CASSIES 2002 CASES

Brand: Diet Pepsi

Advertiser: Pepsi-Cola Canada Ltd.

Agency: BBDO Canada

Winner: Grand Prix. Packaged Goods Beverage Gold.
Sustained Success Gold.

Credits: Pepsi-Cola Canada Ltd.

Michael Hartman - Vice President, Marketing

Richard Burjaw - Marketing Director, CSDs

Dan Mullen - Marketing Manager, Diet Pepsi

Credits: BBDO Canada

Stephanie Nerlich - Vice President, Group Account Director

Edward Caffyn - Vice President, Strategic Planner

Darlene Remlinger - Account Director

Jack Neary - President and Chief Creative Officer

Michael McLaughlin - EVP Creative Director (1999)

Ian MacKellar - Vice President, Group Creative Director (2000-2002)

Scott Dube - Vice President, Group Creative Director (2000-2002)

Cynthia Heyd - Vice President, Director of Broadcast (1999)

Emma DuBoisson - Vice President, Director of Broadcast (2000-2002)

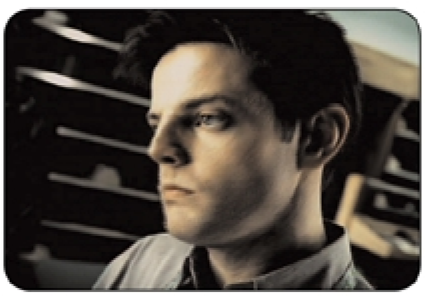
Crossover Notes. These highlight learning that "crosses over" from one case to another, going back to Cassies I. They vary by case, and a full set is at the end of this document. Note that they were not part of the submitted case—I have added them after the fact. David Rutherford.

Agency:	BBDO Canada	Title:	“Seems Fitting”
Client:	Pepsi-Cola Canada Ltd.	Length:	30-second English Television
Product:	Diet Pepsi	Date:	01.02

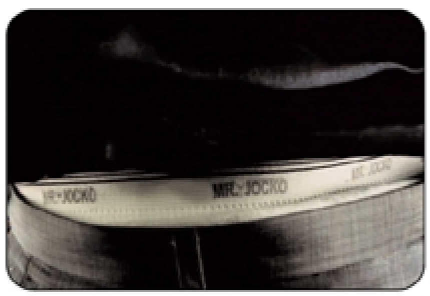
Open on the interior of a men’s clothing store

We are watching as a tailor pain stakingly measures his customer for a pair of pants.

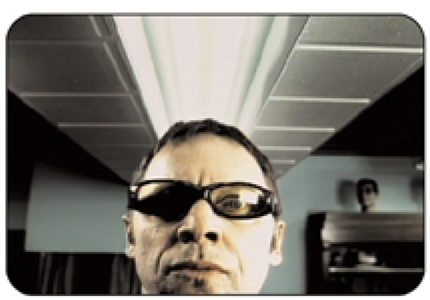
The tailor pauses for a second and then reaches over to a nearby table and grabs a can of Diet Pepsi.



The tailor returns to his measuring. As he makes his way around to the back of the man, something catches his eye.



We cut to the older man’s expression just as He realizes he’s getting a wedgie.



Tailor: How’s that fit?

ANNOR VO: Taste the one that’s forever young. Diet Pepsi

Executive Summary

"And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and
slang it, and smote Goliath in his forehead, that the stone sunk into
his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth."

1 Samuel 17 v.49

The carbonated soft drink category is one of the most competitive in the world. The media sit up when Coca-Cola introduces a new tagline. The nation tunes in when Pepsi signs the latest pop phenom. There are million-dollar budgets, media saturation and celebrity endorsements—all over what could be described as fizzy water, with flavouring and colouring.

But this to-do is not over the product, but over the brand – the image, the associations, and the values that the brand represents. When consumers choose a branded soft drink, they are not merely buying refreshment, they are buying into the brand's personality, and what that brand stands for. *Crossover Note 1*

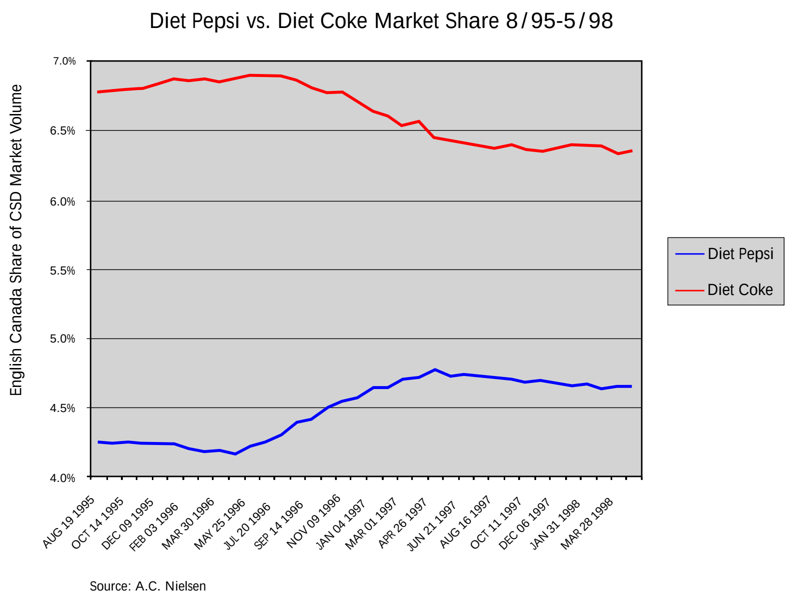
This paper describes the revitalization of Diet Pepsi in English Canada, in the face of the monolithic marketing effort of Coca-Cola, and in a category where traditionally only expensive product innovations have increased market share. It will illustrate how consumer insight led to effective advertising. Furthermore, it will show that regular testing and evaluation led to better execution year over year, in creative and in media. Finally, it will demonstrate how smart strategy and calculated risk can cut Goliath down to size. *Crossover Note 8*

Situation Analysis

In this category, there is a natural transition from regular to diet colas, as consumers age and their girth increases. For Pepsi, it is essential that a thriving Diet Pepsi keep these consumers in the Pepsi portfolio.

In the mid 90s Diet Pepsi launched one of those reformulations (to its artificial sweetener) and share went up from 4.2% to 4.8%. However, it then stagnated, hovering uncertainly around the 4.6% mark, while Diet Coke kept a firm grip on the lead at 6.4%. This was a problem. At first glance it appeared that only substantial product innovation could steal share from Diet Coke. (Exhibit 1) *Crossover Note 6*

Exhibit 1



South of the border, Pepsi-Cola US was gearing up to launch a new Diet Pepsi brand, Pepsi One. If Pepsi-Cola Canada could not improve the Canadian Diet Pepsi business, they would have to take the expensive step of launching Pepsi One. Faced with this ultimatum, the Canadian brand team was inspired to set a David versus Goliath objective - to become the preferred diet cola brand in three years. Not easy, at all. We went to work to understand what might be causing the stagnation. In so doing, several beliefs were debunked: *Crossover Note 10*

1. It might have been easy to blame Diet Coke's significantly higher spending. However, Pepsi-Cola Canada has proven time and again that they can grow their brands even when up against huge Coke budgets.
2. Distribution wasn't an issue. Nor was pricing. Absolute price had gone up during the stagnation period, but relative to Diet Coke the pricing was at par.
3. Contrary to the desired consumption model, regular Pepsi drinkers were not transitioning to Diet Pepsi. Instead, they were shifting to Diet Coke. The Pepsi franchise was becoming a leaky bucket – filling up at the top but continuously losing at the sides.

Strategy and Execution

Our investigations showed that the problem lay with how the target audience perceived the brand. Qualitative research revealed an anomaly in Diet Pepsi perceptions in relation to the parent Pepsi brand.

We had been assuming that Diet Pepsi, as a well-supported and mature brand, could stand on its own, with its own imagery, appealing to the more conservative diet cola drinker. We were wrong. When asked to ascribe brand characteristics to Diet Pepsi, respondents resorted time and time again to words that described Regular Pepsi. This imagery had been crafted to attract the young, open-minded Pepsi drinker—and was obviously less appealing to our target. While this was a testament to the effectiveness of regular Pepsi's marketing, it created a real issue for Diet Pepsi.

In contrast, Coke, with more conservative imagery for the parent brand, had no such incongruity, and was better able to transition drinkers to its Diet offspring.

Bottom line: Diet Pepsi was not seen as a legitimate diet alternative. Lucky for Diet Coke, they were.

Diet Pepsi could not fight its parent's imagery. It carries many of the same genes. We had to make the regular Pepsi imagery work for Diet Pepsi, and still resonate with our maturing audience. Not easy again.

There were two sources from which a repositioned Diet Pepsi could source volume. The most important was the Pepsi Transistioners, regular Pepsi drinkers on the cusp of shifting to a diet cola. The other was a segment of Diet Coke drinkers who felt less aligned to the conformity of the Diet Coke world. We put these targets under the microscope.

They shared similar demographic profiles (25-34 years old), but they also shared similar changes in their lives. They were beginning to make their first big, important decisions—decisions that would affect where they live, their job, their relationships, and so on. And they knew that the world was beginning to view them as adults, insisting that they leave the immaturity of their early adult years behind.

