

# Cassies 2006 Cases

**Brand/Case: Froster Bloody Zit**

**Winner: Packaged Goods Beverage—Silver**

## **Client Credits: Mac's Milk**

Todd Hayman, Director of Marketing  
Tina Rizzo, Marketing Manager  
Kathryn Close, Category Manager

## **Agency Credits: Bos**

Claude Carrier, Vice-President  
Chad Borlase, Co-Creative Director  
Gary Watson, Co-Creative Director  
Sherilee Frew, Account Manager

**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](http://www.cassies.ca)

- Crossover Note 2. Brand Truths.
- Crossover Note 6. Should the Product be Improved?
- Crossover Note 10. Conventional Wisdom—should it be challenged?
- Crossover Note 16. When a campaign stumbles.

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):** The 12 months through April 30, 2006.  
**Start of the Advertising/Communication effort:** May 1, 2005.  
**Base Period for comparison:** May 2004 to April 2005.

In 2004 Mac's Convenience Stores began to change from a sleepy convenience store chain to an aggressive retailer in search of growth. They started to look externally at expanding their network. And they looked at existing products for opportunities to grow.

One opportunity was Froster, Mac's brand of Frozen Carbonated Beverages (FCBs). Froster was a high margin brand targeted at teens. But how could Mac's differentiate Froster from Slurpee at 7-11, when it was essentially the same product?

Taking a cue from their Quebec division, Couche-Tard, Mac's decided to create a proprietary new Froster flavour—Bloody Zit.

The campaign was an instant success. Parents hated it. The target loved it. Sales jumped.

Mac's target had been a growth rate of 20% over the summer months, the busiest season for a frozen drink. Bloody Zit helped them grow sales by 38% for the entire year.

## SITUATION ANALYSIS

### a) Overall Assessment

Mac's was in a period of growth and expansion—not only through adding stores, but also by increasing the performance of existing brands.

To drive more teen traffic to stores, Mac's identified Froster as the best opportunity. Over the preceding few years, with the help of grassroots sampling and in-store promotion, Froster had grown in the ten percent range (though with a low return on investment.) Western Canada, however, had outpaced Ontario sales by more than 2:1. So there was room in Ontario to grow. Mac's also looked to Quebec. *Sloche* had launched in 2000 with huge success and continued growth.

But there was a challenge. Previous campaigns had limited success. **Crossover Note 16.** Research in 2004 asked respondents to identify a frozen slush brand, and 7-Eleven's Slurpee had the edge, with first mention at 39%, versus Froster at 29%. Conversely, Mac's was the preferred place to buy these drinks (40%) over 7-Eleven (14%).

To further confuse things, the FCB flavours offered at 7-Eleven and Mac's were for the most part the same, coming from the same syrup supplier. Mac's needed a way to differentiate Froster from the competition. **Crossover Note 6.**

Mac's decided to work with the supplier to create a proprietary flavour for the Spring/Summer of 2005. This would hopefully drive more traffic into the stores.

## b) Resulting Objectives

- A Froster growth rate of 20% for the summer season (May to August)
- Improved profitability (achieved by increasing the price of the smallest and most popular size by 16%, and the largest and third most popular size by 6%).

[Editor's Note: The bulk of sales are in the summer, but the case details annual sales growth later.]

## STRATEGY AND INSIGHT

The new flavour would be super sour cherry. But it needed a name, and a campaign.

Should the name involve the flavour? In the past, Mac's had featured flavours based on taste. But this hadn't made a huge splash in terms of sales. In Quebec, meanwhile, *Sloche* had introduced bizarre names like 'Roastbeef.' [Crossover Note 10](#).

With the deep red colour as inspiration, the creative team took to the streets to get the pulse on teen culture. They discovered a psyche riddled with violence, vomit and gore. They also found puberty, and puberty means zits. So we decided to call the new flavour Bloody Zit.

