

Cassies 2004 Cases

Brand: Miller for Mayor

Winner: Events and Seasonal—Silver

Client Credits: Miller for Mayor Campaign

David Miller, Mayor of Toronto
Andrea Addario, Press Secretary
John Laschinger, Campaign Manager
John Piper, Consultant
Peter Donolo, Consultant
Bruce Scott, Coordinator

Agency Credits: Lowe Roche

Geoffrey B. Roche, Creative Director
Ed Roncarelli, Chairman
Simon Tuplin, Associate Creative Director
Allen Oke, Senior Copywriter
Tyler Clemens, Business Manager
Jeff Ostilly, Print Production Manager
Black Lab Digital Inc.

Crossover Notes: All winning cases contain lessons that cross over from one case to another. David Rutherford has been extracting these lessons (he calls them Crossover Notes) since Cassies 1997. The notes for this case are as follows, and are attached. The full set can be downloaded from the Case Library section at www.cassies.ca

- Crossover Note 16. When a campaign stumbles.
- Crossover Note 26. Awareness Alone.
- Crossover Note 1. What a Brand stands for.
- Crossover Note 11. The Eureka Insight.
- Crossover Note 10. Conventional Wisdom—should it be challenged?
- Crossover Note 22. Humour in a Serious Category.
- Crossover Note 27. Share of Mind. Share of Voice. Spending.

To see creative, go to the Case Library Index and click on the additional links beside the case.

Executive Summary



Results Period: August 2003 – November 10 (Election Day) 2003.

Start of Advertising/Communication Effort: Mid-July 2003.

Base Period: January 2003 (David Miller launches candidacy) – August 2003.

There are few political challenges quite like running for mayor of the megacity. The territory is vast; the linguistic barriers formidable; the spending limits inadequate. And, of course, the stakes are incredibly high.

- The Ascent of David Miller, Toronto Life.

This case describes the three critical months leading up to the November 10th, 2003 mayoral election for the amalgamated City of Toronto. It details how David Miller, a city councillor, went from relative obscurity to Mayor of Toronto. It demonstrates the impact of advertising, which raised awareness, built image, and brought focus to core issues in a way that political advertising rarely does.

Between January 2003, when he announced his candidacy, and August 2003, support for David Miller had grown only from 4 percent to 14 percent—and he was running fourth in the polls. In August, David Miller's new campaign kicked in. When he won on Election Day he had 43 percent of the popular vote, the largest jump ever in a race for Mayor.

This defied the odds. Distinctiveness, clarity, consistency and resolve in communication helped win the day for a very worthy candidate.

Situation Analysis

By the summer, some of Miller's closest advisors...were urging him to shake things up if he truly wanted to win."

- The Ascent of David Miller, Toronto Life

In January 2003, little-known west-end councillor David Miller launched his candidacy for Mayor of Toronto. He had roughly 45 percent total awareness, but only 4 percent support. At the time, his bid seemed unlikely to be successful. Barbara Hall, a former Mayor of Toronto, had just launched her campaign and many believed it was her race to lose. John Tory had at his disposal a dream team of senior strategists from both the political and business worlds—as well as access to considerable financial resources. Miller was an underdog—seen as a left wing, urban NDP candidate in what was thought to be a mainly suburban contest.

Come June, Miller and his advisors knew that his campaign needed an overhaul. He had vision, and passion for the city. But his ideas were not getting through. A small subway platform campaign with the slogan “A Mayor for Transit” had not resonated with people. **Crossover Note 16.** For the final assault, Miller added John Laschinger as campaign manager, and brought in Lowe Roche Advertising.

The issues were obvious: Miller had low name awareness and next to no awareness of what he stood for. He also had 30 percent less ad budget than Barbara Hall and John Tory. As Labour Day approached it looked as if Hall was cruising to victory. She had 50 percent support, built mostly on name recognition. A provincial election in September [See the Cassies 2004 Elections Ontario case] had taken media attention away from the Toronto race. Miller was running fourth in the polls with 14 percent support. The team needed to make some moves, and set three objectives:

1. Turn David Miller into a household name by Election Day. **Crossover Note 26.**
2. Make sure voters know what he stands for. **Crossover Note 1.**
3. Win.

Strategy & Insight

I think the hardest thing in these things is focus.

- Paul Begala, strategist and political advisor for Bill Clinton.

The team needed to focus Miller's platform on issues voters could connect with. And be smarter than the competition with their abundant resources. Polls by Laschinger in July on taxes, corruption, integrity and the Island Airport revealed that corruption was a big issue—and that most voters would choose a candidate based on the position he or she took on the proposed fixed link airport bridge. This was news. **Crossover Note 11.**

While the media didn't seem to think the Island Airport was an issue, careful research confirmed that voters were concerned. Miller had long been an opponent of the link and a proponent of cleaning up City Hall. His message began to crystallize around the themes of integrity and *a magnificent waterfront*, both of which resonated strongly with voters.

At the same time, Miller had to be turned into a household name. Here, there was something to work with. The more people got to know Miller, the more they liked him. So three key strategies emerged:

- Focus on one issue; one that differentiated Miller from the other candidates and that research said was meaningful to voters—stopping the Island Airport expansion.
- Make Miller's human, likeable nature come through—an image very different from typically sterile political advertising. Give him a sense of humour to help people connect with him. **Crossover Notes 10 and 22.**
- Stick to the core message at all points of contact.

Execution

The ads are unorthodox, funny and sometimes controversial. Not the usual stuff of a Toronto mayor's race."

- Campaign ads seek fresher approach, The Globe and Mail, Nov. 7, 2003

The creative idea focused on cleaning up Toronto—a clean, green waterfront, clean air and streets, and a clean government to match. The tone conveyed Miller's unparalleled integrity, personality and direct approach. It had impact, and was even controversial, in order to get the attention needed.

