimes you need a sauce to make food taste great and to make sure the whole family eats it.

And when you do, we want you to think of McDonnells Curry sauce.

Strategy

Our strategy therefore was to position McDonnells curry sauce as the tasty meal maker, capable of making even the dullest bit of chicken or chip into something scrumptious.

We would also leverage our market leading position to justify a uniquely Irish tone of voice, which we believed would put clear water between ourselves and our competitors.

We felt this taste-centric strategy, if delivered in a uniquely Irish, humorous way, could appeal to mums, students and a broader family audience.

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THE IDEA AND COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

Creative Idea: MAKES FOOD TASTE GREAT.

If strategically the brand was a blank canvas, there were absolutely none of the usual tools that might come in useful or help us frame the creative process or point us towards an executional route.

However, the strategy did hone in on two absolute and powerful truths.

Firstly, the product tasted absolutely brilliant and could transform boring food into something all the family would enjoy.

Secondly, McDonnells was the most popular curry sauce in Ireland - despite the fact that many people consumed it without knowing or recognising the brand name.

We knew taste was the primary driver to drive purchase and trial, but this by itself would never do enough to reverse the brand's fortunes. In particular, we couldn't rely on our product to garner appetite appeal because it looked so unappetising on camera.

We therefore needed to deliver our taste message in something that could both speak to our genuine Irishness in as interesting way as possible.

For inspiration, we looked to the existing brands who were telling stories of 'genuine' and 'authentic' Irishness in the food category. Brands like McDonalds, Lidl, Bord Bia, all told the same story portraying real, rugged men walking through fields, over fences, into farmhouses and all delivered in a truly earnest fashion.

Each spokesperson more genuine than the next. Each rain-drenched field serving up grass-fed goodness that could be enjoyed in the earthy, range-filled kitchens they were portraying.

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McDonnells Curry Sauce - Unbland

THE IDEA AND COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

So successful had this advertising trope been, it had seemingly filtered into every other cooking show being produced – ‘real’ cooks, with ‘real’ ingredients in ‘real’ places. So ubiquitous, it had become ‘real’ bland.

Our potential opportunity was to subvert that existing ‘real’ paradigm that had become so really forgettable, and in doing so, make ourselves more memorable.

Taste was our message. Not how we’re made, where we came from or the family history behind it – or indeed how ‘down to earth’ our spokesperson was. Taste can come in a tub, and we were going to make that point loud and clear.

Our idea therefore was to create a loving homage or pastiche of this style and in doing so to become The **Unbland** to the bland category advertising.

We looked for our everyday antihero who would be the spokesperson for the brand. Enthusiastic rather than restrained. More first-time presenter than polished pro.

Knowing the weight of importance of the performance, we decided to cast stand-up comedians rather than actors, and this proved to be a key decision.

This inversion played by the right actor and peppered with both slapstick and surreal comedy, we felt, could lift our piece out of the humdrum of the ‘genuine’ Irish category.

Played straight, we would build the enthusiasm to an unsustainable crescendo, only to ‘pull the rug’ with our actual great taste message.

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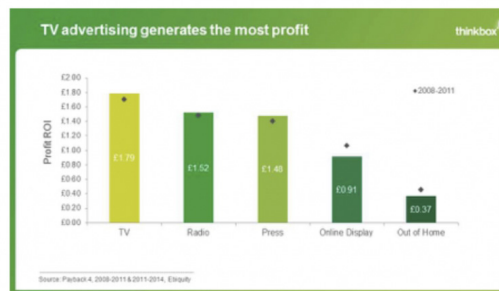
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Fig. 14.

Nielsen Findings	% growth in share of market (SOM) per 10% points of excess share of voice (ESOV)
FMCG brand leaders	+1.4%
Challenge FMCG brands	+0.4%
An 'average' campaign for an 'average' FMCG brand	+0.5%

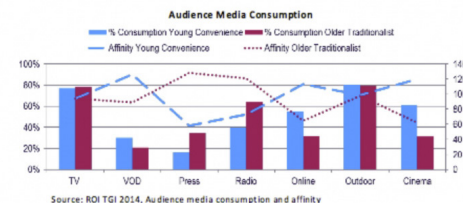
Source: Nielsen

Fig 15. TV advertising generates the most profit



Source: Thinkbox

Fig 16.