Of course, this would get *negative* attention from those outside the target, and the media. But we decided that shocking creative was the way to go. We also decided that ruffling feathers could be just the sort of notoriety we were striving for. [Crossover Note 2](#).

Once the name was settled, the strategic issue was where the Froster brand would fit in. Research had shown that the 'brand' was not really important when teens chose where to buy a FCB. So we decided to put the Bloody Zit name front and centre. Mac's would get secondary branding, so that teens knew where to buy the drink. And the Froster brand would be present, but in a minor way.

## EXECUTION

Creative had to grab attention and communicate that we were talking about a beverage. We were confident that the name and visuals would then induce trial.

Media had to optimize visibility with 12-17 year olds—to reach them where they hang out. Being the first to try a Bloody Zit was only for the most daring.

The campaign had two elements. In-store POP at the 500+ Mac's stores in Ontario—and an advertising campaign consisting of TSAs, Cinema Ads, web banners and viral email.

With a limited budget and 27 Ontario markets to cover, we decided to concentrate all of the media dollars in an 8-week period during the late spring/early summer. This would build momentum that would hopefully be sustained over the rest of the summer months.

We used Mac's substantial window-fronts. A big window poster showed how a Bloody Zit drink was 'made' (with a young guy popping his zits into a clear cup). In-store, POP blanketed the store with the same look - a green tile background, indicative of a school bathroom, with bloody zits splattered all over and, where appropriate, "themed" wording.

As expected, this got an onslaught of consumer response. So, after 2 weeks, we replaced the original window poster with a milder back-up. But there was no doubt about it - this campaign was getting noticed.



First Window Poster



The Anticipated Back-Up

We placed TSAs close to schools for 8 weeks from May 1 to June 26, with creative similar to the POP. It was strongly branded "only available at Mac's."

Cinema was perfect for our target. A 30-second spot drew on an awkward moment—the first kiss. The spot had very low ambient background noise to help it stand out, and the twist at the end caused en masse gasps of 'ewww.' The buy included backlit posters using the TSA creative, and an ad in "Famous" magazine. The campaign ran for 7 weeks.

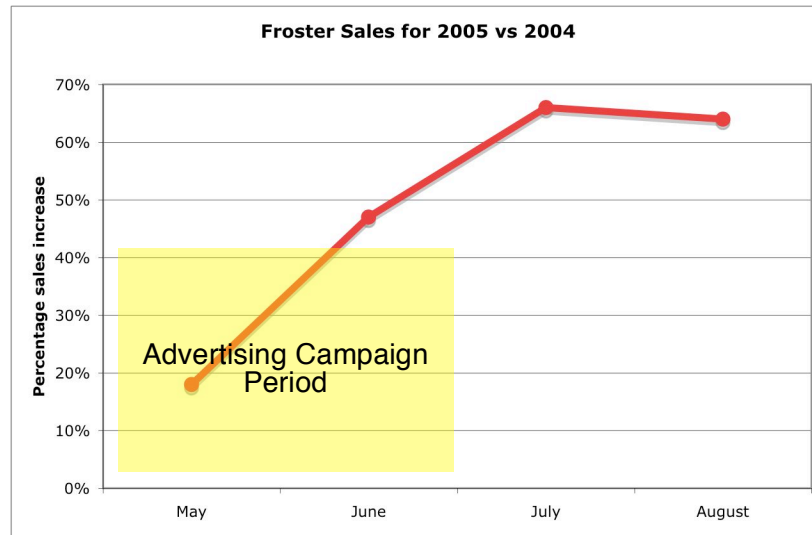
Online, web banners linked teens to a viral e-mail page that played the cinema spot. The web banner was a still shot of the two teens from the cinema ad with the line "Will she?"