The first step was to create an icon (a stylized broom) and slogan ("*For a clean city*"). These addressed corruption, litter and a polluted waterfront, and appeared on blue and yellow lawn signs, bumper stickers, buttons and postcards throughout the city.

Lawn sign (front & back)



The next step was the Island Airport communication. The ads were controversial – a transit shelter ad, a radio ad, newspaper banners. Brochures and cards were taken door-to-door. The team even put the issue on the flip side of the lawn signs to read “*stop the island airport expansion*”.

Platform Poster



THE ISLAND AIRPORT EXPANSION. IT'LL BE LIKE THE AIR SHOW. ONLY 365 DAYS A YEAR.



THE ISLAND AIRPORT AFFECTS OUR FUTURE. A FUTURE ONLY one candidate is thinking about. David Miller knows there is a lot at stake in the race for our next mayor. And it's not just the waterfront. It's the future of this city. Ultimately, the city we leave our children. We can't explain why Ms. Hall and Mr. Tory support the Island Airport expansion. We can, however, explain how David Miller, because of his views on this issue and many others, plans to make our city great again.

WATERFRONT CONCERTS: NOW WITH DOZENS OF INTERMISSIONS.

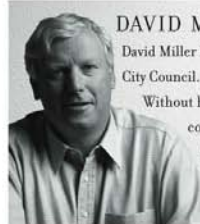
With facilities like the Yo-Yo Ma Music Garden and the Molson Amphitheatre, our waterfront is a gift when it comes to entertaining. Unlike the airport, it's a place *all of us* can enjoy. With planes roaring overhead, and the accompanying pollution and stench, our waterfront will certainly be, unfortunately, a very different place.

WHO'S FOR DESTROYING OUR WATERFRONT?



EVEN THE TORONTO CANCER PREVENTION COALITION IS AGAINST IT.

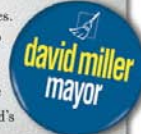
Pollutants given off by airports more than double the average rates of asthma, allergies, and respiratory disease in nearby communities. The potential *carcinogens* from engine fumes alone have led the Toronto Cancer Prevention Coalition to officially oppose any expansion. Hope your immune system is up to the challenge.



DAVID MILLER. WHY HE'S THE RIGHT GUY FOR THE JOB.

David Miller has had a hand in the daily workings of this city since 1994, when he was elected to City Council. As a TTC Commissioner, he's helped solve a great number of transit issues.

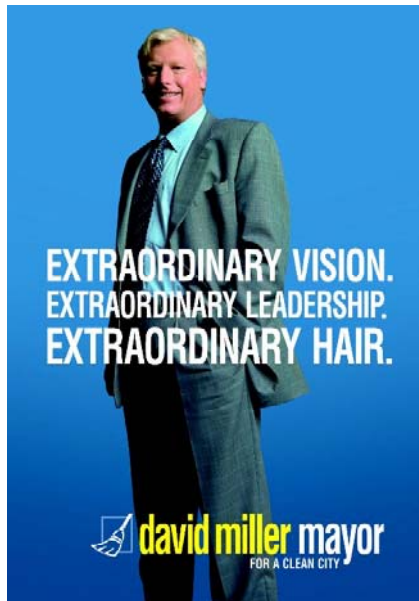
Without his involvement, there would never have been an inquiry into the MFP computer leasing scandal at City Hall. David is a graduate of both Economics from Harvard, and Law from the University of Toronto. He lives in High Park with his wife and two kids. For more about David's views on this and a variety of other issues, visit millerformayor.com



FOR A CLEAN CITY

Then a series of humorous radio and transit shelter ads played up Miller's differences in style, policies and vision for the city from his two main rivals.

Transit Shelter Ads



Throughout the campaign, Miller and team kept a positive approach, despite increasingly severe attacks from his competition. Barbara Hall attacked Miller's "Looks like a Mayor" ad, labeling it insensitive and even racist. This, of course only gave Miller more buzz. John Tory attacked on the tolls issue¹ calling Miller's scheme "highway robbery" and setting up a caustic website called MillerHighwayRobbery.com. Tory also attacked what he felt was Miller's lukewarm support for the police force. Throughout all this, Miller and team stuck to the message, repeating it over and over.

Media

Amazingly he did it all without a second of paid television spots.

- Campaign ads seek fresher approach, The Globe and Mail, Nov. 7, 2003

In contrast to John Tory's and Barbara Hall's \$600,000 advertising campaigns, with TV as a key medium, Miller's campaign had \$450,000 and didn't rely on television at all. Instead dollars were put towards high traffic areas, where citizens have more time to absorb and consider. As Alan Middleton of the Schulich School of Business said, "It was street, street, street." **Crossover Note 27.**

¹ Miller had mused about the possibility of introducing tolls on roads like the Don Valley Parkway, to help with traffic congestion, and raise money for more transit.

The campaign took a grassroots approach, using transit shelter and subway platform ads, community newspapers, major city newspapers, and radio—with a push on traditional street level advertising such as lawn signs, buttons, brochures, postcards and even the somewhat retro bumper sticker—and it caught on. This media choice tied in with the overall philosophy: David Miller is a man who is involved in, connected with, and very present in the community. Not someone disconnected in television land.

Media placement was also challenged by the rules of election advertising. It was illegal to put up any advertising signs that were visible from the street until September 15. But bumper stickers were deemed permissible because they were seen as an extension of the individual. So 10,000 bumper stickers were disseminated as early as mid-July. You can still see them today, almost a year after the election.