Source: ROI TGI 2014, Audience media consumption and affinity

THE IDEA AND COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

This combination was both unexpected and welcome to our viewer. Its energy and humour demanded attention with the 'rug pull' hammering home our taste message – though even this was played with a slight twist.

And, by the simple inversion of the familiar Curry Chips description to 'Chips curry', McDonnells in a stroke took ownership of one Ireland's favourite dishes.

Use of Channels

To grow market share, brands must invest in advertising; as had been proven by recent studies such as Nielsen/IPA Databank's How Share Of Voice Wins Share Of Market and the seminal Binet & Field work The Long & The Short Of It. Investment beyond the shelf was necessary to increase visibility and consideration of the brand, but it needed to be of a weight and within channels that delivered McDonnells share of voice and ultimately business results. This also meant that we had to be mindful of the weight of investment, every euro had to be accountable. At launch, the business put in €340,000, which yielded media presence to the value of €600,000.

In order to reach a broad consumer base, everyone from the 20-year-old male student to the 42-year-old housewife needed to be exposed to our campaign. TV and outdoor were the two channels where the polar ends of our consumer base met for both reach and affinity. TV was selected as the lead medium due to its proven efficiency on FMCG return on investment (source: Thinkbox/Ebiquity Payback studies).

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Fig 17. entertainment.ie

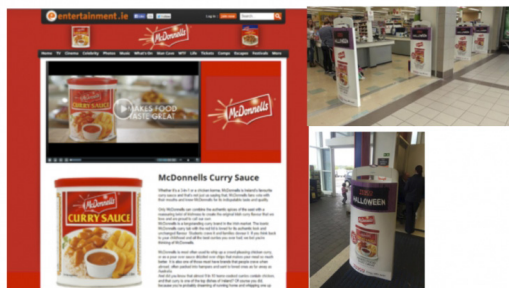


Fig 18. Point of Sale



THE IDEA AND COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

AV: TV & online video

On TV, we used the full breadth of stations on offer. However, part of our strategy was to place McDonnells at the heart of Irish culture again, so we handpicked key programmes – including The Rose of Tralee, Ireland's Euro 2016 qualifiers, Fair City, and The Saturday Night Show. With humour a core element of the creative delivery, we up-weighted in comedy, including a strand on Comedy Central.

We extended TV reach, particularly for our younger target, by utilising online video through TV players (RTÉ, 4OD etc.) and YouTube – working our TV assets hard.

Digital: Entertainment.ie

Viewers of our ads online were prompted to visit our purpose-built entertainment.ie microsite, harnessing the value of connection between the entertaining nature of the ad and the credentials of the entertainment.ie property. Visitors to the microsite had to watch our ad to get the answer to the competition question! This turned our launch lead medium into a true cross-platform audio-visual (AV) strategy.

Outdoor: Point of Sale

To reinforce our brand all the way to the shelf, we harnessed the power of point of sale, including 280 store-points and 4,200 trolley handles to remind at the point of purchase. These sites were handpicked to match McDonnell's top-performing sales stores across 25 branches of Tesco and Dunnes Stores, and ran in sync with in-store promotional activations. Both formats had been proven to generate sales uplifts in test and control research.

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Fig 19. Plenty of talk

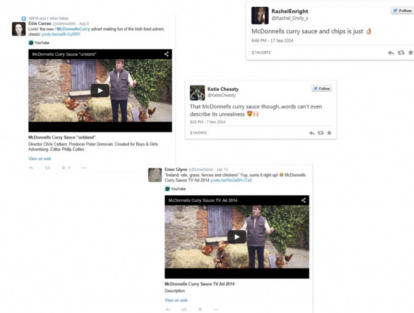


Fig 20. Media Plan 2014-2015

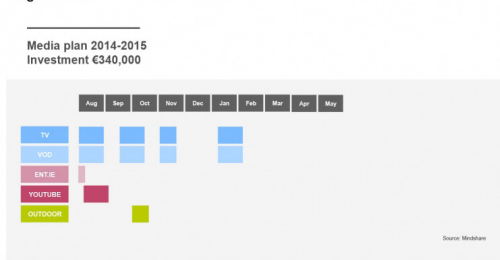


Fig 21.