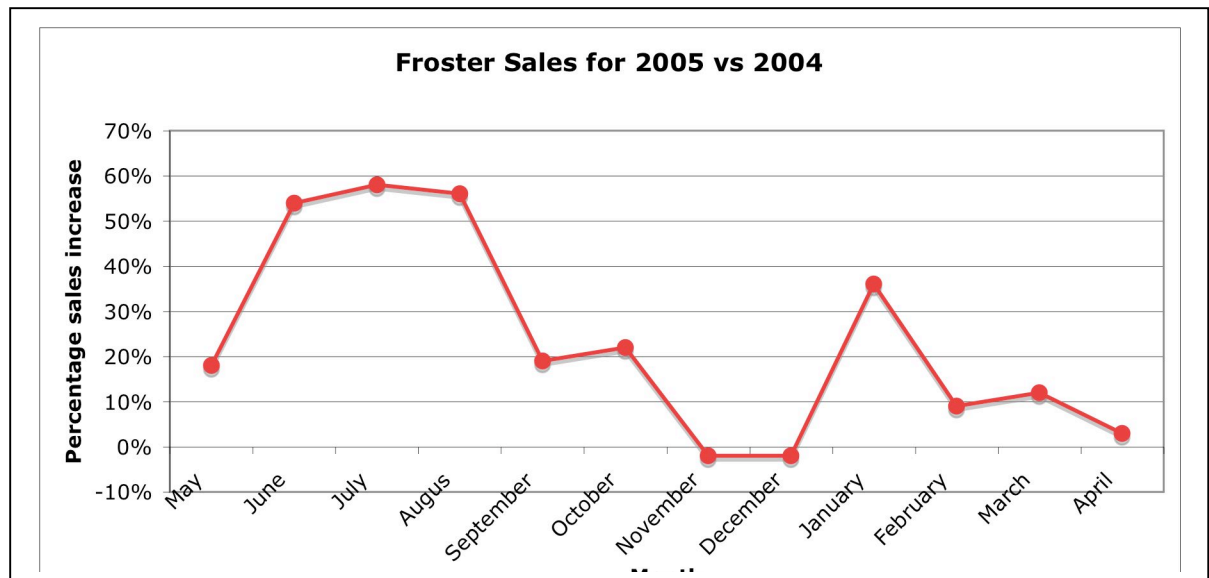
Once they had watched the spot, viewer could 'puss' the ad on. This spawned countless teen blogs. In fact, if you Google "Bloody Zit" you will get over 300,000 mentions.

## BUSINESS RESULTS

Froster saw a huge lift in sales compared to the previous year.



By August, sales had increased 48%, against the 20% objective. Additionally, for the 12-month Year I, Froster saw a 38% growth in sales (Additional detail was supplied.)

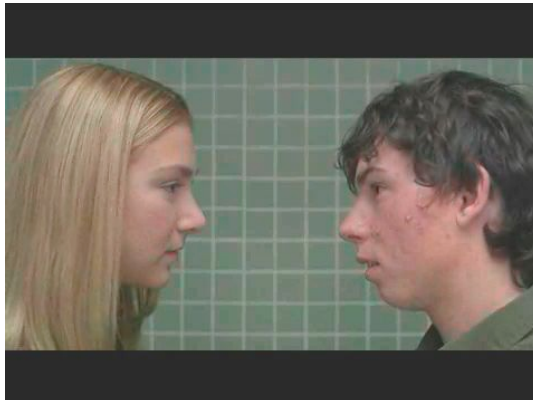


## CAUSE AND EFFECT BETWEEN ADVERTISING AND RESULTS

This is clear by relating the sales response to the advertising effort.

To put this in perspective, we ran out of flavoured syrup in just 7 weeks, with the initial demand running at three times normal levels.

**Bloody Zit” Cinema Ad :30 seconds**



**SFX:** low ambient noise



**SFX:** licking face



**SFX:** loud bong

[Ed's note. Some judges, given the serious health issues relating to blood borne diseases, felt that this advertising was inappropriate, and wanted their view to be registered.]