

Cassies 2006 Cases

Brand/Case: Monster.ca

Winner: Best Insight—Gold
Off to a Good Start—Silver

Client Credits: Monster.ca

Louis Gagnon, vice-président marketing
Rikke Wivel, directrice communications

Agency Credits: Bos, Provokat

Lisa Fournier, chargée de projets
Gary Watson, writer
Chad Borlase, artistic director
Jean-Sébastien Basque, planificateur média
Raynald Petit, planificateur stratégique
Martin Ouellette (Provokat), web strategy

Crossover Notes: All winning cases contain lessons that cross over from one case to another. David Rutherford has been identifying these as Crossover Notes since Cassies 1997. The full set for Cassies 2006 can be downloaded from the Case Library section at www.cassies.ca

- Crossover Note 1. What a Brand Stands For.
- Crossover Note 5. The Total Brand Experience.
- Crossover Note 8. Classic Rivalries.
- Crossover Note 10. Conventional Wisdom—should it be challenged?
- Crossover Note 11. The Eureka Insight.
- Crossover Note 20. Emotional versus Rational.

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Business Results Period (Consecutive Months): June 2005 – December 2005
Start of Advertising/Communication Effort: May 15, 2005
Base Period for Comparison: Calendar 2004

In 2005, the Canadian economy was the strongest it had been in decades, outpacing all of the G-8 countries. Unemployment was at a record low, making it difficult for Canada's top employers to find and hire top talent. As a result, the demand for online recruitment was especially strong, with competition particularly fierce, and Canada's Workopolis leading the pack.

Despite Monster's worldwide dominance in online recruitment, its Canadian division was struggling. Its three rivals—Workopolis (Bell Globemedia), Jobboom (Québecor) and Working.com (CanWest Global Communications)—had the extensive print, radio, television and Web properties of their parents at their disposal.

Armed with the conviction that it could never win the ad spending war, Monster decided to engage its competitors on a battlefield where it knew it had an edge: the Internet.

This led to a major re-positioning, away from the "facts and figures" of traditional recruitment to something that would strike an emotional chord. [Crossover Note 20](#).

By the end of 2005, Monster had surpassed all expectations, increasing sales by 61%, year-over-year traffic by 44%, job postings by employers by 106%, and brand awareness by 10%. And all of this happened while being outspent 4:1 by Workopolis.

[Editor's Note: Workopolis also did well over a slightly later period. See their case in the Events, Seasonal & Short Term category.]

SITUATION ANALYSIS

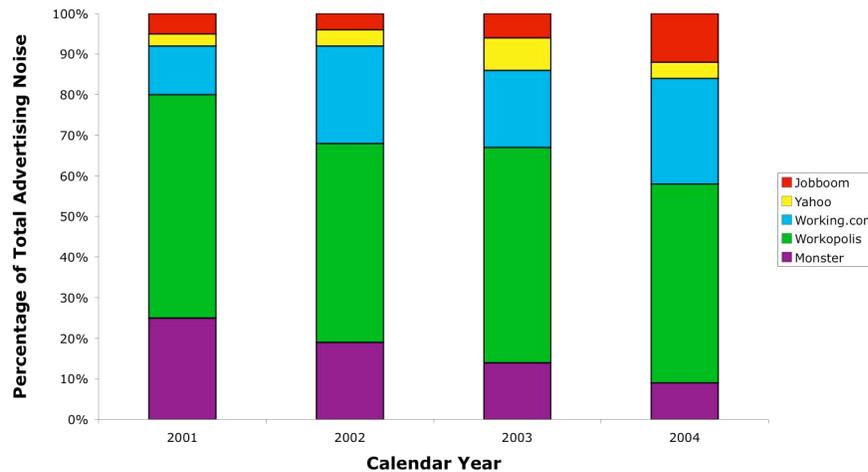
a) Overall Assessment

With the persistent growth of the Canadian economy, record low unemployment, and a tightening labour market, demand for recruitment was particularly robust in 2004—with online recruitment boasting its fastest year-over-year growth at +18%.

The newspaper share of the market was three times that of online, but online had been growing six times faster since the late 1990s. So the media conglomerates developed online offerings of their own, giving Monster—the online pioneer—a run for its money.