Then came the first glimmer of the solution. While our target recognized and accepted this "maturing," they also had a sense of loss. Those crazy, irresponsible days of youth were not so long ago. They had sworn they would never lose that energy, spontaneity and spirit. But now, daily life could be very constraining—with tedious, grown-up situations like business meetings, waiting in line, getting the car repaired, etc. Wouldn't it be fun to inject some of that youthful release into this! Crossover Note 19

Suddenly, Eureka! Here was the critical bridge to connect how our target felt with the youthful heritage of Pepsi. "Forever Young" was born. You may be maturing in age and responsibility but you always remain young at heart. Crossover Note 11

Creative Evolution

Creative tapped into our target's desire to break free, if only for a moment, and reconnect with their youthful side. But we were walking a tightrope. Too much emphasis on youthfulness and we could land right back in regular Pepsi territory. Too little and Diet Pepsi would come off as dull, staid and inhibited.

The 1999 launch creative ("Dirty Dancing" and "Dancing Can") was the perfect creative interpretation. The commercials poked fun at office life. The print "Shoe Laces," "Paper Clips," "Bottle Cap") all tied into the office theme. And the "Forever Young" tagline drove the point home.

Follow-up work for 2000 and 2001 ("Taxi Unfare," "Seems Fitting," "Spill Saver") continued the core idea, but we extended the situations to everyday occasions. Importantly, continued qualitative research taught us to be careful not to portray the target as juvenile or immature. We had to communicate a temporary break from maturity, not a breakdown in their entire way of life.

In 2002 we decided to inject new excitement into the campaign. We took "moments of youthful liberation" to a new level—now less about the occasion and more about how people view themselves. "Comb-Over" taps into a balding man's nostalgia for his 1980s hair. *Crossover Note 14*

Media Evolution

Our message was emotional, and we had to get Diet Pepsi on the radar screen with our consumer, our customer and our sales force—all with a $1.5 million-range budget. We chose television as the lead medium, and decided to sacrifice continuity for event programming. We spent nearly the entire budget in the first 8 weeks, launching during the 1999 Super Bowl, the Academy Awards and the Grammies. We complemented this with cherry-picked programming in prime TV, supported by specialty cable and print.

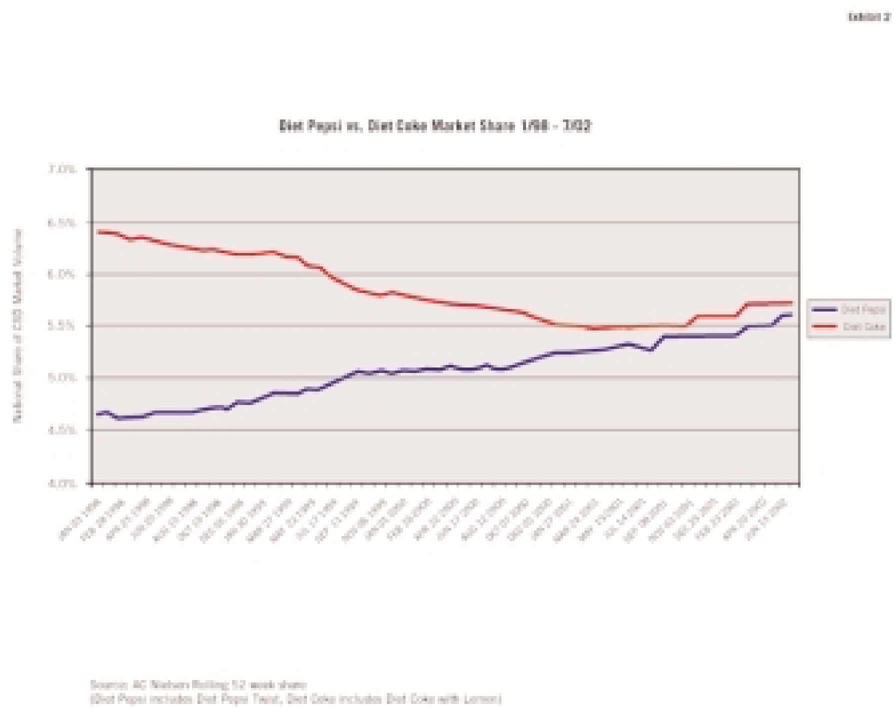
Good tracking results in Year I showed we had established the campaign. Knowing that purchase frequency was key to success, we aimed for more continuity in 2000—lessening the weekly GRPs but extending the number of weeks. Post 2000 tracking showed that we probably had not garnered enough weeks, and that there were too many hiatus weeks between flights.

For 2001 we evolved further, adopting the John Philip Jones and Erwin Ephron strategies for recency planning, rather than the concept of effective frequency. We dropped weight levels to 75 weekly GRPs, with 12 consecutive weeks before any hiatus. We then came back on, generating 24 total weeks of on-air support, and to bridge the TV gap we ran promotional radio. The tracking results outlined in this paper confirm that this was the correct strategy, and it has been continued in 2002 (again with strong tracking success). *Crossover Note 23*


FOREVER YOUNG.
diet PEPSI

Results

Diet Pepsi's market share began to grow immediately. At the end of the 1999 campaign it had increased from 4.8% to 5.1%, all at the expense of Diet Coke. It has continued to grow, and as of this writing the brands are neck and neck, with shares of 5.6% and 5.7%. (Exhibit 2.)



These results are particularly impressive, especially after allowing for difficulties with a key customer beginning in the fall of 2001. This reduced our co-op support, and increased Diet Coke's feature pricing. (According to AC Nielsen data, with this activity "normalized" there would be a 0.7 share point swing in favour of Diet Pepsi i.e. we would already be #1.)

Most importantly, Pepsi-Cola Canada did not have to follow the US lead and launch Pepsi One, saving the expense and risk of a new brand introduction. In fact, the US has decided to again support Diet Pepsi, this time using the Canadian Diet Pepsi brand positioning and creative strategy.

Isolating the Cause and Effect of the Advertising

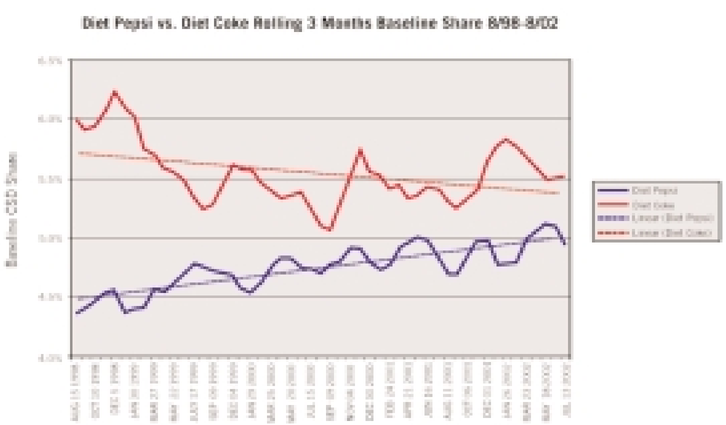
Trade support in this category is a key success factor. However there is significant evidence, both in business results and tracking, proving that “Forever Young” has been critical in the overall success of the brand:

1. The advertising began in January 1999, was concentrated at significant weights over an 8-week period and almost immediately share began to grow at the expense of Diet Coke, with absolutely no change in relative share of trade support. This continued over the whole first 6 months (Diet Pepsi’s weighted co-op indexed at 86 to Diet Coke over the base period – 1998 – and the first six months of 1999).

   For the second 6 months of 1999 the trade got behind Diet Pepsi, and weighted co-op relative to Diet Coke increased to an index of 137. Over the long term this has fallen back to historical levels, indexing at 98 in 2001, and 78 in 2002 to date. In other words, weighted co-op levels have to some extent been caused by business success, but they have not been sufficient to be a cause of long-term success in their own right.

The above analysis is supported by AC Nielsen baseline share data (which removes price, promotion and coop support). This shows significant market share increases attributed to the only remaining factor – the advertising effort. (Exhibit 3)

Exhibit 3



Source: A.C. Nielsen

3. Media spending is not the variable. Over the last five years, according to AC Nielsen, both Diet Pepsi and Diet Coke have spent similar amounts on their brands (an average of $1.5million and $1.4 million respectively per year), negating any share of voice advantage. It is also worth recalling that Diet Coke benefits from the halo of Regular Coke, with Coke spending in the $15 million+ range. This makes the Diet Pepsi success even more impressive.

4. These results cannot be attributed to just running “any old ad.” Ineffective creative doesn’t work. ACT quantitative and predictive copy testing of the 1999 ad “Dancing Can,” the 2000 ad “Taxi Driver,” the 2001 ad “Spill Saver,” and the 2002 ad “Comb Over” all received above average scores for volumetric shift (the predicted effect the advertising would have on sales) when compared to past diet soft drink advertising norms. (Exhibit 4). In addition, all advertising was tested quantitatively—and in some cases two, and three times—to make sure we were hitting the “forever young” sweet spot. If possible, Correct the Source: AD Vantage/ACT 1999, 2000, 2001.