Miller Campaign Blocking Chart	July				August				September				October				November	
	7	14	21	28	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	6	13	20	27	3	10
Bumper Stickers, Buttons																		
Brochures, Cards (Door-to-door, events, etc)																		
Lawn Signs																		
Radio																		
* Warbler & Lobbyist																		
* Lobbyist & Waterfront																		
* Bio RD, Excitement RD, It's Time RD & Neighbourhood2																		
Newspaper Banners																		
* 365 Days, Polluted, Smog																		
Outdoor Transit Shelters (77) & Platform Posters (70)																		

Miller Campaign Blocking Chart

Business Results

“Miller sweeps into mayor’s office”

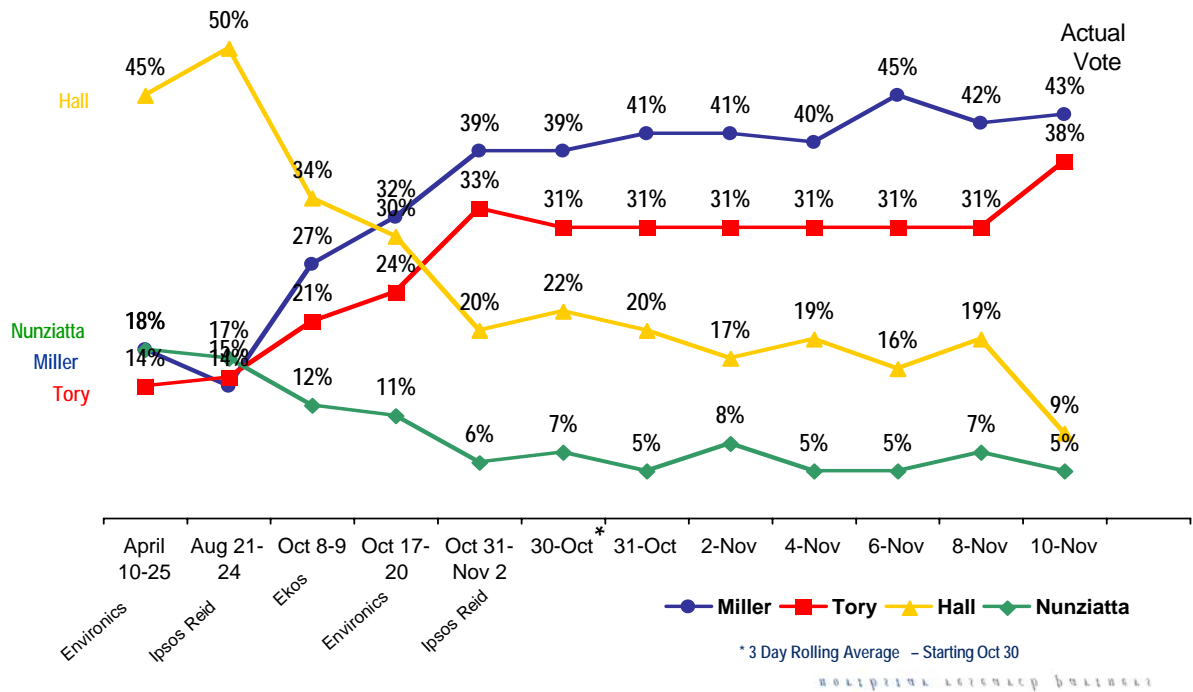
Headline, Toronto Star, Nov. 11, 2001

In the last 3 months of his campaign, Miller did what had seemed impossible, and he became Toronto’s new Mayor on November 10th.

Polling results illustrate Miller’s remarkable surge to victory from August through Election Day after 7 months of running a futile fourth place.

The Anatomy Of A Victory

Current Vote Among Decided Voters



Showing Cause and Effect between Advertising and Results

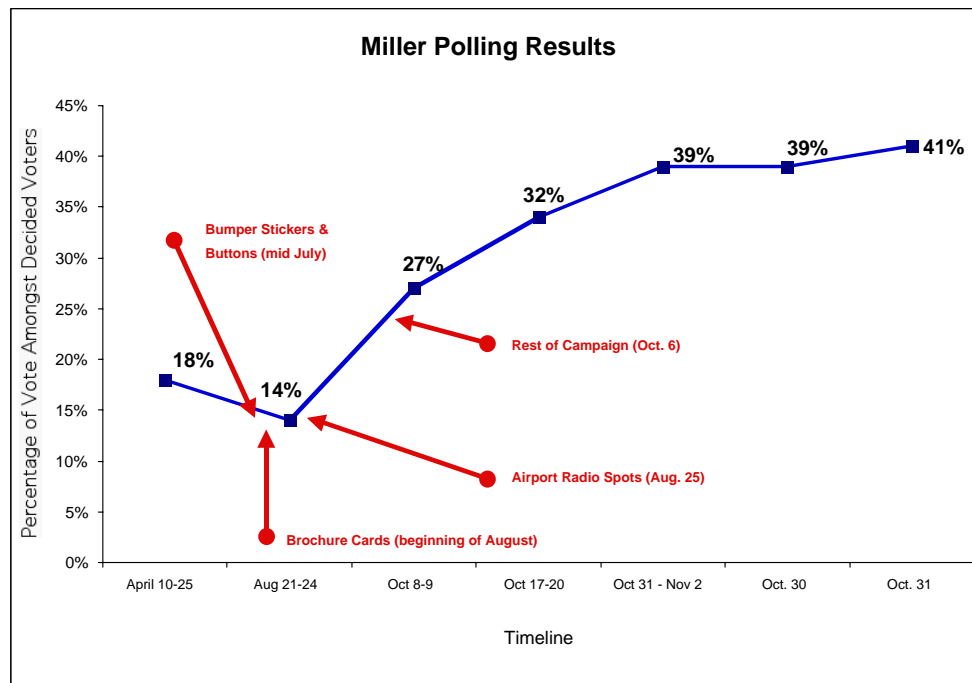
The cheeky approach of David Miller's pitch – one ad reads “Extraordinary vision, extraordinary leadership, extraordinary hair” – set him apart from his competitors.