Workopolis (Bell Globemedia), Jobboom (Québecor) and Working.com (CanWest Global Communications) all bundled online postings with traditional newspaper recruitment ads, using their print, radio and television properties to drive sales. This copycat activity, and aggressive pricing, led employers to think that job boards were pretty much a transaction-based commodity.

The effect on Monster was damaging to say the least. By the end of 2004, Workopolis was the new leader, with 5 times more job postings than Monster, and 700,000 more unique visitors (UVs) a month. **Crossover Note 8**. Employer and job-seeker loyalty began to erode due to the similarity of offerings. And Monster's share-of-voice had dwindled from 25% in 2001 to 10% in 2004 (see the table).



Source: AC Nielsen Media Research Canada, All media - June 2005

Monster's once unshakable brand awareness lead was also weakening, slipping 10 points in 12 months, while Workopolis continued to trend upwards thanks to the extensive print, radio and television coverage available through Bell Globemedia.

Top-of-Mind Brand Awareness (First mention, all Provinces)

Brand	Q4 2003	Q1 2004	Q4 2004
Monster	43%	39% ↓	33% ↓
Workopolis	11%	16% ↑	19% ↑

Source: TNS Brand Awareness Study, March 2005

b) Resulting Objectives

Monster executives set the following goals:

1. Recapture the Web traffic lead among job seekers (B2C) despite the then-current deficit of 700,000 unique visitors a month.
2. Outpace Workopolis in new job posting acquisitions (B2B) despite having nearly 5 times fewer postings at the time.
3. Change the perception of Monster from transaction-driven to value-added.
4. Do all this with a share of voice of about 10%.

STRATEGY & INSIGHT

Monster decided to engage its rivals where it had a competitive edge: the Internet. As the industry pioneer, it had unparalleled expertise in Internet-based technology.

But although this know-how was matchless, communication had been anything but.

Monster had been using claims that were common to most players—highest number of unique visitors per month, greatest volume and diversity of jobs, biggest number of résumés in the database. **Crossover Note 1.** All were rational, and all supported the tenet “bigger is better.” But now Workopolis was the biggest player, and they were using the sorts of claims that Monster had once made. **Crossover Note 10.**

The Insight: Monster was driven by the belief that it helped bring people together to advance their lives. **Crossover Note 5.** A job is much more than earning a living, it is a way to realize your full potential. It's much more than just filling a position, it's an opportunity to make a difference. Job satisfaction is not so much remuneration, perks and benefits, but the quality of the relationship you have with the people you work for.

Monster put this to the test by polling over 5,000 respondents through an online survey. Results confirmed that for an overwhelming majority (82%), *the way they related to their boss had the greatest influence on their professional satisfaction.* **Crossover Note 11.**

EXECUTION

The Monster Idea: Monster, Bos and Provokat turned this thinking into the online viral campaign *Rate Your Boss*. Employees could rate their boss from character to leadership to everything in between.

After completing a survey, participants entered their job category and the location of their employer so that they could compare their boss's score with other bosses in the same job category, or different categories in different provinces or territories.

Those whose boss scored poorly were politely invited to shop around for a new, better boss on Monster.ca. Those whose boss scored above average were invited to nominate the boss as one of the best people to work for in Canada. A list of the best bosses by region would ultimately be published in Canada's leading newspapers and broadcast on top radio stations. In addition to getting an official Monster Boss certificate, bosses with hiring authority were offered a free job posting on Monster and a consultation with a Monster recruitment expert, adding a powerful B2B component to the branding initiative.

There was also a viral element. Participants were encouraged to invite colleagues and friends to take part in the survey, in exchange of a chance to win a year's salary.

Support: In addition to online advertising, Rate Your Boss was supported by print, radio and television. Two television executions featured great bosses. The tag line “What a difference a great boss makes” reinforced the notion that people, more than anything, can impact job satisfaction, and that great bosses can be found on Monster. A full-blown PR campaign developed by Porter Novelli rounded out the campaign. This included National Boss Day in Toronto where bosses who received the highest scores in the land were recognized as the top people to work for in Canada

BUSINESS RESULTS

a) Overall Impact

The Web initiative was a remarkable success. It attracted 166,000 visitors, 66% over objective. Of that number, 100,000 questionnaires were completed for an outstanding conversion rate of 60.24% compared to the normal survey industry average of 3-10%.

