

# Cassies 2007 Cases

**Brand/Case: Cashmere Toilet Tissue**

**Winner: Packaged Goods Food/Other—Gold**

**Client Credits: Kruger Products (formerly Scott Paper)**

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**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 2007 can be downloaded from the Case Library section at [www.cassies.ca](http://www.cassies.ca)

- Crossover Note 1. What a Brand Stands For.
- Crossover Note 2. Brand Truths.
- Crossover Note 10. Conventional Wisdom—should it be challenged?
- Crossover Note 11. The Eureka Insight.
- Crossover Note 15. Baby with the Bathwater.
- Crossover Note 17. Turning a liability into a strength.
- Crossover Note 18. Keeping it Simple.
- Crossover Note 25. Brand Linkage (when should the brand name appear).

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

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Results Period (Continuous Months):** May 14, 2004 – May 12, 2007  
**Start of Advertising/Communication Effort:** September 2004  
**Base Period for Comparison:** 52 weeks to May 13, 2004

*You can feel the cot-ton-y soft-ness.  
 Cot-ton-elle*

If you had lived in eastern Canada at any time during the 34 years leading up to the fall of 2004, this little ditty would be all too familiar. At this time Cottonelle Bathroom Tissue had a 23% share and category brand leadership by a substantial margin.<sup>1</sup> Things were good and the brand team would have been riding high if it weren't for the fact that all the equity that had been built over those three and half decades was about to be taken away. **Crossover Note 17**

After 35 years in eastern Canada and at least seven years as the number one brand, Cottonelle was losing its name, its equities and its icons. An agreement with Kimberly-Clark for use of the name was expiring in June 2007 and Kruger Products (formerly Scott Paper) had to figure out how to transition to a new name without succumbing to powerhouses Charmin and Royale. And if that weren't enough, it was expected that Kimberly-Clark would bring the Cottonelle brand back to Canada in 2007.

This case shows that astute marketing and powerful advertising did more than save the Cottonelle brand; it helped it reach unprecedented sales and share.

## SITUATION ANALYSIS

### a) Overall Assessment

In 2004, the bathroom tissue category was a \$315 million business in English Eastern Canada (excluding Quebec). Volume was growing at 2-3% annually with three strong branded competitors: Cottonelle, Charmin and Royale. At this time, Cottonelle was not only the number one brand in Eastern Canada, it had amassed sufficient volume to take over national share leadership despite that fact that it wasn't available west of Ontario.

Price played a significant role in the category, evidenced by the 40% share enjoyed by Private Label. Margins were being squeezed and despite regular product improvements (requiring increased investments by manufacturers) bathroom tissue was being sold at a lower retail price than it had been 15 years previously.

Product improvements and claims about functional benefits drove category news. All brands, with P&G's Charmin at the lead, were emphasizing greater comfort or strength, blurring the lines for the consumer and making brands virtually interchangeable. Yet for all the manufacturer effort, 41% of consumers did NOT have a brand in mind when they approached the shelf, where they spent only 16 seconds making their brand selection.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ACNielsen Markettrack, Sales Tonnage Equiv Case, Ontario and Maritimes, 52 wks ending May 13, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> EnviroSell, Bathroom Tissue and Paper Towel Shopping Behaviour Highlights, March 2006.

It was evident that it would take an audacious approach to make the newly transitioned brand rise above the battle for product news and lowest price per roll. But could a brand with the strongest sales volume, top-of-mind awareness, loyalty quality perception survive a change in name and positioning with two resourceful competitors waiting in the wings to pounce?

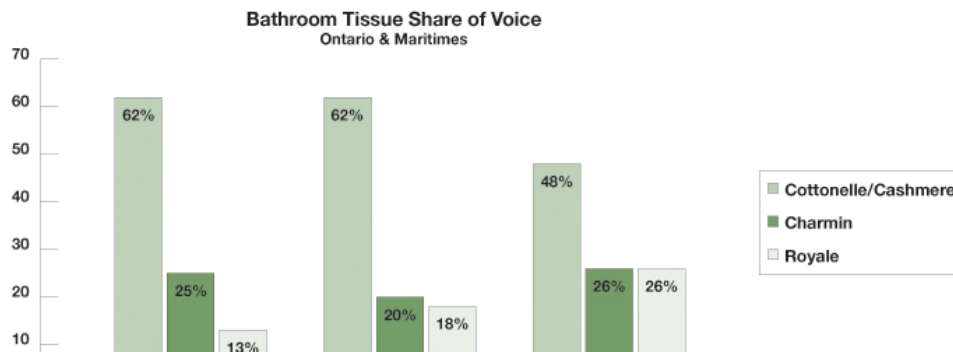
## b) Resulting Business Objectives

For the three years it would take to successfully transition the brand, the business objectives remained relatively unchanged:

1. Maintain market leadership
  - a. Defend share versus Charmin & Royale
  - b. Build a greater gap between Cashmere and Private Label
2. Successfully transition from Cottonelle to Cashmere (the new name) while reassuring the existing franchise/making them feel good about the change
3. Reinforce/evolve the softness strategy through continued reinforcement of the Cashmere name and exploiting all associated premium and softness equities.