- Campaign ads seek fresher approach, The Globe and Mail, Nov. 7, 2003

On November 10th, people didn't vote for the advertising, they voted for the candidate. And we had a quality candidate. The advertising got him noticed. The advertising helped bring attention to the issue. People liked the image and message – *For a clean city*. But Miller did the rest. He participated in 71 debates, worked 12-14 hour days, and traveled the length and breadth of the megacity, meeting and relating to voters.

In a political race, it is difficult to isolate the direct contribution of advertising (paid communication) given all the other factors that play into a voter's choice – media coverage, debates, the candidates themselves, etc. However, despite this, and despite not having advertising tracking results, it seems inescapable that the advertising message and creative achieved its intended effect – boosting awareness for David Miller, the issue of the Island Airport, and the Clean City image.

1. *The advertising was written about.* This sparked new issues, in turn sparking more coverage. Many articles and/or mentions of the campaign (including images of it) appeared in various media across the city. Even Barbara Hall talked about it. [The articles were supplied with the case.]
2. *The advertising brought attention to the Island Airport issue.* Following the launch of the “Airport” advertising in August, media coverage increased exponentially. Media mentions of “island airport expansion” or “fixed link” increased by +300% from Aug.25 – Nov. 10, compared to the 3 months prior (Source: Financial Post Infomart). It didn’t seem to be a media issue until the team made it one.
3. *The advertising had influence.* The image and personality of the advertising crossed into editorial speak. The media started using our words. Some examples:
 - “Miller leading by a haircut.” – National Post
 - “Miller pledges to make clean sweep.” – The Globe and Mail
 - “Miller sweeps into mayor’s office” – Toronto Star
 - “David Miller a radical. The extraordinary locks say so.” – Now Magazine
4. *Public opinion shifted over time in tight correlation with the advertising effort.* Bumper stickers went out in mid-July, door-to-door airport brochures and radio started in August, and the bulk of the campaign kicked in with full force on Oct 6th. We can see the growth in preference that reflects those bursts in the following:



End of Case. Crossover Notes follow.

INTRODUCTION TO CROSSOVER NOTES — CASSIES 2004

[Miller for Mayor Version]

Crossover Notes have been going for several years, and now run to 30 pages.

We used to attach the full set to each case, but to save a few trees, we are now customizing each attachment. It can still be quite long, but not 30 pages.

The idea of Crossover Notes occurred to me while I was editing Cassies 1997.

I was a consultant by then. But before that I had clambered up to the group product manager level at P&G, and been President and Vice Chairman at O&M—both in Toronto. These companies were passionate about “lessons learned,” and so was I. It’s hard to believe now, but we felt rushed off our feet even then. Compared to today, though, we had time to study if campaigns were working or not, and come to conclusions about why.

There are lessons, like gold dust, in all the Cassies cases. So in 1997 I decided to extract them. This started with bite-sized footnotes about lessons that “cross over” from one case to another. And the idea kept growing. It is still anchored to the winning cases, but I also draw on other thinking for more complex issues.

You can use Crossover Notes in two ways. Although they didn’t start out as a crash course in advertising, they are worth reading as a whole. You can also dip into them selectively. The headings on the next page will help you choose.

I’ve tried to be even-handed on controversial issues, but here and there you will sense my point of view. For this I thank the Cassies for not editing their Editor.

We now have over 120 published cases. They’re an immense and growing body of experience. I hope I’ve helped pass some of this on.

David Rutherford

Toronto: November 2004.

For comprehensive advice on brand-building, see *Excellence in Brand Communication*—authored by leading Canadians from across the marketing and advertising spectrum. It is published by the ICA. See www.ica.adbeast.com.

INDEX OF CROSSOVER NOTES FOR CASSIES 2004

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8. Classic Rivalries.	
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34. Longer and Broader Effects, and A Closing Thought.	

The Notes for this case are marked ✓ and are attached. Some of these refer to others—marked (✓) and also attached. This then starts a chain reaction—because some of the (✓) Notes *themselves* refer to others—but we decided to stop at this point. The full set can be downloaded from the Case Library section of www.cassies.ca

MILLER FOR MAYOR. CROSSOVER NOTES. CASSIES 2004.

1. **What a Brand Stands For.** People in real life hardly give the deeper meaning of brands a second thought. They know that some appeal more than others. They may have a sense that brands jostle for their attention. But that's about it. They certainly don't agonize over what is the *essence* of this, or the *abiding truth* of that.

But branding goes deeper than we in marketing may realize. Before marketing was even thought of, branding was part of life. Everything from national flags, to coinage, to the uniforms on soldiers, boy scouts and Supreme Court judges, to the plumage on peacocks (human and otherwise), is a form of branding. Business had an early example in the 1800s when Harley Procter of P&G heard a pastor quote a biblical text about ivory palaces. Goodbye Procter & Gamble White Soap. Hello Ivory. More recently, Tom Peters published *A Brand Called You*. And Tony Blair tried to re-brand the UK as "Cool Britannia."

A brand, in the fullest sense, is hard to define. Dictionary definitions tend to focus on the trademark aspect, and yes, branding does involve some sort of identifying mark. But this misses the point. What makes a brand *valuable*?