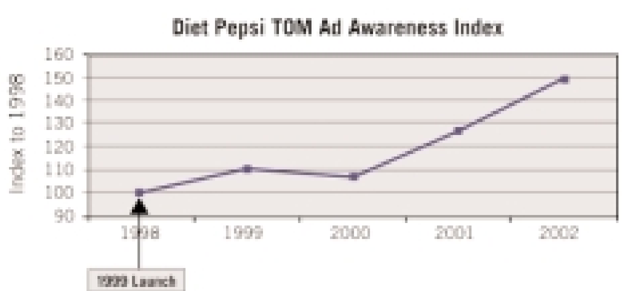
Exhibit 4

	Dancing Can 1999	Taxi Driver 2000	Spill Saver	Comb Over
Volumetric Shift (Indexed to Diet CSD Norm)	260	340	600	600

Source: AD Vantage/ACT Nov. 1999

5. The in-market results also correlate with Pepsi-Cola’s tracking. Diet Pepsi’s top-of-mind advertising awareness increased by 14% in the first two years of the campaign and by mid 2002 had increased by 50%. (Exhibit 5.) Notice the correlation with our change in media strategy in 2001. Our learning that a continuity strategy would perform most strongly for us has really paid off.

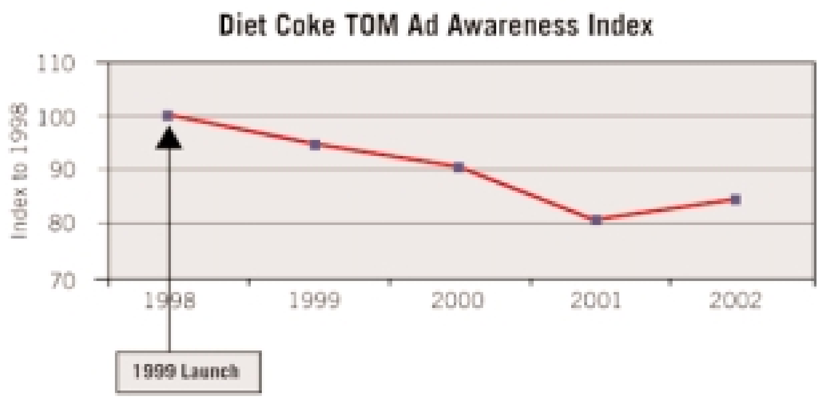
Exhibit 5



Source: PCCL Consumer Tracking Study 1998-02

6. Over the same period Diet Coke's top-of-mind advertising awareness decreased by 16%, correlating with their share declines. (Exhibit 6.) Coke did a number of different things in response to our efforts, including running some US work under the campaign "Live your life," and then picking up some older UK work. More recently, they launched Diet Coke with Lemon, with heavier ad support, and this has helped their franchise.

Exhibit 6



Source: PCCL Consumer Tracking Study 1998-02

7. The "Best Ad" rating (an indexed measure of reaction to Diet Pepsi vs. Diet Coke communications) went from a low of 69 in 1998 to 106 by year-to-date 2002. This is a measure of the general body of ads for each brand, which, over time, Pepsi has found to correlate nicely with sales.

Diet Pepsi—Taxi Unfare :30

To access the commercials online, click here.

View thru cab driver's window.
Music SFX throughout.

Can opening.
Girl in cab opens can.

Girl sees VW bug. Hits cabbie.

Cabbie Reacts.

Girl explains. Punch Buggy!

VO: Taste the one that's forever young. Diet Pepsi.

CROSSOVER NOTES

The idea of Crossover Notes occurred to David Rutherford as he was editing Cassies III in 1997. He used footnotes to alert readers that a lesson in one case crossed over to a lesson in another. With each Cassies this has evolved. For 2002, David links back to all the cases since 1993, and also cross-references academic thinking on some of the more complex issues. Each of the Cassies 2002 cases is keyed to the Crossover Notes, and the complete set is captured below.

Nowadays, we have so little time to think. If you have a marketing or advertising challenge, chances are that someone has faced the question before, and there s something about it in the Crossover Notes. They are like a crash course in best practice easy to read, and packed with lessons learned. I read them from front to back and would recommend that to anyone in the business.

Rupert Brendon

Introduction by David Rutherford

I was at Procter & Gamble for seven years, before they let me off for good behaviour. Then I was at Ogilvy & Mather in Toronto for fourteen, finishing up as Vice-Chairman. These two companies are not the only ones to lay great stress on lessons learned but they must be at or near the top. In those days, we thought we were run off our feet, but compared to today, we found time to study what was happening and very important pass that learning on. Crossover Notes started with that idea, and like Topsy, they have just grown.

I ve given each Note a descriptive title, and tried to organize them in a sensible sequence. But great marketing and advertising ideas do *not* come from linear thinking, so feel free to browse the list according to what catches your eye. I ve tried to be even-handed on controversial issues, but here and there you will see (or sense) my point of view. For this I thank the Cassies for not editing their Editor. Some Cassies cases illustrate a number of points, and get mentioned more often than others. But there is something to be learned from every success story. Enjoy the ride.

The Crossover Notes for CASSIES 2002
(by David Rutherford)

1. **What a Brand Stands For.** A brand is more than the functional product. This moreness is proved by blind and identified product tests. With any strong brand, the preference goes up in the identified leg. Why? Because of the added values embodied in the brand name. (See *What s in a Name* by John Philip Jones.) This moreness is worth money, so all the players in marketing and communication have beliefs and methods (some radically different) about how to create these added values. Virtually all agree that a brand is not a concrete thing, but something that exists in the mind. Most also agree that you have to stake out definitively what your brand stands for.

   This can t be done by empty promises. You have to discover the most symbiotic combination of what the consumer wants and what your product delivers. Years ago, the late Gerry Goodis (At Speedy You re a Somebody) said, Find the greed and fill the need. But nowadays it isn t that simple. What the consumer wants can be hard to pin down, and what the product delivers is a melting pot of perceptions and reality. This is one of the reasons that the litany of brand ideas has sprung up Brand Image, Brand Personality, Brand Character, Brand Essence, Brand Equity, Brand Footprint, Brand Truth, Brand Soul, and so on to say nothing of the old faithfuls like Positioning, Basic Stance, Focus of Sale, Selling Proposition, Features, Attributes, Benefits, and Values. Whatever the terminology, though, all the Cassies winners reflect the benefit of finding this symbiotic combination that underpins all brand-building.

2. **Brand Truths.** It s generally agreed that successful advertising (in fact all types of communication) has to resonate with its audience. Wanting people to believe that you have the best-tasting coffee may be a worthy goal, but saying I have the best-tasting coffee will probably not get the resonance you need. This has led to the idea of trying to uncover Brand Truths (the names vary) that operate on a deeper level than simple claims. One of the top UK agencies described this as "we interrogate the product until it confesses its strength." Many of the Cassies winners are based on finding an important Brand Truth. See *11. The Eureka Insight.*

3. **Core Equity versus Price & Promotion.** From a purely financial point of view, a brand is not some abstract notion, but something that has to be valuable (if ever you want to sell it) and something that has to make good money (as long as you hold onto it.) When a brand is under price and promotion pressure, difficult decisions have to be made. If you do not fight fire with fire, you will almost certainly lose some business in the short-term. But if you do not invest in brand-building, you could lose much more over the long term. Decisions of this type [between a clear and present danger, and a worse but less immediate one] are hard to get right. When seen from the vantage point of hindsight, it seems that we succumb more than we should to short-term pressures. Fido in Cassies 99, Clearnet and KD in Cassies 2001, and Nautilus and Sidekicks in Cassies 2002 faced this issue and all five decided to build their business through emphasis on brand value, rather than price and promotion.

   Core Equity itself is one of these concepts with more than one meaning. Its softer aspect relates to the "bundle of meanings" created in the audience's mind such that they choose one brand over another. The hard aspect measures the equity in financial terms. This is a developing area, and for more information contact the ICA about the publication *Brand Valuation. Measuring And Leveraging Your Brand.*

4. **Business Strategy dictated by the Brand Positioning.** This goes far deeper than the "Ps" of Marketing. Virtually everyone agrees that Product, Pricing, Packaging, Promotion, and Place must all support and enhance the Positioning (or Image, Character, Essence, Soul etc.) But how many companies allow their concept of "the brand" to dictate the business strategy? Clearnet is a Cassies example. See also i-wireless. Virgin is sometimes quoted as a general example. So too is Lou Gerstner s turnaround of IBM. Apple used to be cited, and perhaps will be again. People blow hot and cold on Nike as an example, which makes Scott Bedbury s book *A New Brand World* a fascinating read.

5. **The Total Brand Experience.** Although the CASSIES have historically been about advertising, they are evolving to include the broader idea that brands are built by every point of contact with the consumer. At its highest level (See Crossover Note 4) this is much more than a communication issue, but it tends to come under the heading of Integrated Marketing Communication. One of the challenges of IMC is to find what one of the agencies calls the organizing idea. This gives a focal point for all the different disciplines, without leading to cutting-and-pasting visuals and slogans from one medium to another. The organizing idea can come from anywhere, but once in place, it guides all the effort on the brand. Cassies examples include: In Cassies III, Richmond Savings. In Cassies 99, AGF Funds. In Cassies 2001, Clarica, Clearnet, and i-wireless. In Cassies 2002, Bank of Montreal, Scotiabank, ED, Lipton Sidekicks, and Sloche.

6. **Should the Product be Improved?** Some years ago it was an axiom of marketing that your product, at a functional level, should have an advantage over its competitors. In packaged goods, for example, it was considered foolish to launch a new brand unless it was a blind test winner over its major competitor ideally overall, and at least for a highly desirable benefit. [1]

   That thinking has shifted a great deal, and it s commonly said today that it s impossible to sustain a functional advantage; that competition can match you in a matter of weeks or months, or even days with some technological products. This has had a paradoxical effect. Some people have become almost frenzied in the desire to keep their product (or service) improving, fearing that if they don t, they will be left behind. Others go into a slipstream mode letting others face the headwinds, then matching what they do.