THE IDEA AND COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY

Post-launch we continued to work our AV strategy into January 2015 to develop brand equity, placing our campaigns at key periods for promotional support.

Media summary:

- ▶ TV – 1,500 ratings; national and satellite channels
- ▶ Online video – TV players (RTÉ, TV3, 4OD); YouTube; Vevo etc.
- ▶ Entertainment.ie microsite and competition
- ▶ Point of sale - 280 store-points and 4,200 trolley handles (25 stores)
- ▶ Total budget €340,000
- ▶ Media value in excess of €600,000

The campaign generated strong PR with The Daily Edge dedicating free editorial placement in December

2014 – “11 signs McDonnells Curry Sauce is an essential part of the Irish diet” - and even without a formal social media strategy, both Facebook and Twitter started to talk!

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Fig 22. Commercial Objectives: ALL KEY DATES MET

DATE	OBJECTIVES		
	Aug 2014	Mar 15	Oct 15 (new data)
ACTION	Campaign launch	Go/No Go on NPD Launch	Evaluate
SUCCESS MARKERS	START PT Jan-Jul 14 -9%	Aug-Mar 15 GO IF +1% YOY	52 W/E +6%
RESULTS		Aug-Mar 15 +16% ✓	52 W/E +14% ✓

Source: Nielsen Scantrack

Fig 23. Commercial Objectives: Key Dates to Hit



Fig 24. And then there was more



RESULTS

The fate of McDonnells Curry Sauce has been entirely transformed by the advertising campaign they commissioned in May 2014.

Commercial Objectives

Results

A 9% decline figure YoY (with a predicted 15% decline were we to do nothing) was entirely reversed, with the brand enjoying instead a 15% increase in sales.

This was a 24% swing in sales during the key 9-month period from launch in July 2014 until March 2015.

This increase was 14% better than our stated ambition of a 10% swing in sales and the 1% sustainable brand growth which was needed to green-light the hoped-for NPD.

Secondarily, BVG had a set a 52 W/E growth figure for OCT '15 of +6%. The final figures came in at 14%, which was beyond the scope of even the most optimistic projection.

This incredible turnaround gave the BVG group confidence to launch a range of NPD as planned - Thai, Indian and Intensity – all of which have subsequently been successfully rolled out.

McDonnells has moved from being a single orphan product with only two SKU's to a master brand with a full range of variants and 14 SKU's.

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Fig 25. Marketing Objectives: MORE PEOPLE, MORE SHARE

	KPIS	FROM	TO	ACTUAL
SUCCESS MARKERS	Increase penetration	30%	36%	40% ✓
	Recruit more ABC1 shoppers	35%	40%	41% ✓
	Increase Market Share	53%	60%	64% ✓

Source: Kantar/iReach

Source: iReach

Fig 26. Communication Objectives: IMPROVED ASSOCIATIONS

KPIS	FROM	TO	ACHIEVED		
			ACTUAL	VS START	VS TARGET
Makes food taste great	42%	47%	49%	+7%pts ✓	+2%pts
Quality	44%	49%	51%	+7%pts ✓	+2%pts
Easy to use/prepare	56%	61%	64%	+8%pts ✓	+3%pts
Real meal/curry dish	57%	66%	70%	+13pts% ✓	+4pts%
Old-fashioned	34%	29%	18%	-16pts% ✓	-11pts%
Sense of humour	13%	30% (Stretch 40%)	50%	37% ✓	+20% (+10%)

RESULTS

Marketing Objectives

Results

Thankfully we also overachieved in all three of our specific marketing markers - driving penetration by 10%, increasing Market share by 11%, and secondarily but importantly, increasing the number of ABC1 Shoppers into the brand by 6%.