The answer is The Advantage of Belief.¹ Charles Revson of Revlon famously said, "In the factory we make cosmetics. In the store we sell hope." In other words, a brand is not a product; it's what people *believe* about a product. These beliefs can be immensely powerful. The most astonishing is the placebo effect. In clinical trials, many patients respond to the "sugar pill," even when they have serious diseases. We see the same thing with blind and identified product tests. With a strong brand, the preference jumps. (See *What's in a Name* by John Philip Jones.) And when the Advantage of Belief takes hold, it leads to a long list of benefits:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| a) Customer loyalty | e) Facilitating brand extensions |
| b) Higher price | f) Withstanding competitive attack |
| c) Higher cash flows | g) Motivating staff and attracting new talent |
| d) Higher long-term profitability | h) Potentially augmenting the stock price |

This doesn't, of course, answer the question, "how do you build these beliefs?" There are widely varying notions, but most agree on the basic principles: (1) stake out what the brand can and should stand for (2) stick with this over time (3) evolve to account for lessons learned and market changes.²

This can't be done by empty promises. We have to assess what consumers want against what the product delivers—and tell the story better than competitors do. We have a melting pot of perceptions and reality to work with. All the "brand" ideas are there to help—Brand Image, Equity, Personality, Character, Essence, Relationship, Footprint, Truth, Soul, Identity, and so on—along with old faithfuls like Positioning, Focus of Sale, USP, Features, Attributes, Benefits and Values. Whatever the terminology, though, "what the brand stands for" is critical.

¹ This is a phrase of mine, though the idea that a brand is "more" has been described by many authors.

² How do you do this, and evolve? See *Excellence in Brand Communication* : www.ica.adbeast.com

10. Conventional Wisdom—should it be challenged? Conventional wisdom will sometimes be right. But it can also be a roadblock. When US Pepsi executives saw the Pepsi Challenge, they apparently said, "that's not Pepsi," and rejected it. The Dove Litmus campaign (*Crossover Note 7*) ran into a fusillade of disapproval at client/agency global head offices—and only survived because the Canadian team stuck to their guns. Here are others that went against the tried and true:

- Crispy Crunch in Cassies I, making a virtue of greed—a taboo in confectionery.
- Richmond Savings in Cassies III, poking fun at the Humungous banks.
- Sunlight in Cassies 99, saying it's OK to get dirty.
- Fido and Clearnet, using dogs and frogs. Cassies 99 and 2001.
- Various financial accounts—so many that humour, wit and charm have almost become the new conventional wisdom for the category: AGF in Cassies 99, Clarica in Cassies 2001. BMO Quebec and Scotiabank in Cassies 2002.

Others from Cassies 2002:

- Bud Light, not going after the young, legal-age, male heavy drinker.
- CFL, against younger viewers, accepting they might alienate the core franchise.
- ED, going high-profile with a taboo topic.
- Five Alive, switching from Moms 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, embracing the English heritage with “honest frenglish.”
- Sloche, rejoicing in being politically and nutritionally incorrect.

From Cassies 2003:

- Bait Cars, talking directly to criminals.
- Crown Diamond Paint, advertising that men hate painting.
- Familiprix, using humour to sell health products.
- Irving Mainway Coffee, making a virtue of the caffeine hit.
- Toyota Matrix, breaking all the Toyota “rules.”
- Sola Nero, could not be further away from wine snobbery.
- Super 7, reveling in the excesses of the super-rich.
- Université de Montréal, with no smiling students and ivy covered buildings.

From Cassies 2004:

- Cirque du Soleil—as a corporate philosophy.
- Elections Ontario, resisting the temptation to use social responsibility.
- Miller campaign, throwing out the conventions of political advertising.
- Réno Dépôt, investing in the brand, rather than “price and item.”
- Toyota Sienna, with their “cool minivan” thinking.

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

- Oh Henry! None of the gut-fillers had tried to own hunger, even though it was the high ground for the category. Cassies II. See also *Crossover Note 7*.
- Buckley's. Rather than side-step their bad taste, Buckley's relished it. Cassies III.
- Chrysler. Minivans were "my most expensive household appliance." Even so, *emotion* was the key to an immensely successful launch. Cassies III.
- Philadelphia Cream Cheese. In research, people often do not own up to what they really want, which in this case was "permission to indulge." Cassies III.
- Richmond Savings. Almost everyone hated banks, but it still took insight to turn this into the "Humungous Bank." Cassies III.
- Eggs are natural, but in word-association tests, consumers did not say so. (See *12. Changing the Goalposts* next.) The farmer campaign brought "natural" to life.
- Sunlight. Getting dirty is fun. This is diametrically opposed to the conventional wisdom, dominated by Tide, that clean is good and dirt is bad. Cassies 99.
- Fido in Cassies 99. Competitors were fighting on promotion/price. In an echo of Apple vs. IBM, Fido saw that consumers needed the human touch. See also Clearnet and "the future is friendly" in Cassies 2001.
- Diet Pepsi found a way to be youthful without being too young in the "forever young" campaign. Cassies 2002.
- Listerine in Cassies 2002: healthy gums, after a century talking about bad breath.
- Pro•Line in Cassies 2002: Appealed to non-experts with "Anyone can win."
- Aero. Saw the power of "melting" in Cassies 2003.
- Crown Diamond. Used the fact that men hate to paint in Cassies 2003.
- Super 7. Ignored the political correctness of being tasteful. Cassies 2003.
- Cottonelle. Talked to women as women, not as "family." Cassies 2004.
- Quebec Milk. Saw the blindingly obvious. That just asking people to drink more milk might cause it. Cassies 2004.
- Toyota Sienna. Realized that the answer lay not in what minivan buyers do, but in what SUV buyers do. Cassies 2004.
- Virtually all the cases in *Crossover Note 10*.