   John Philip Jones (the much published Professor of Communication at Syracuse University) is vocal on this, saying that we do *not* live in a parity world that imitators may try to match the innovators, but they often don t quite succeed. His view (and I share it) is that it is dangerously complacent to assume that functional product parity is the inevitable the way of the world.

   Another danger is the belief that marketing can compensate for a weak product. This led to the debacle a decade or two ago when North America systematically under-invested in product development. The Japanese, and later the Europeans and other countries, did exactly the opposite leading to the market shares we see today.

   There s no question that the cost to upgrade a product can be daunting, especially with the financial pressure to deliver short-term returns. Nevertheless, many Cassies cases reflect the investment. For example:

   - Listerine in Quebec in Cassies II, with an improved taste.
   - Chrysler in Cassies III, with the NS Minivan.
   - Pontiac Sunfire in Cassies III.
   - St Hubert in Cassies 99, upgrading their entire operation.
   - Sunlight in Cassies 99, with improved cleaning.
   - Home Furnace in Cassies 2002.
   - Lipton Sidekicks in Cassies 2002.

[1] There was the pre-emptive possibility, (staking out a convincing claim for a parity benefit before anyone else) but in general, having a product edge was seen as important

6. **Should the Product be Improved? (cont d).** Still others achieve their gains with no change in product though the existing product is in all cases good, and sometimes better than the competition. These cases would include:

    - Crispy Crunch in Cassies I.
    - Pepsi in Quebec in Cassies I.
    - Oh Henry! in Cassies II.
    - Buckley s, Dove, and Philadelphia Cream Cheese in Cassies III.
    - Eggs, becel, and Wonderbread in Cassies 99.
    - Kraft Dinner and Lipton Chicken Noodle in Cassies 2001.
    - Campbell s, Diet Pepsi, Listerine, and Pro¥Line in Cassies 2002.
    - All the major beer winners over the years.

    The technology cases (and some others) are harder to categorize, but generally have ongoing improvement. In these situations, as argued by Clearnet in Cassies 2001 and Lipton Sidekicks in Cassies 2002, if you know that any functional advantage will be quickly matched, you had better develop an advantage through brand personality/character/equity. There can be no cookie-cutter answer. Each situation has to be assessed on its merits.

7. **Fighting for the Same High Ground.** A brand has to be distinctive. But some extend this to believe that you should not fight for high ground already held by a competitor. (It comes out as our positioning has to be unique.) This sounds so right, how can it be wrong? Consider this from Cassies III. Ivory Bar owned mildness. Lever wanted to pre-empt the arrival of Oil of Olay bar from the US, and decided to kick-start Dove sales (using advertising) before Olay arrived. Dove had the litmus test a spectacular demonstration of mildness. Those who felt you shouldn t fight for the same high ground warned of a strategic blunder. But Dove attacked anyway with the Litmus campaign. Four years later Dove was up 73% in dollar sales, and Ivory had lost half its share.

    How can the two views be reconciled? Distinctive is essential, *but it does not have to come at the positioning or strategic level.* And how do you decide whether to attack or not? On an assessment of winnability. Yes, Ivory held the mildness position, but with the Litmus story Dove had a superb claim on that territory. Duracell/Energizer show another aspect of the issue. Duracell staked out "No other battery looks like it, or lasts like it." Energizer did not attack this lasts longer high ground for years. Eventually they did, and the Energizer Bunny has been going and going ever since. One last example. Sunlight wanted to attack Tide, but they knew that a frontal attack on clean would almost certainly fail. So they re-defined clean as the joy of getting dirty, and won the Grand Prix in Cassies 99.

    [A caveat: I m not saying you should always attack the high-ground though I have to confess it is the first place I look.]

8. **Classic Rivalries.** Examples in the Cassies are as follows:

- Canadian versus Blue. Cassies I, III, and 2001.
- Duracell versus Energizer. Cassies II.
- Dove versus Ivory. Cassies III.
- Richmond Savings versus the banks. Cassies III.
- Lipton versus Campbell. Cassies 2001.
- Sunlight versus Tide. Cassies 99 and Cassies 2001.
- workopolis.com versus monster.com. Cassies 2001.
- Labatt Bleue versus Molson Dry. Cassies 2002.
- Listerine versus Scope. Cassies II and 2002.
- Pepsi versus Coke. Cassies I and Cassies 2002.

9. **Turnarounds.** There are a number of such stories in the Cassies:

- Crispy Crunch. The "Someone Else's" campaign in Cassies I.
- Molson Canadian. The "What Beer's All About" campaign in Cassies I.
- Pepsi. The Quebec "Meunier" campaign in Cassies I.
- Listerine. The "Oncle Georges" Quebec campaign in Cassies II.
- Oh Hungry? Oh Henry! in Cassies II.
- Dove. The "Litmus" campaign in Cassies III.
- Molson Canadian. The "I AM" campaign in Cassies III.
- Philadelphia Cream Cheese and the "Angel" campaign in Cassies III.
- becel. The "Young at Heart" campaign in Cassies 99.
- Eggs. The "Real-Life Farmers" campaign in Cassies 99.
- Sunlight. The launch of "Go Ahead. Get Dirty." in Cassies 99.
- Wonder Bread and "Childhood" in Cassies 99.
- Kraft Dinner in Cassies 2001.
- Lipton Chicken Noodle in Cassies 2001.
- Bank of Montreal in Cassies 2002.
- Campbell s Soup in Cassies 2002.
- CFL in Cassies 2002.
- Easter Seals Relay in Cassies 2002.
- Sleeman in Cassies 2002.
- Listerine in Cassies 2002.
- Pro¥Line in Cassies 2002.

10. **Conventional Wisdom Should it be Challenged?** All markets have conventional wisdom. A belief in the tried-and-true will sometimes be right, but if it isn't, it can be hard to loosen its grip. Years ago, when US Pepsi executives saw the prototypes for the Pepsi Challenge, they apparently said, "that's not Pepsi," and refused to approve it. In a similar way, the Dove Litmus campaign ran into a fusillade of client/agency criticism at the global head offices and only saw the light of day because the Canadian team stuck to their guns. Here are other examples of going against the flow:

- Crispy Crunch in Cassies I, making a virtue of not sharing.
- Richmond Savings in Cassies III, poking fun at the Humungous banks.
- Sunlight in Cassies 99, no longer worshipping "clean" and saying it's OK to get dirty.
- Fido and Clearnet, using dogs and frogs. Cassies 99 and 2001.
- AGF in Cassies 99 and Clarica in Cassies 2001. Along with Richmond Savings, they deliver serious messages with wit and charm. In fact, wit and charm are now part of the financial advertising repertoire, as shown by the Bank of Montreal and Scotiabank in Cassies 2002. Others from Cassies 2002 include:
- Bud Light, not going after the young, legal-age, male heavy drinker.
- CFL, going aggressively against younger viewers, accepting the risk that they might alienate the older, loyal, core franchise.
- ED, going high-profile with a taboo topic.
- Five Alive, switching from the Mom target to young males.
- Irving Home Furnaces, using age as a plus for attracting attention.
- Labatt Bleue, breaking the Christmas Happy Holidays tradition.
- Pine-Sol, breaking the conventions of household cleaner advertising.
- Sleeman in Quebec. Conventional wisdom would surely tell you to drop or minimize an Anglo heritage. Sleeman did the opposite with the honest frenglish campaign.
- Sloche, rejoicing in being politically and nutritionally incorrect.
- Finally, the IBM (non-Cassies) example, with the "Nuns" advertising that helped launch "Solutions for a Small Planet" in the mid 90s. Given the trouble that IBM was in, this was an extraordinary way for IBM to tell its revitalization story which is exactly the point.

Note: It's easy to overlook the courage it took to approve these campaigns. They are examples of taking the right risk. It s a paradox of advertising that the attempt to avoid one risk (breaking conventional wisdom) can sometimes create a worse one being invisible.

11. The Eureka Insight. These feature in many cases. Some examples:

- Crispy Crunch, Nissan, Pepsi, Quebec Buckle Up in Cassies I.
- Listerine, Oh Henry!, Polaroid in Cassies II.
- ABC Literacy, Buckley s, Budweiser, Chrysler Minivan, Dove, Molson Canadian, Philadelphia Cream Cheese in Cassies III.
- Big Brothers Vancouver, Eggs, Lay s, Reactine in Cassies 99.
- Clarica, i wireless, Lipton C Noodle, Kraft Dinner, Molson Canadian in Cassies 2001.
- Virtually everything under *Conventional Wisdom* and in Cassies 2002.