75% of the traffic generated was through email invitation, confirming the viral component’s effectiveness. On average, each visitor invited 8 people to rate their boss.

5,000 bosses received a Monster Boss certificate and 1,300 asked that a Monster online recruitment consultant contact them, 30% above the objective.

The buzz around the innovative concept generated an unprecedented 16 million PR impressions compared to the projected 2 million, resulting in some 30 radio and live television interviews, and countless write-ups in dailies in every major city in Canada including front-page coverage on the Toronto Star.

b) Hard Numbers

By the end of 2005, sales were up 61%, compared to the growth of the Canadian online recruitment industry that year estimated at 18%.

Traffic on Monster.ca increased 44% year-over-year, helping Monster recapture the Unique Visitor lead over archrival Workopolis for 9 months out of 12 in 2005. Job postings increased by 106%, giving Monster a 5 point market share increase. Brand awareness increased by 10%, giving Monster bragging rights as Canada’s most recognized online career portal. And all of this happened while being outspent 4:1 by Workopolis.

c) Recognition

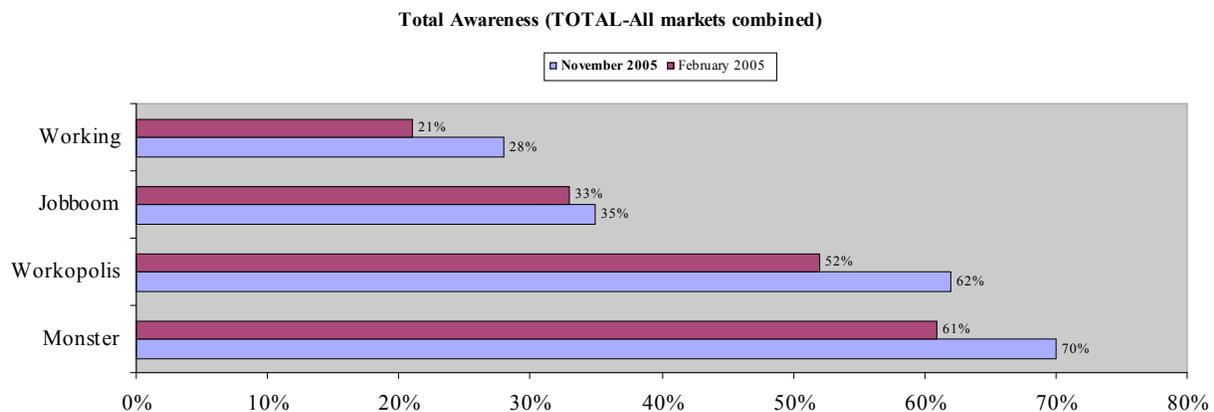
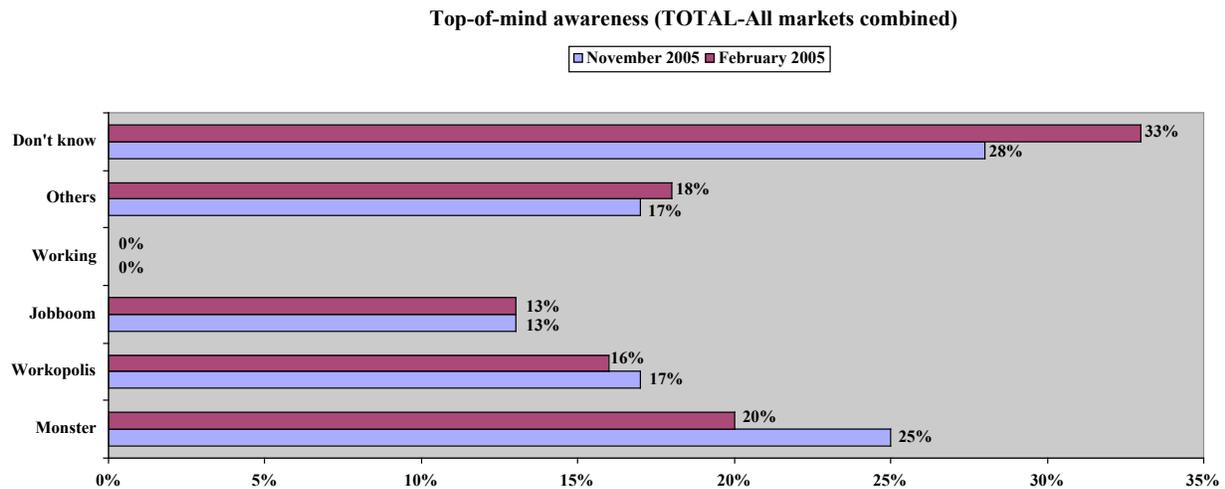
The Web campaign took top honours at the 2005 Boomerang awards organized by Montreal’s InfoPresse magazine. It received Certificates of Honour at the Webby Awards and at Toronto’s Digital Awards that same year.