16. When a campaign stumbles. This might be a momentary stutter and (if we were clairvoyant) we would make a minor fix, and keep a long-running campaign going. But it might be the first clue that something is going dangerously off the rails. There's no crystal ball, and the pressure of the situation can lead to snap (and wrong) judgments. The best answer usually comes from applying a blend of experience, judgment, intuition, vision, and research. Here are some pointers.

1. **Dig deep into trends and tastes.** You could be on the wrong side of a tectonic shift: a remorseless re-shaping that transforms everything. Tectonic shifts can be massive. "Made in Japan" used to mean a cheap, shlocky, knock-off, and North American business took years to see what was coming. *Crossover Note 6*. The entire geography of marketing and communication is a tectonic shift, with the added thrill that the tectonic plates are moving fast. In terms of brands, consider Listerine. "Always a bridesmaid, but never a bride" started life in a Listerine advertisement, reflecting a bad breath positioning that had been in place for as long as anyone can remember. But a shift was happening, towards the idea of a healthy mouth. (See Cassies 1995 and 2002). Something similar has happened in toothpaste. At one time, Pepsodent ("you'll wonder where the yellow went...") was the leader, and whitening was the high ground. Crest came along with fluoride (and dental association endorsement). This transformed the market, and Pepsodent slid into history. Over the next generation, though, cavities stopped being the problem they once were.³ The market started to shift towards "mouth health" and Colgate got there first with Colgate Total, knocking Crest off its #1 perch. Crest responded with Crest Complete—and now the whole market has come full circle with a furious battle for whitening again.
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 *11. The Eureka Insight*, and *12. Changing the Goalposts*.
3. **Think through the change needed.** See *6. Should the product be improved?* and *14. Refreshing a Continuing Campaign*.
4. **Make change for the right reasons.** 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 "What Beer's all About" in the late 80s. This put Canadian in the mainstream, and it took over from Labatt Blue as market leader. You'd think they'd want to keep going with "What Beer's all About." And they did for a few years. But they realized tastes and trends were shifting. To stay ahead of this, they launched "I AM" in the mid 90s (Cassies III). This was successful but eventually it too ran out of steam, and Canadian re-incarnated again with "Joe's Rant," as described in Cassies 2001. See also *15. Baby With The Bathwater*.

Note: Many "turnaround" cases have faced issues of this sort. In Cassies 2004, Desjardins, Quebec Milk, Kit Kat and Sienna would be examples.

³ Ironically, Crest had helped make this happen, by driving the whole market in this direction.

22. Humour in a Serious Category. It doesn't make sense to trivialize what you are trying to sell, but this does not mean that humour cannot sell in serious categories. 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; Familiprix and Université of Montréal in 2003; Miller for Mayor and Elections Ontario in Cassies 2004.

The two financial cases in Cassies 2002 (Bank of Montreal and Scotiabank) both use humour. As of Cassies 2003, I was saying that the financial category has thrown off its "serious" straightjacket. And in Cassies 2004 the Desjardins case-writer suggests that the pendulum has swung too far, pointing out that virtually all the Quebec banks are on a humour tack.

Sometimes humour must be avoided, even when the temptation to use it is strong. Jokes about erectile dysfunction are an easy laugh, but not to men who have ED. So the ED campaign in Cassies 2002 was conspicuously serious. By the time we get to Viagra, though, the mood has become distinctly jaunty. See "Good Morning" in Cassies 2003.

26. Awareness Alone. It seems self-evident that awareness is important, and many Cassies cases refer to increases in brand or ad awareness (unaided, top of mind, aided etc.) Awareness needs to be kept in perspective, however. Bud Light had high awareness but a miniscule share. Nautilus had high awareness, but business was suffering. Familiprix, Pro•Line and Viagra all said that awareness was not the issue. The old cliché, "I don't care what they say as long as they get my name right" is too simplistic.

Strong brands are based on *relevant differentiation*. Of course, you must imprint what the brand stands for—and "awareness" shows you are doing that. But relevant awareness is what counts. Young & Rubicam has conducted an enormous and ongoing study of this, called the Brand Asset Valuator. It has a worldwide database with hundreds of brands in it. The key findings are in the public domain. For example, they've found that brands are a combination of Relevance & Differentiation on the one hand, and Knowledge & Esteem on the other (awareness is part of Knowledge & Esteem). Very important, though, Relevance & Differentiation are more important than Knowledge & Esteem. This shows up with new and growing brands, and with old and declining ones. With new brands, Relevance & Differentiation "lead" Awareness and Esteem. With old but declining brands, it turns out that they often retain Knowledge and Esteem. It is the loss of Relevant Differentiation that causes the decline. In other words, a brand can have high awareness, but still be in trouble. This is why awareness alone is not enough.⁴

⁴ This will vary by category and brand, of course. But even in high impulse categories (I worked for some time on confectionery brands) pure awareness, if it was not relevant awareness, did not seem to be enough.

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

A host of research studies show that creative effectiveness has much more leverage than media weight. This means that if you have effective creative, increased media spending *may*⁵ work. But without proven creative, there is not much point in spending more on media.

This field is far more complicated than a Crossover Note can cover. If you are interested, you should get on the WARC website and find papers by Lodish, Jones, Blair, Ehrenberg, McDonald, Feldwick, Hollis and others. You'll find a kaleidoscope of views amongst these experts, 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.

ADDITIONAL (✓) CROSSOVER NOTES

6. Should the product be improved? Some years ago it was an axiom of marketing that your product, at a functional level, must 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.⁶

That thinking has shifted, 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 are almost frenzied in their 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 parity is the way of the world.