Remarkably, this was achieved almost entirely single-handedly by our advertising campaign.

An advantage in assessing the campaign is that virtually nothing changed to impact sales other than advertising being launched. There was no new packaging or increases in distribution during this period. The competitor landscape remained very similar and McDonnells promotions (€3 packs versus standard €3.99 RRP on the main 250g SKU) ran for only 4 weeks in the period that a decision on the NPD had to be made - supported with some off-shelf display units in a small number of leading stores - with Erin remaining as promotionally focused as previously.

Communications Objective

The communications objective was to address five key consumer concerns or issues that research had told us were blocking consideration, as well as establishing a differentiating, humorous tone which would aid brand engagement.

All of our communications objectives exceeded expectations.

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Fig 27. Stage 1 - What does Advertising Effect?

CONSTANTS	VARIABLES	DATA ANALYSIS	AD EFFECT ON SALES
<p>MCDONNELLS</p> <p>Packaging</p> <p>Product</p> <p>Range</p> <p>Promotional weeks, dates and weight</p> <p>Distribution</p> <p>COMPETITION</p> <p>Promotional Activity</p>	<p>Advertising</p> <p>Media Spend</p>	<p>Source: Nielsen Scantrack, Scantrack accounts for 60% of market</p> <p>McDonnells is available a further 24%</p> <p>All sales (estimated and actuals) were grossed up to match 74% of the market</p> <p>Projected sales were based on forecasted 15% decline vs previous year.</p>	<p>Actual Sales minus Forecasted Sales</p> <p>=</p> <p>SALES EFFECT ABOVE FORECAST</p>

Source: Nielsen Scantrack (accounts for % of market)

Fig 28. Stage 2 - Evaluating Marketing Investment

	SPEND	MARKETING INVESTMENT
Media Spend	Total Aug-March 2015	Media Spend + Pro-Rata Production Spend
Production	<p>Campaign built for 24 month exposure</p> <p>Pro Rata cost is 9 months covered by this case study. Unweighted to 12 months to take launch into account.</p>	= MARKETING COMMS SPEND

Source: Mindshare/Boys and Girls

Fig 29. Stage 3 - Return on Investment

$$\frac{\text{ADFX ON SALES}}{\text{MARKETING COMMS SPEND}} = \text{RETURN ON MEDIA INVESTMENT}$$

RESULTS

Return on investment

Immediate return on investment had not been set as a specific objective for us; rather, this campaign was designed to explore the potential future of the brand. Could McDonnells be turned around into growth and become a successful launch pad for NPD, or was it a fading cow to be milked?

Trying to change sales figures and brand metrics with a brand that was essentially launching itself into the market (given the seeming total absence of marketing communications over its 40-year history) was always going to be harder than for a brand with an established marketing presence or positioning.

However, we have established return on investment using the following formulae. Taking a staged approach:

Stage 1 - identified the impact of the campaign on sales

Stage 2 – calculated the marketing investment

Stage 3 – established the actual return on investment

Our return on investment was €1 - €1.18. Or simply, for every 1 euro spent, the campaign returned an additional 18 cents to the company.

Putting this into perspective, McDonnells had considered the option of moving to a promotionally driven brand which would mean selling product for €3 as opposed to the current RRP of €3.99, a loss of 25% on every pack sold. By choosing to invest in advertising, that potential loss became a gain.

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RESULTS

Most importantly, for a long-term return on the investment BVG made in buying the brand in 2011, the campaign proved that McDonnells had the potential to be a successful master brand as the launch of our new Thai, Indian and Intensity ranges have proved.

Observations

The results of this case are particularly interesting for a couple of reasons:

- ▶ It suggests to FMCG businesses who don't tend to advertise that they ought to consider it.
- ▶ It suggests to brands who have found themselves in a promotional 'race to the bottom' cycle that they should consider their A&P spend balance.