Earlier Crossover Notes commented the following:

- Oh Henry! None of the gut-fillers had tried to own hunger. Cassies II. (Bud Light makes this point about laughter in Cassies 2002.)
- Buckley's. Bad-tasting medicine is supposed to be good for us. Rather than ignore this (as a negative) Buckley's relished it. Cassies III.
- Chrysler NS Minivan. People called minivans "my most expensive household appliance" but the team ignored this attitude and created a launch campaign with immense emotional pull. Cassies III.
- Philadelphia Cream Cheese. Often, people do not own up to what they really want. The team realized that consumers wanted "permission to indulge." Cassies III.
- Richmond Savings. Everyone knew the feelings against banks, but it took insight to turn this into the "Humungous Bank." Cassies III.
- Virtually all of us have a KD truth in our lives (Cassies 2001). The insight was to realize the *power* of this. See also Lipton Chicken Noodle in Cassies 2001, and Campbell s Soup in Cassies 2002.
- Sunlight. People want their clothes clean, but getting them dirty is fun. This brilliant insight was diametrically opposed to conventional wisdom, dominated by Tide, that clean is good and dirt is bad. Cassies 99.
- Fido in Cassies 99. The big competitors were fighting on promotion and price. In an echo of Apple vs. IBM, Fido saw that consumers needed the human touch. See also Clearnet and the future in friendly in Cassies 2001.
- Over time, Eggs had used a clutter of claims about taste, nutrition, and versatility. Eggs are also natural, but in word-association tests, consumers did not come up with this. This is the type of gap that is easy to miss, because it is based on what consumers *don t* say. (See *12. Changing the Goalposts.*) The real-farmer campaign that brought natural to life helped turn around a 17-year decline. Cassies 99.

12. **Changing the Goalposts.** This type of insight can have a marketing origin, such as Cow Brand Baking Soda s extended usage, Johnson s Baby Shampoo s adult re-positioning, and attempts to get cereals eaten as a late night snack. It can also originate in a consumer truth. This could be long-standing, but previously un-noticed, as in it s fun to get dirty. It could come from shifting attitudes, as with Listerine and Pine-Sol. It could simply be seeing things in a new way, as with Pro¥Line and Sidekicks. (See the Cassies 2002 cases.)

    It can also come from what consumer s *don t say*. At one time, everyone sold dog-food on taste and nutrition. Consumers, understandably enough, played back that these benefits were important, reinforcing the conventional wisdom. Suddenly, the team at Scali/Purina saw the significance of the unspoken (and deeper) truth that a dog is part of the family. This led to the immensely effective "helping dogs lead longer lives" campaign.

    And there s a twist to this too. Similar thinking had produced the famously successful "prolongs active life" campaign for PAL dog-food in the UK. This reinforces that other markets, if we can only find the time to study them, are a rich source of insights too.

13. **Immediate vs. Long-Term Effect.** The effects of advertising (a) at all and (b) in the short and/or long-term have been hotly debated for years. I m not sure I can do justice to all the points of view in this space, but here is an overview:

    In physics, the search continues for a theory, aptly enough called the theory of everything. Einstein came across the Theory of Relativity almost 100 years ago. It explained a lot, but not everything. Twenty or so years later, Planck and others came up with Quantum Theory, and Hiesenberg advanced his Uncertainty Principle. Though astonishing, they did not explain everything. Since then, physics has been a hotbed of enquiry, but there s still nothing that explains it all. In a less cosmic way, advertising has followed the same course. One of the top UK researchers has identified over a hundred supportable theories of how advertising works, all capturing a part of what happens, but none explaining the full picture.

    This may seem academic, but it matters a lot in practice. Whether we realize it or not, we have all pieced together a customized notion of how advertising works. These mental models (while right some of the time) are not right all of the time, but and this is the key point *we tend to treat our view as if it is.*

13. **Immediate vs. Long-Term Effect (cont d).** For example, there used to be a view (it s diminishing, but it still surfaces now and again) that creativity *gets in the way of effectiveness.* Some years back, the CEO of one of the big packaged goods companies was vocal with this view. What he meant, of course, was creativity that detracts from what I am trying to get across or irrelevant creativity or self-indulgent creativity but the fact remained that in his mental model, he was suspicious of anything that was not tried and true.

    At the other extreme, there is the mental model that outstanding creativity is, in and of itself, the essential ingredient. Again, when people say this, they do not mean outstandingly irrelevant or outstandingly self-indulgent though the people at the other end of the spectrum suspect that they do.

    Between these polar opposites is the view that has accumulating evidence in its favour that creativity (relevant of course) is a *partner* in effectiveness. All of the big Cassies winners bear this out, and there an even longer list of examples going back 20 years in the IPA effectiveness Awards (The Cassies were modeled on the IPA Awards.)

    Tangential to this, but related, is the question of how advertising works (when it works). Because it mirrors common sense, many of us intuitively carry the 100 year-old AIDA model (Attention >> Interest >> Desire >> Action) but there is any amount of evidence that advertising, especially for established brands in everyday categories (I dislike the term low interest) does not work this way that many effective campaigns act more by positive reinforcement.

    And now there is a hotly debated theory that as humans we take in immense amounts of information through what is called Low-Involvement Processing. To people with any kind of AIDA mental model, this is about as whacky as quantum mechanics. It argues (with a lot of evidence from neuroscience) that our brains cannot acquire the learning they do by the high involvement process that almost all learning and education (and advertising) has been based on. Personally, I think there could be something to this, in the sense that there are any number of things in our lives, not just advertising that we seem to pick up by osmosis more so than by active learning. (See papers by Robert Heath and Jon Howard-Spink in Admap and other sources.)

    In any event, there is no theory of everything and scores of intuitively different mental models. This explains some of the tension that goes on when advertising is being evaluated.

13. **Immediate vs. Long-Term Effect (cont d).** On immediate versus long-term effect, there is an experienced-based view, and an academic/research-based view. The experience-based view has four broad scenarios:

    1. New advertising kick-starts a brand within days/weeks of going public.[2]
    2. A brand has a good level of volume/share/profit with advertising helping to sustain this but the advertising is not, in and of itself, visibly driving the brand ahead in leaps and bounds.
    3. The advertising seems not to be working, and analysis confirms that it is, in fact, failing.
    4. The situation is hard to read, either because it is too early to tell or there is not enough information to sort out what s happening.

    Hard-to-read situations need to be looked at with great care. For example, imagine a new campaign, a couple of months in-market. Media weight has been sufficient, but the business has not taken off. Angst creeps in as you face the question, Is it working? The following could all be valid:

    - **The advertising is working.** The effect, however, is masked by pricing, promotion, in-store activity, distribution etc. If this is true, then given time, as the masking effect recedes, all should be well.
    - **The slow burn situation.** The advertising is the type that needs to wear in. When this has been achieved, all should be well. [Note: some insist that wear-in is sometimes needed. For example, the original I AM campaign for Canadian was spectacularly effective. I have been told that it was a slow burn. Others, especially some researchers, reject wear-in, and treat examples such as I AM as exceptions.]
    - **The arm wrestler stand-off.** Imagine two equally matched arm wrestlers. They hold each other immobile for an agonizing length of time, because their strength cancels out. This can happen with offsetting ad campaigns i.e. you have to assess the strength of the competition s campaign very carefully before coming to a conclusion.
    - **The advertising is not working.** Despite everyone s best efforts (and allowing for the fact that it may be too early to know for sure) you need to be looking at some sort of fix.

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[2] And is hopefully evolved into a long-running business-building campaign See *14. Refreshing a Continuing Campaign.*

13. **Immediate vs. Long-Term Effect (cont d).** From the academic/research side, what do we know? One question has been, If advertising works in the short-term, how come it s so hard to see this in practice? For the long-term, it has been, If advertising has a long-term effect, is it the accumulation of (hard-to-read) short-term effects, or is there some other long-term process at work? These issues are still debated, but the following have been influential:

- **John Philip Jones and STAS (Short-Term Advertising Strength).** In the mid 90s Jones designed a study to uncover short-term advertising effect, if it exists. He used single-source data to examine advertised and non-advertised households and the brands they buy within a week of exposure to advertising. The study needs to be read in detail [there are detractors] but the findings seem pretty clear:

  a) There is a definite, short-term effect from advertising. (He found it in 70% of cases.)
  b) In Jones s own words, *a single advertising exposure was shown to be all that was necessary to achieve an immediate sales increase.* (This flies in the face of a lot of conventional wisdom about frequency. See *28. Media Learning* for implications.)
  c) The short-term effect was often followed by a one-year effect (he reports it in 46% of all brands) though the sales response at one year is always lower than at one week.
  d) When brands do not show the STAS response, it is likely because the creative is not as strong as it might be, or that it is being offset by more powerful competitive creative. [Stronger arm-wrestler.]

- **The IRI findings on long-term effects.** IRI is the US company with the BehaviourScan split-cable test markets. In the early 90s they published an unprecedented industry collaboration that analyzed 400 individual tests, originally designed to explore different TV creative, different media weight, different promotion support and so on. In terms of long-term advertising effect, they measured 44 tests. In the following, they are designated as Plan A, compared to a Plan B control:

  a) In Year I, Plan A markets averaged +22% volume over Plan B.
  b) In Year II, Plan A markets held their advantage, at +14%.
  c) In Year III, they still held an advantage, averaging +7%.[3]

  In other words, the advantage in Year I holds up over three years. It diminishes, but the 3-year effect is basically double the one-year effect. (The momentum effect of 14% + 7% basically equaling 22%.)

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[3] In Years II and III, Plan A and B markets received the *same* advertising plan as each other i.e. the only difference was in Year I, and this held up over the three year period.

13. Immediate vs. Long-Term Effect (cont d).

- **The Millward Brown Findings.** Millward Brown have immense databases in the UK, USA, Canada, Europe and elsewhere. They report the short-term advertising effect typically seen in continuous tracking, but also a long-term effect. Through sales modeling, they estimate that this long-term effect may, on occasion, be as much as 7 times greater than the short-term effect.