⁵ 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**.

⁶ There was still the “pre-emptive” possibility i.e. staking out a convincing claim for a parity benefit before anyone else did. But, in general, having a product edge was seen as important

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. The Japanese, and later the Europeans and others, did exactly the opposite—and carved out 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.
- Irving Mainway Coffee and Source Yogurt in Cassies 2003.
- MINI in Cassies 2003.
- Motrin in Cassies 2003, adding stronger skus.
- VodKice in Cassies 2003, remodelling the Boomerang portfolio.
- Cirque du Soleil in Cassies 2004, by adding Zumanity to their portfolio.
- Kit Kat in Cassies 2004, keeping Original the same, but launching Chunky.
- Toyota Sienna in Cassies 2004, with multiple upgrades.

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.
- Aero, Dodge SX 2.0, Familiprix, Super 7, in Cassies 2003.
- Cottonelle and Milk in Cassies 2004.

Technology cases are harder to categorize, but usually have improvements. Service companies (e.g. Desjardins, Gaz Metro, Réno Dépôt in Cassies 2004) may not have radical surgery, but often make improvements as part of the “total brand experience.” Some cases make the point (e.g. Clearnet in Cassies 2001 and Lipton Sidekicks in Cassies 2002) that if your functional advantage is going to be matched, you had better develop an advantage through brand personality/character/equity. There is 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. Some take this to mean 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 Cassies III. Lever wanted to pre-empt the arrival of Oil of Olay bar from the US, and decided to kick-start Dove sales via new advertising. They had a spectacular demonstration of mildness. When Dove is subjected to a litmus test, the paper does not change. With soaps—including Ivory—the paper turns an ugly blue. But Ivory owned mildness. Those against fighting for the same high ground predicted disaster. But Dove attacked anyway. Four years later Dove was up 73% in dollar sales, and Ivory had dropped to half of Dove’s dollar share. And how do you decide whether to attack or not? On winnability. Ivory held the mildness position, but with “litmus” Dove had a superb claim on that territory.

The key is how you think about distinctiveness. It is certainly essential, *but it does not have to come from positioning*. Consider Duracell and Energizer. Duracell staked out “lasts longer,” and Energizer languished in other territory for years. Eventually they decided to attack, and the Energizer Bunny has been going and going ever since. Both brands have the high ground positioning. They get their distinctiveness from *execution*. One last case. Sunlight wanted to attack Tide on cleaning, but decided that a frontal assault would almost certainly fail. So they re-defined “clean” as the joy of getting dirty, and won the Grand Prix in Cassies 99.

[I’m not saying you should *always* attack occupied high-ground—just debunking the idea that it has to be a mistake. In Cassies 2004, Cottonelle, Desjardins, Gaz Metro and Réno Dépôt were all successful by sidestepping or redefining the high ground. Even so, the high ground is still one of the first places I look.]

12. Changing the Goalposts. Some insights come from suddenly seeing what was always there to be seen. (Sunlight’s Cassies 99 joy of getting dirty would be an example.) Others re-frame the problem, such as:

- Cow Brand Baking Soda’s extended usage.
- Johnson’s Baby Shampoo’s adult re-positioning.
- Cereals trying to get eaten as a late night snack.

Insights can also spring from what is *not* being said. The Eggs case in Cassies 99 is an example. Word-association tests played back any number of benefits, but did *not* identify that eggs are natural. Somehow, this omission caught the agency’s eye, and they turned “natural” into a powerful campaign using real farmers. This turned around a 17-year decline.

Purina is another example. At one time, everyone sold dog-food on taste and nutrition. Not surprisingly, consumers played back that these 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.

Purina also points up another way to get insights—by looking beyond Canada. Similar thinking had produced the famous “prolongs active life” campaign for PAL dogfood in the UK.

14. Refreshing a continuing campaign. When I was at P&G, and later at O&M, all the big advertisers and their agencies thought in terms of campaigns. If we were developing new advertising, the comment “that’s just a one-off” was a kiss of death.

In those days, a campaign was usually defined by what a brand did on television. There would be one commercial, or a pool, and they would be refreshed over time. Nowadays, influenced by the ideas of “media neutrality” and “every point of contact,” a campaign is more complicated. But it’s fair to say that we (clients and agencies) still believe that campaigns are the right/best way to build a brand.⁷

The belief in campaigns evolved intuitively. But more recently, the idea of “the brand relationship” has taken hold. This is the notion that (in a way) we treat brands like friends. Brand Truths can come out of this type of thinking, as can other insights. I know of one researcher who says, “I want to know what you think of the brand, but I also want to know what the brand thinks of you.”

Relationships themselves can be very different, but for most people, they are based on things like trust and consistency, without being boring or predictable. This has led to the idea that brands should present a consistent face over time (assuming, of course, that they are standing for the right thing in the first place.)

So the intuitive belief is in line with the “relationship” view. There is still the question, though, of what is a campaign? At one time, packaged goods advertisers (and some agencies) believed in strict pool-outs. But campaigns do not have to be this tightly formatted. The following list starts at the most rigid and extends to the most holistic. All the examples have successes and failures, and the list is not a comprehensive one because some campaigns don’t lend themselves to being categorized. It will give an idea of the possibilities, however and (I hope) free up what can be rigid thinking:

- **Strict Pool-Out.** Campaigns like “Who wants Gum? I do. I do.” A similar situation is pooled out time after time, in a repeated format, often with a USP demo or slogan. Some people think this type of advertising is passé. Others remember it fondly, and wonder what happened to the way it used to be.
- **Hall of Fame Pool-Out.** Some think pool outs are dull, boring, predictable and clichéd. Not necessarily. The 20-odd year campaign for Hamlet cigars in the UK is rigidly formatted, but is spectacularly creative and effective.
- **Situational Pool-Out.** These don’t have the format of the strict pool out but still have a clear connection between executions. Diet Pepsi’s “forever young” and Pro•Line’s “anyone can win” are examples. So are Fido (dogs) and Clearnet/Telus (flora and fauna). Huggies “Happy Baby” is one of the longest-running.