The campaign was so successful that Monster’s worldwide network showed keen interest in importing the initiative, giving Canada added clout at Monster HQ in the U.S.

CAUSE AND EFFECT BETWEEN ADVERTISING AND RESULTS

Although there are many contributing factors to Monster's success in 2005, there is no doubt that this effort played a determining role in the turnaround.

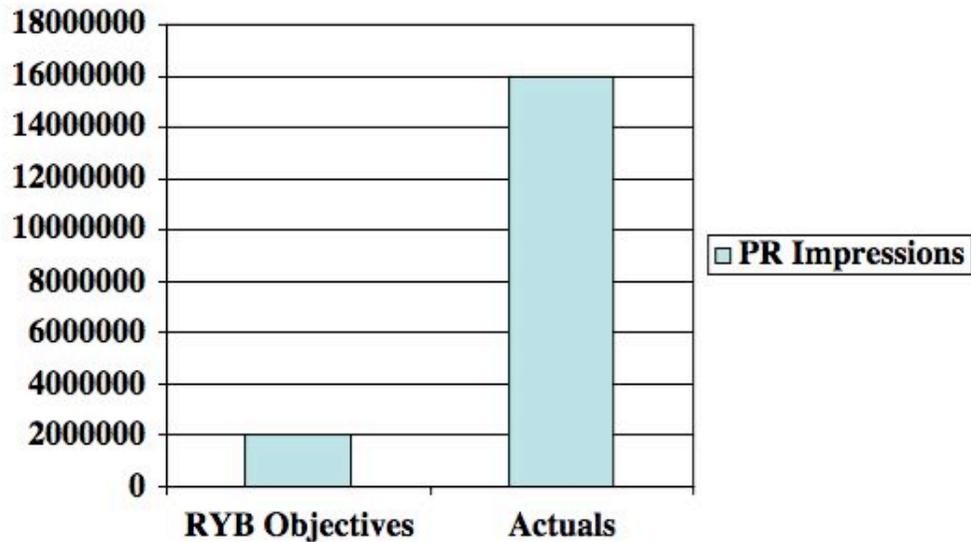
It's clear from the tracking of awareness levels that advertising and the spin from public relations were a significant driving force.



Source : Ipsos Decarie

This was achieved with high levels of perceived advertising noise, well above the level of actual noise afforded by Monster's 10% share-of-voice, confirming the relevance and attention-getting quality of the combined communication effort.

The phenomenal PR coverage can directly be linked to the Rate Your Boss campaign. In past years, Monster could never generate more than a handful of newspaper clippings annually, despite its thought leadership and interviews granted to the media.



The 1,300 qualified sales leads are also directly linked to the Rate Your Boss initiative since they were generated through employee email nominations via the online questionnaire. They turned the advertising campaign into a measurable ROI exercise, and positive the ROI it was.

The outstanding increase in the number of job postings (+106% vs. 2004) was also due in large part to Monster's continuous sales approach improvement and better sales coverage that coincided with the launch of Rate Your Boss.

Pricing can be ruled out as a factor as Monster increased the price of its postings from \$595 to \$695 in July 2005. If anything, this would have had the adverse effect on sales.