- **The Observations of Paul Feldwick**. Paul Feldwick is a top researcher/ planner in the UK with impeccable credentials. He has proposed a fascinating metaphor for short and long-term effect, based on brand muscle. When we exercise, the result of any individual activity is small and hard to measure. But over time, results can be dramatic. This is more than just a clever analogy. There is a huge amount of evidence that as consumers get more used to buying a brand, it moves into their habitual (and perhaps even loyal) repertoire.

For more, see publications by John Philip Jones, Leonard Lodish (IRI), Millward Brown, and Paul Feldwick. For some academic fireworks, see the disputatious views of Andrew Ehrenberg of the London School of Business.

14. Refreshing a Continuing Campaign. (Similar comments apply to Clearnet, St-Hubert, Sunlight, and Tourism New Brunswick in Cassies 2001.)

It is almost universally agreed that brands build *relationships* with consumers, and vice versa. This leads to the corresponding belief that brands should present a consistent face over time (assuming, of course, that they stand for the right thing in the first place.) This has been extended to a belief in *campaigns.* Some practitioners interpret campaign very rigidly. At one time, for example, many of the packaged goods advertisers used to demand strict pool-outs, where successive ads had the same structure, a continuing ad property, and a continuing slogan. Such campaigns can be effective, but campaigns do not have to be this tightly formatted. The following is not a comprehensive list, but it gives an idea of the possibilities:

- **Strict Pool-Out.** Campaigns like "Who wants Gum? I do. I do." with similar situations, in a similar format, repeated over time. Some practitioners regard this type of campaign as old-fashioned. Others seem to regard them fondly as the way it ought to be.
- **Hall of Fame Pool-Out**. The formatted pool-out can still deliver fabulously effective and creative advertising for example the UK’s campaign for Hamlet cigars, with 20-year longevity and the type of creativity that has put Hamlet in the Advertising Hall of Fame.

14. Refreshing a continuing campaign (cont d).

- **Icons.** These can anchor a campaign (Maytag Repair Man, Marlboro Cowboy) or be a property (Tony the Tiger, Pillsbury Doughboy). As I write this Michelin is trying to make more of the Michelin Man. Some see icons as a yesterday idea, but that is a mis-call. Certainly some icon-based campaigns are dated, but others are fresh and current. Absolut Vodka uses its bottle brilliantly. And, depending how broadly you define an icon, so does Fido with its dogs.
- **Spokes-people, and Spokes-animals.** Dave Thomas, god rest his soul, would be a recent example, as would Morty the Bison in the 2001 Manitoba Telephone case. Quebec has had various examples.
- **Storytelling.** Continuing character(s) that we get to know. The Oxo campaign in the UK is one of the longest-running. Campaigns with well-known personalities have been very successful in Quebec e.g. the Pepsi and Listerine Grand Prix winners in CASSIES I and II.
- **Music-Based.** Soft Drinks, Cars, Fast Food, and Beer have all built campaigns this way. In packaged goods, becel s young at heart campaign would be an example.
- **Consistent "Voice and Attitude."** This campaign is held together by something more subtle than anthems, slogans, structure, and icons. Perhaps the most impressive was Volkswagen in the 60s. Individual executions were very different (some quite serious, some comical, some ironic, some dramatic) but they all had the Volkswagen voice and attitude. Brands like Nike are in this category. Benneton would be an extreme example.
- **Same core message. Customized execution.** For people with a pool-out mindset, this might hardly qualify as a campaign at all, because individual executions are totally different. But the overall effect can be very powerful. The best Cassies example is Dove, which built its business spectacularly in the early to mid 90s. It started in late 91 with "Litmus," a demonstration commercial with a haunting music track, no voice over, no people, and the story told via supers. Then came the complete opposite a candid-camera commercial of women in a focus group doing the Litmus test. Then came a "talking head" with the scientist who invented Dove. Then back to another demonstration.

  What held the campaign together was a continuing promise (mildness), an element of surprise, and a straightforward brand character. The format varied completely, and there were no continuing slogans or visual icons.

Note: It is usually not a good idea to pre-set the type of campaign you need. Best practice is (1) define the issue (2) create the best solution (3) let the type of campaign fall out of this.

15. **Baby with the Bathwater.** Campaigns at one point or another can run out of steam. Sometimes everything gets thrown out, and this can be the right call, as pointed out in other Crossover Notes. But it s worth checking to see if anything should be kept or re-expressed. The "I am Canadian" line is an example. It was part of the successful I AM campaign in Cassies III, but was discarded as that campaign faltered. It came back with Joe s Rant, interpreted differently. Another is Campbell's Kids, recently re-introduced after years in oblivion. The campaign (with the Kids as a sign-off) was a winner in Cassies 2002, and it will be interesting to see how this plays out.

    Sometimes long-running properties get discarded, rightly or wrongly, because the people who love them move off the brand. (I think this happened with Red Ones Last and Smarties.) Sometimes they are discarded for good reason, but only after heated debate. The pour shot had appeared in every Dove commercial since launch. For the Litmus commercial (Cassies III) the Canadian agency/client team decided to drop it because the whole point was to get consumers to see Dove in a new way. Despite this disarming logic, the international powers-that-be (at client and agency) reacted as if there had been a death in the family. Their sense of bereavement turned into horror when their advice was ignored. Litmus ran without the pour shot, and was immensely successful. Interestingly enough, when people were asked if the commercial had the pour shot in it, a goodly number said yes.

    This is one of points about long-running brand properties. Many practitioners believe that they should be used on every piece of communication, and in the normal run of things, this is a good idea. But if you have reason to drop a property for a while, consumers will not forget it. These images have a tenacious grip on long-term memory. As evidence, imagine you are trying to erase an image that has got its hooks into the consumers mind. Lever wanted to broaden the Wisk positioning to whole wash. I watched them try for years to erase the ring around the collar image. It wouldn t budge.

16. **When a Campaign Stumbles.** This can be difficult to assess. It might be a momentary stutter and (if we were clairvoyant) we would know that all we had to do was make a minor fix, and keep a long-running campaign going. But it might be the first clue of something going dangerously off the rails. There s no crystal ball to say where a campaign is between these two extremes, and the pressure of the situation can lead to snap (and wrong) judgments. The best answer usually comes from a reflective blend of experience, judgment, intuition, vision, and research. Here are some pointers.

    1. **Dig deep into trends and tastes.** As explained in Listerine s 2002 case, fighting bad breath had been the high ground for as long as anyone could remember. But the tectonic plates were shifting towards the idea of a healthy mouth. These shifts can be very important. Crest is a case in point. They had long been the market leader based on cavity fighting, but cavities were no longer the problem that once they were.[4] Colgate developed a better product for the new areas of mouth-health and gum disease and, with Colgate Total, knocked Crest off its #1 perch.
    2. **Look at the goalposts**. If they really haven t changed, then it s likely that you just have a short-term stutter to fix. But if they have, try to envisage the new game. See *12. Changing the Goalposts, 11. The Eureka Insight,* and *1. What a Brand Stands For*.
    3. **Think through the nature of the change.** A campaign can be defined in many different ways. See *14. Refreshing a Continuing Campaign*.
    4. **Be careful about the degree of change.** It s broadly true that long-running campaigns kept fresh and relevant are great brand-builders. And it s sadly true that new people, wanting to make their mark, make change for change s sake. But once in a while, wholesale change is right.

       Molson Canadian (Cassies I) was a niche player when it launched the What Beer s all About campaign in the late 80s. This led to a huge re-shaping of the market, and Canadian eventually took over from Labatt Blue as market leader. With such a success behind them, you would think that they would want to keep going. But in the mid 90s, they decided that tastes and trends were shifting. To stay ahead of this, they launched the I AM campaign, described in Cassies III. This campaign itself then ran out of steam, and Canadian re-incarnated again with Joe s Rant etc. as described in Cassies 2001
    5. **See also** *15. Baby With The Bathwater*.

[4] This traced to fluoride in the water, and a much-increased attention to dental health. But ironically Crest had also helped make this happen, by driving the whole market in this direction.

17.Turning a Liability into a Strength. Some examples:

- Buckley s Tastes awful but it works. Cassies III.
- Irving Home Furnaces made a virtue of their age.   Cassies 2002.
- Listerine Were seen as Margaret Thatcher and displaced this image with the Action Hero campaign. Cassies 2002.
- Pine-Sol Seen as far too strong. Softened this with the thorough clean campaign. Cassies 2002.
- Sleeman in Quebec Took an Anglo-heritage beer in a declining category and re-vitalized it with the honest frenglish campaign. Cassies 2002.
- Johnson s Baby Shampoo One of the great re-positionings. JBS was a blind test loser against adult shampoos. Even so, it was repositioned for washing your hair every day, and took over as market leader.
- Heinz ketchup making a virtue of s-l-o-w.

18. Keeping it Simple. Almost everyone agrees in single-mindedness until it comes time to approve the creative strategy. Then, there is an irresistible urge to cram things in. This is puzzling, because we all know that if something is complicated it will go over people s heads. Given what s at stake, though, it s easy to see why a client might find it hard to keep things focused. But it has to be done. At Procter & Gamble it was drummed into us that we had to feel the pain of leaving things out. Supporting this, the research companies have inescapable evidence that complicated messages do not get through.