Our campaign managed to revitalise and reframe this much-loved product but largely invisible brand into a modern Irish brand using largely a single execution which was broadcast on TV and VOD, with very limited price promotion.

It clearly demonstrates the power of advertising in building both a brand and sales.

Lastly, it gave BVG the confidence and belief that building brands was of best long-term benefit to their business and established a great working relationship between BVG and Boys and Girls, as can be seen in the quote below:

"The campaign gave our business enormous confidence, which subsequently led to a raft of McDonnells NPD also being supported above the line. It also encouraged the business to support the Chivers brand ATL. It ultimately helped the business back to growth, and helped shift perceptions across the company from Marketing as a Support service function to Marketing as a key Strategic business function that drives growth."

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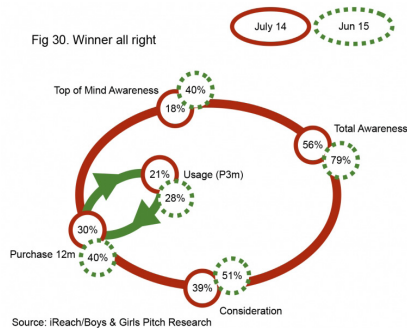
RESULTS

There are pivotal decisions in the lifetimes of all brands and all businesses, and in all of our careers. The decision to partner with Boys and Girls was a pivotal moment for the McDonnells brand, for our company, and for the careers of all of us involved on the client side. It has been immensely positive for all concerned and I would like to thank and salute Boys and Girls not only for their undoubted talent and creativity, but for their bravery, their entrepreneurship and their spirit of partnership. And in case that all sounds a bit serious, it was great fun too."

John Tolan, Head of Marketing, Boyne Valley Group.

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Source: iReach

Fig 31. Communication Objectives: IMPROVED ASSOCIATIONS

KPIs	FROM	TO	ACHIEVED		
			ACTUAL	VS START	VS TARGET
Makes food taste great	42%	47%	49%	+7%pts	+2%pts
Quality	44%	49%	51%	+7%pts	+2%pts
Easy to use/prepare	56%	61%	64%	+8%pts	+3%pts
Real meal/curry dish	57%	66%	70%	+13%pts	+4%pts
Old-fashioned	34%	29%	18%	-16%pts	-11%pts
Sense of humour	13%	30% (Stretch 40%)	50%	37%	+20% (+10%)

IMPACT ON BEHAVIOURAL ACTIVITY AND PAYBACK

From a marketing perspective, in order to drive these sales we knew we would need to drive awareness (especially top of mind awareness which was very low) and then consideration. In other words, we needed to both make people aware of the product, and give them a reason to think about buying it.

Given the fact that the brand had had no marketing support in living memory, there were understandably issues at every stage of the Consumer Journey that we needed to overcome in order to move these scores.

The campaign managed to move people all the way through the funnel to an extent none of us had predicted.

Although it has been alluded to in the results section, it is also worth restating the effects that the advertising had on the 6 key metrics we needed to shift in order to drive sales.

Lastly, and of least commercial importance but of most cultural importance, was the successful introduction into the vernacular of the phrase Chips Curry. You are welcome Ireland.

Fig 32. Chips Curry



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NEW LEARNINGS

Rarely do you get a chance to work on an established brand that has never advertised before. It had none of the advantages of a launch – no novelty factor, no new news. All it had was a brave client prepared to take a risk by both trusting in advertising and being daring in their creative approach. In very simple terms, this campaign teaches us all that advertising truly works.

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SUMMARY

How McDonnell's Curry Sauce pasted the market.

This is the story of a profitable but long-term declining product that, for most of its existence, had de facto been the category.

In the face of greatly increased branded and own brand competition, seemingly declining relevance given the increasing trends for ease of use within home cooking, and lacking any easy-to-use provenance or product story credentials, McDonnells bit the bullet and built the brand it deserved to be. In doing so, it transformed its sales trajectory to such a degree that it's now in sustainable, long-term growth, and has launched a range of successful NPDs.

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MEDIA GALLERY



McDonnell's Curry Sauce - Unbland