This category includes spectacular executions like “Manhattan Landing” and “Face” for British Airways, though it can be hard to keep coming up with ideas this big. Kit Kat is a different example, where the idea of “break” continues, and the challenge is to keep it up to date.

⁷ A 30-something creative friend said to me, “where does this belief in campaigns come from? Young people today want constant change. What’s so wrong with a stream of one-off ideas?” This would have been seen as heresy at one time, and perhaps still is. But it’s food for thought.

- **Icons.** These can anchor a campaign (Maytag 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 I think that's a mis-call—it depends how it's done. Absolut Vodka uses its bottle as an icon, and it's brilliant. The Familiprix pharmacist is hilariously effective, and could become an icon (the creative is in the case history section at www.cassies.ca)
- **Spokes-people, and Spokes-animals.** Dave Thomas and Colonel Sanders, god rest their souls, are examples, as is Morty the Bison for Manitoba Telecom.
- **Storytelling with continuing character(s).** The Oxo family in the UK is one of the longest-running examples. Bartles and Jaymes was a wonderful success story in the US. Personalities have been very successful in Quebec e.g. the Pepsi and Listerine Grand Prix winners in Cassies I and II.
- **Music-Based.** Music sometimes goes beyond a supporting role, and becomes part of the brand character. 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."** These campaigns are 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 serious, some comical, some ironic, some dramatic) but they all had the Volkswagen voice and attitude. Brands like Nike are in this category. Benneton is an extreme example. As I write this, I'm remembering some Fedex ads that would fit this category ("I have an MBA" and "You're a heck of a man doing a heck of a job, Lewis.")
- **Same core message. Customized execution.** To people with a "pool-out" mindset, this hardly qualifies as a campaign at all, because individual executions are totally different. But the overall effect can be very powerful.

The best Cassies example is the 4-year Dove case, which has been used to illustrate a number of points in these notes. The campaign started in late 91 with "Litmus," a scrupulously simple demonstration, with a haunting music track, no voice over, no people, and the story in supers. Then came the exact opposite: a raucous candid-camera commercial of women in a focus group doing the litmus test for themselves. Then another shift—to a talking-head message from the scientist who invented Dove. Finally, back to another demonstration—this one like "Litmus" in tonality, repeating the haunting music.

Someone with a strict pool-out mental model What held the campaign together was a continuing promise (mildness), an element of surprise, and a straightforward & honest brand character. The format varied completely, with 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.

It's an open question whether today's obsessively short-term attitude is causing us to lose the drive we once had for creating great campaigns. I hope it isn't.

15. Baby with the Bathwater. Campaigns can run out of steam, and it may be right to throw everything out (*Crossover Notes 14 and 33*). But it's worth checking to see if anything should be kept. "I am Canadian" from the "I AM" campaign in Cassies III was discarded when the campaign later faltered. It came back with "Joe's Rant," with a twist. The Campbell's Kids re-appeared in Cassies 2002 after years in oblivion. It will be interesting to see how this plays out. Cottonelle in Cassies 2004 knew that they had properties in the cottony soft jingle etc. But these were also dating the brand. So they found a way to use the jingle in a tongue in cheek way.

Quite often, long-running properties get discarded because the people who believe in them move off the brand. On Smarties, this happened with "Red Ones Last," though I see that it has come back, in a back-handed way. (I'm referring to the ad with two nerdy guys in the office who—in their own minds at least—get the girl.) Sometimes they are discarded for a good reason. Dove's "pour shot" had appeared in every commercial since launch. For Litmus (Cassies III) the Canadian team decided to drop it—to help consumers see Dove in a new way. Despite this logic, the international powers-that-be (at client and agency) reacted as if Dove was at risk of imminent death, and said so in no uncertain terms. Their sense of bereavement turned to horror when their advice was ignored. The "Litmus" commercial 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.

Many believe these properties should be used in 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 while⁸ consumers will not forget it. These images have a grip on long-term memory. Think about it this way. Imagine you want to *erase* an image that has got its hooks into the consumer's mind. Could you do it? I watched Lever try for years to erase Wisk's "ring around the collar" image. It wouldn't budge. That said, my view is that (in general) we are too quick to change things—probably because we want to leave our imprint on the brands we are entrusted with. One of the main reasons brands are valuable, as covered in *Crossover Note 1*, is that they accumulate added values over time. There is no formula for doing this, but the evidence says it does not happen if a brand keeps changing the face it presents. I need to stress that I am *not* advocating no change, but something closer to Paul Feldwick's "exercise" model in *Crossover Note 13*. Let the effort on the brand be part of a coherent program, evolving as needed over time, all building brand muscle.

A CLOSING THOUGHT

Throughout my career the unspoken assumption is that advertising has to help make things *grow*—brands, businesses or both. And what could be wrong with that? But the engines on an airliner not only help it climb, they save it from falling out of the sky. There is inescapable evidence that if a brand is unsupported, it may glide for a while, but eventually it will fall. Or, to use another analogy, a successful brand is like a goose laying golden eggs. If it didn't lay as many eggs as you wanted it to, would you starve it? I don't think so. But that is what we seem to do with brands.

David Rutherford

⁸ On Prairie Milk in Cassies 2004 they dropped the classic pour shot because it is a cliché to teenagers.