If we re honest, haven t we all been in situations where the people *working* on a brand can t remember what the ads have been saying? Scott Bedbury (of Nike and Starbucks) is brutal on this. He blames clients for wanting too much in creative strategies. Given that clients make the final call, he has a point. It s hard for an agency to leave something out when the client says why not just leave it in. (Note: most of the Cassies advertising is conspicuously simple.)

There is a sub-set of this problem when a brand has an emotional benefit *and* a rational claim. Examples would be (1) Philly in Cassies III with permission to indulge and 60% less fat .. (2)   Scotiabank in Cassies 2002, selling individual services and creating an overall image (3) Campbell s Soup in Cassies 2002, wanting to modernize its image, and get nutrition facts across.

Best-practice is to understand what s possible. For example, when you track how well a rational claim is getting through, what awareness level should you expect? My experience is that clients (understandably) are aggressive, and agencies (also understandably) do not always speak up when they think the objectives are too high. This is where experienced research companies can help. They can give evidence-based answers as to what is reasonable.

19.Great Minds Think Alike.In Cassies 2002,Diet Pepsi,Five Alive and Toronto.com came to very similar conclusions about their young adult male target group i.e.that they are media savvy,somewhat cynical when it comes to marketing effort,realizing the responsibility is looming,but not wanting to give up on the best and craziest parts of being young.Fido and Clearnet in earlier Cassies also came to similar conclusions in a broad sense,helping them strike a chord with the confused and somewhat intimidated public.See also *7.Fighting for the Same High Ground.*

20.Emotional versus Rational.There s a great quote that a brand is a bundle of meanings.Many of those meanings relate to emotions more than reason, so if we showed a Vulcan a typical Creative Strategy (especially one from the packaged goods companies in their heyday)he would be puzzled.The key consumer benefit is rational,and the rationale is,well,rational too.Our Vulcan would say that this is not logical,because Earthlings live their lives on an emotional,rather than a rational,level.

It is worth asking why Creative Strategies are this way. First,there is the tendency of many clients to assess issues analytically rather than intuitively. This was fertile ground for the rationalist ideas of Claude Hopkins,who wrote Scientific Advertising in 1922,and Rosser Reeves,who wrote Reality in Advertising in 1960.The resulting hard-sell advertising appealed to the aggressive mentality of many North American advertisers.And it had enough successes to make these beliefs self-fulfilling (with selective perception expunging the failures).

Others, led most notably by Bill Bernbach,argued for a more intuitiveapproach,and recently emotional appeals have shone more brightly on theradar screen. But even to this day,there are Creative Strategies that just tuck them in under Brand Character,or do not mention them at all. I used to make that mistake. When I was Brand Manager on Tide we said implacably that Tide stood for cleaning At an unwritten level,we knew that Tide also stood for trust,but this crucial benefit did not appear anywhere in the Creative Strategy and we could easily have overlooked it. If you examine the mental model you have of advertising, make sure it rings true with what people are really like. Often, we are too rational, and that could be tragic. John Bartle (of Bartle Bogle Hegarty, the UK agency famous for using creativity to deliver effectiveness) has called for us to think in terms of the

~Unique Emotional Proposition~

I've never seen a Creative Strategy with this section in it. Given what we know about Emotional Intelligence, this looks like a missed opportunity.

Here are winners that *could* have focused on the rational, but chose emotion:

- Chrysler NS Minivan. It had a number of functional improvements, but the campaign was heavily infused with emotional benefits. Cassies III.
- Philadelphia Cream Cheese. The Angel campaign captured the emotional benefit of "permission to indulge," along with the rational benefit of 60% less fat than butter or margarine. Cassies III.
- Richmond Savings. The Humungous Bank campaign.
- becel. With hard-hitting print, and effort against doctors & nutritionists, it reached #1. They could have continued, but wanted to get on TV. Regulators forbade hard-hitting TV claims. This led to the "young at heart" campaign, and long-term business growth. Cassies 99.
- Fido. The campaign includes rational benefits, but its main pull is user-friendliness. Cassies 99.
- Wonder Bread. They could have taken a functional taste + nutrition approach, but instead used the joy of childhood. Cassies 99.
- Clearnet MiKe. It was positioned to appeal to the self-image of its pragmatic, project-driven target audience. Cassies 99.
- AGF Funds. The "what are you doing after work" campaign charmed its way into people’s pocketbooks. Cassies 99.
- Canadian reminded us who we are. Cassies 2001.
- Clarica made it all look simple. Cassies 2001.
- Clearnet gave us a biology lesson. Cassies 2001.
- Kraft tugged at our heartstrings with KD moments. Cassies 2001.
- Manitoba Telephone used a talking bison. Cassies 2001.
- St-Hubert tapped into chez-nous. Cassies 2001.
- Sunlight captured the joy of getting dirty. Cassies 2001.
- In Cassies 2002, the Bank of Montreal and Scotiabank made us smile.
- Campbell s gave us the less-than-perfect family.
- CFL fanned the flames of rivalry with the fans.
- Diet Pepsi and Five Alive gave us back our youth.
- Easter Seals tugged at the heartstrings.
- ED made us think.
- Home Furnaces tickled the fancy of an older audience.
- Nautilus gave us back our joie de vivre.
- Philly gave us a less-than-perfect angel.
- Pine-Sol took a quirky look at keeping the house clean.
- Sidekicks gave the family a helper.
- Sloche appealed to teen rebelliousness.
- The SAAQ campaign scared us to death.

21. **Likeability.** It s generally felt that likeability is good for a brand s advertising. This seems obvious, but there was once an opposite school of thought. The poster-child was "Ring around the Collar" for Wisk. It was highly disliked *and* highly effective. The dissonant views on likeability, in part, reflect the long-running feud between creativity and selling power are they on the same side, or does creativity get in the way? The Cassies convincingly demonstrate that *they are on the same side,* and the day may finally be arriving when these ancient vendettas are put to rest.

    The idea that likeability might correlate with effectiveness hit the headlines in the mid 80s, with a paper published by Alex Biel of the (then) Ogilvy Center for Research and Development. In the early 90s, the Advertising Research Foundation reported The ARF Copy Research Validity Project.[5] The results caused a stir, because the well-known methodologies did not do particularly well. I will not repeat the findings, because there was a blizzard of rebuttal and counter-rebuttal. But the results contained a surprise. Liking was one of the better predictors of in-market effectiveness.

    A bandwagon started. Those who see advertising as an extension of entertainment seized on the entertaining meaning of liking to support their view. Others pointed out that liking is a portmanteau word carrying many meanings and we don t necessarily know what a consumer means by it. For example, Alex Biel found that liking was anchored more to meaningfulness than entertainment. Later researchers have suggested that it equates to a combination of positives (Entertaining, Relevant News, and Empathetic) and the absence of negatives (not being Familiar, Confusing, Alienating.) In other words, it s simplistic to assume that liking means entertaining to the exclusion of other factors.

    In terms of the Cassies, much of the winning advertising is likeable in the ordinary sense, but some (Big Brothers Vancouver, Dove Litmus, Ethical Funds, Pfizer s ED campaign, and SAAQ s anti-speeding campaign come to mind) could only be called likeable in the meaningful sense. For myself, I ve found the best approach is to merge the broader concept of liking with the dominant idea in brand-building: *relevant differentiation.*

    For more on liking, see such papers as *Love the ad. Buy the product?* Alexander Biel. Admap 1990, *Do our commercials have to be liked?* Colin McDonald. Admap 1995. *Like it or Not, Liking is not Enough.* Nigel Hollis. Journal of Advertising Research 1995.

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[5] They took five pairs of commercials for each of five different brands. For each pair, one was known to be markedly more effective than the other, based on at least a year s worth of results from split-cable test markets. The ARF replicated the major pre-testing techniques, and pre-tested each commercial, to find out if any technique would accurately pick out the winners.

22. Humour in a Serious Category. It does not make sense to trivialize what you are trying to sell, but this does not mean that humour cannot sell in a serious category. Money is serious stuff, but Richmond Savings (Cassies III) blew the doors off with its "Humungous Bank" campaign. Other examples include Buckley's, Claritin, and Goodwill in Cassies III; Fido and AGF in Cassies 99; Clearnet and Manitoba Telephone in Cassies 2001. In semi-serious categories, we also have The Weather Network and workopolis.com in 2001, and Home Furnaces in 2002.

The two financial cases in Cassies 2002 (Bank of Montreal and Scotiabank) both use humour. In fact, we can now say from an advertising point of view that the financial category has lost its serious straightjacket.

Sometimes humour is a temptation that must be avoided. One such case was the conspicuously serious ED campaign in Cassies 2002. Notably, though, the Good Morning Viagra advertising that followed it is distinctly jaunty.

23. Problem versus Solution. There is a widespread idea that advertising works better when it is positive with a related mental model that advertising should spend more time on the solution than the problem. Notwithstanding this (See *21. Likeability*) there is a fair amount of evidence that this conventional wisdom can be challenged. The Cassies has the following:

- Quebec s Buckle Up campaign in Cassies I.
- The campaign against Quebec s Medical Bill 120 in Cassies I.
- The Heart and Stroke campaign in Cassies I.
- Oxfam Canada in Cassies II.
- Buckley s in Cassies III. (The advertising spends most of its time on the awful taste.)
- Dove Litmus in Cassies III. (Most of the commercial is on the problem of harshness.)
- Big Brothers Vancouver in Cassies 99.
- Ethical Funds in Cassies 99.
- Sunlight in Cassies 99. (Most of the time is spent on getting dirty.)
- Erectile Difficulties in Cassies 2002.
- SAAQ anti-speeding in Cassies 2002.

Note: When I have pointed out to people that Dove and Sunlight spend most of their time on the problem they quite often disagree, until they re-look at the commercials. This is why the conventional wisdom needs to be re-examined. The issue shouldn t be how much time a commercial spends on this or that, but the *net impression* the consumer takes away.

24. Tough Topics. The Cassies do not have a lot of stories about more complex social issues. However, we do have the following:

- Quebec s Buckle Up campaign in Cassies I.
- The Heart and Stroke Foundation in Cassies I.
- Oxfam Canada in Cassies II.
- Goodwill Industries in Cassies II and III.
- ABC Literacy in Cassies III.
- Big Brothers Vancouver in Cassies 99.
- Erectile Difficulties in Cassies 2002.
- SAAQ anti-speeding in Cassies 2002.

Note: British and Australian databases have more cases of this type.

25. Brand Linkage (when should the brand name appear). People quite often say "I saw this great ad last night, but I can't remember what it was for." This is a brand linkage problem, and it is two-edged. Highly engaging advertising can drown out the brand identity but in this over-marketed world, advertising that is obviously selling runs the risk of being zapped.

If you are assessing brand linkage your view will be affected by your mental model. But there are no paint-by-numbers answers. Some executions that seem bullet-proof don t work. Others do. Some that seem risky get their hooks into the mind. Others don t. The challenge is to be relevant *and* different. Relevant, by the way, does *not* mean familiar though it seems to have acquired that meaning for some people.

There is a brand-linkage idea from the past that you should say/show the brand name "early and often." This took hold with the packaged-goods companies in the 60s, based on day-after recall testing.[6] The majority of Cassies winners do *not* reflect it. This includes Chrysler NS Minivan, Dove, Imperial Margarine, Molson Canadian (the original "I Am"), Budweiser, Claritin, Pontiac Sunfire, Richmond Savings, Metro Toronto Zoo, Goodwill, Sunlight, becel, St-Hubert, Molson Canadian (The Rant etc.), Clearnet, Clarica, Manitoba Telephone, Lipton Chicken Noodle, i-wireless, Pro_Line, Pine-Sol, Bank of Montreal, Scotiabank, and many others, depending how you define early and often.

Some very successful advertising puts the brand front and centre, but it s also possible in today s over-hyped world that early and often is a turn-off. My own view is that each situation has to be assessed on its merits. But it s clear that an unthinking belief in early and often should come to an end.

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[6] Many top researchers today regard DAR as invalid for predicting marketplace effectiveness.

26. **Awareness Alone.** Many cases, reasonably enough, show increases in brand or advertising awareness (unaided, top of mind, aided etc.) Awareness alone needs to be kept in perspective, however. Bud Light, for example, had extremely high awareness but still a miniscule share at the start of its case. Similarly, Nautilus in Quebec had very high awareness, but was under great pressure. The maxim I don t care what they say about me as long as they spell my name right doesn t apply in advertising.

    The idea of *relevant differentiation* is at the heart of most approaches to brand-building. Of course, this doesn t exist in empty space you have to imprint your message in the consumer s mind, and awareness is evidence that you are doing that. Various companies have published findings on this. Young & Rubicam s Brand Asset Valuator is one of the better-known. It is based on a worldwide database, and shows that strong brands combine Relevance + Differentiation on the one hand, and Knowledge + Esteem on the other (awareness being part of Knowledge + Esteem). BAV, and the work of others, show that when you are trying to establish a brand, you should focus on Relevance + Differentiation, letting this lead Knowledge + Esteem. When big brands decline, they also tend to *retain* Knowledge + Esteem, even though they are losing relevance. In other words, a brand can have strong awareness, but still be in trouble. This is why awareness alone is not enough.

27. **Share of Mind, Share of Voice, Spending.** When we assess media effort versus competition we usually measure media spending and share of voice. All other things being equal, SOV is an important measure. But there are many times when they are *not* equal. What do we know about the effect of weight alone, versus the effect of creative content? Split-cable test markets show that extra-spend tests do work quite often, but far from all the time. The conclusion is that weight alone is not enough. This is why Share of Mind is a better measure than Share of Voice.

    Creative effectiveness has much more leverage than media weight. This leads to the conclusion that if you have effective creative, increased media spending *may* work.[7] But if you don t, you have to fix the creative first.

    Note: This field is far more complicated than this paragraph can cover. If you are interested in forensic work, you should get on the WARC website and find papers by Lodish, Jones, Blair, Ehrenberg, McDonald, Feldwick, Hollis and others. They discuss a kaleidoscope of views, from guarded agreement to withering attacks cloaked in academic politeness. A good place to start is the paper that summarizes the split-cable results: *General truths? Nine key findings from IRI test data,* by Lodish and Lubetkin, Admap 1992.

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[7] The reason for the may is that most models of media effort show diminishing returns as weight increases past a hard-to-find optimal level. See also *28. Media Learning.*

28. Media Learning. Many years ago studies from various sources (mainly packaged goods) led to the idea of effective frequency. It was based on two broad notions:

a) That advertising (assuming the creative was any good) had its best effect after 2-3 exposures in a purchase cycle
b) That after that, diminishing returns set in

This lined up with common sense and learning theory i.e. that it takes a certain amount of repetition before a message sticks, but once boredom sets in, more repetition does not increase the learning very much, if at all[8]. This thinking has dominated media planning (particularly in TV) for many years, and many planners embrace it today not necessarily knowing its origins. It has gone by names such as 2+ and 3+ frequency planning. The idea is for the target audience to get 2-3 exposures in a purchase cycle, without wasting excessive frequency on them.[9]

Other models also exist. There are pulsing models. There is an impact model for when it seems right to make a big splash. And there are markets like beer, with very heavy and seasonal spending, that have often developed their own, different notions as to the best way to schedule effort.

In the mid 90s, John Philip Jones formerly of JWT UK/Europe and for some time Professor of Communications at Syracuse University published a study that seemed to say that *just one* TV exposure (in the week before purchase) was enough. See *13. Immediate vs. Long-Term Effect.*

This put the cat among the pigeons. Some have embraced the new thinking wholeheartedly. Some have attacked it. Jones s findings were very much in harmony with those of Erwin Ephron (referred to in the Pepsi paper in 2002) and the whole field has come to be called Recency Planning. It leads to lower weekly weights than have historically been recommended, with longer weekly duration. Programs are also selected so as not to load up a lot of frequency on the same shows. This is a drip-drip model rather than an impact model, and it.flies in the face of some long-held beliefs. It seems to have worked for Pepsi, but its detractors will say that it has its fair share of failures too. For more on this fascinating and still controversial topic, the WARC website is invaluable with papers by Jones, Lodish, Ehrenberg and McDonald being a good place to start.

[8] There are even some findings that over-exposure eventually depresses learning though I have to say, personally, that I find that hard to believe.
[9] In practice this is hard to do, of course.

29. Pre-emptive Media. Quite often, media budgets will not get a high SOV by sheer muscle. Budweiser in Cassies III, Tourism New Brunswick in Cassies 2001, and Campbell s in Cassies 2002, all started media *early.* In the first two instances, this was quite a break with conventional wisdom advertising beer ahead of the peak summer season, and advertising summer vacations to Quebecers in the depth of the Quebec winter.

30. Reach and Frequency versus Large-Space Impact. Media planners almost never have enough budget to build the ideal plan. This means there has to be a trade-off between reach, frequency and coverage and the size/length of advertisements. The reach, frequency etc. of a "large-space" plan will always be lower than for a smaller-space plan, and, although I shouldn't generalize, it seems to me that large-space plans usually get rejected because of their lower reach/frequency numbers.

New Brunswick Tourism in Cassies 2001 and the Chrysler in Cassies III break that pattern. Chrysler, a Grand Prix winner, is particularly interesting. They were faced with a launch that could make or break the company, and a media budget that had been cut by 18% versus the previous year. Even so, they decided that they needed long commercials to get their emotional benefits across, and opted for a TV plan that was virtually 100% in :60s.

P&G used to call this a judgment between depth of sale and frequency. As far as I know, there is no research technique to assess it in fact on paper they all seem to show that a :60, though usually delivering better numbers, does not justify its higher cost. But the same argument holds true for :30s versus :15s. Why do we not rush to :15s? Because over time we have come to realize that :30s are, in general, a better choice. With this in mind, I d like to suggest that we reconsider the value of depth of sale when it comes to :60s and large-space advertisements.

31. Transcending Advertising. Joe's Rant did this for Canadian (Cassies 2001). Wendy's did it with "Where's the Beef." Budweiser gave us "Whassuuuup," and Benetton feeds us a diet of controversy. Richmond Savings (Cassies III) got tremendous publicity from the "Humungous Bank" campaign. Tourism New Brunswick and Manitoba Telephone (Cassies 2001) have a similar story. So do the Bank of Montreal and the ED campaign (Cassies 2002). Generally, advertisers and agencies are pleased when their advertising takes on a life of its own though there are usually some nay-sayers asking questions like Is it on strategy? Is it relevant? Is it really building the business? The latest incarnation of transcending advertising is viral marketing. There has not yet been a Cassies case on this, but it would be good to see one.

End o f Cassies 2002 Crossover Notes