## c) Budget Range/Share of Voice

Spending in Ontario/Maritimes in 2004 was approximately \$5 million, with share of voice split between the three main brands. Between 2004 and 2006 spending increased by 19%, as Charmin and Royale tried to take advantage of Cottonelle's vulnerability. Consequently, the Cottonelle/Cashmere SOV declined from 62% to 48% between 2004 and 2006.



## STRATEGY & INSIGHT

In the period prior to transition, we did a significant amount of strategic work, including a psychographic segmentation study, a cultural anthropologist probe and the testing of positioning concepts using unconventional means to uncover more emotional motivations.

Through these efforts we discovered that in a category where all premium brands were becoming somewhat blurred and interchangeable there was room for a more feminine and seductive approach.

The role of the product for our target was not merely about “wiping,” it was about “taking care of herself.” Hand-in-hand with this, we found room for break-through, sophisticated communication. Bathroom Tissue advertising had been depicting an artificially cute and dated category – full of kittens, dogs, bears, pillows and cotton. We believed that women would respond to a fresh approach.<sup>3</sup> **Crossover Note 10.**

There was one area that Cottonelle already owned—it was seen as a feminine woman’s brand, while the competitors were seen more as family brands. We determined that this was a significant but largely untapped advantage for Cottonelle.

In preparation for the name transition, the winning idea rested in “physical and emotional softness.” It could go way beyond the category benefit. It was truly feminine and spoke to women as women. In a nutshell, our brand idea was that “while your husband and family may never notice, Cottonelle will be *softness women notice.*” **Crossover Note 1.**

When it came to determining the new name for Cottonelle, we ran disciplined name generation research. As it turned out, one of the names on the shortlist was Cashmere, a name already trademarked by Kruger. Cashmere fit the new “softness you’ll notice” positioning, and Cottonelle’s equities, perhaps even better than Cottonelle ever could.

Further, as the “world’s softest, most luxurious fabric,” the functional and emotional benefit of the brand emanated from the product truth. **Crossover Note 2.** Women have a unique, tactile relationship with fabric and as the ultimate in softness and exclusivity, Cashmere holds incredible allure. It set the stage for a sophisticated, compelling and grown-up plan.

### **a) Business Strategy**

This involved a three-step introduction of the new name and graphics spread over three years, so as to be completely transitioned well in advance of the June 2007 deadline. Each phase was researched to ensure that no consumer was left behind.

*Phase I – Fall 2004:* Here, we introduced New Cashmere from Cottonelle. The on-pack emphasis continued to be on Cottonelle, while product improvements supported the new name. Advertising was tactical, leading the consumer through the “evolution of softness” and demonstrating the allure of cashmere over cotton and other soft fabrics.

*Phase II – Fall 2005:* This step transitioned packaging further, shifting emphasis to Cashmere, with Cottonelle in a less prominent role. Again, advertising was tactical, leveraging the 35-year history of Cottonelle. Creative showed women through the years putting their bathroom tissue away in the linen cupboard. This communicated change while showing changing styles in fashion and décor—something that struck a chord with our audience.

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<sup>3</sup> In-Sync Transition Study, November, 2001; Camelford Graham Research Group, Brand Idea Qualitative Research, May 2002.

*Phase III – Fall 2006:* This was the culmination. Packaging introduced the new Cashmere woman, with no reference to Cottonelle. Advertising delivered on “softness you’ll notice” in a way unlike anything seen in the category before.

## b) Communication Strategy

In the first two phases there was no room for subtleties, but Phase III was a new beginning. We could build equity in the Cashmere name while, in essence, making Cottonelle seem passé. **Crossover Note 15, though this time there was a conscious effort to throw the baby out with the bathwater!**

To do this, we focused on a simple idea — fashion. We equated the luxurious, feminine, indulgent qualities of cashmere with Cashmere Bathroom Tissue. **Crossover Note 18.**

## CREATIVE EXECUTION

We developed a fully integrated campaign including television, print, on-line, PR and promotion. Television featured a fashion model in what appeared to be a high fashion ad. She revels in the luxury and softness of cashmere, but at the end, when she tears her beautiful flowing white dress, we find that it is made of Cashmere Bathroom Tissue. The commercial ends with the voice-over, “Cashmere. Now in a bathroom tissue.” **Crossover Note 25.**



Print used the same idea with an haute-couture gown on a beautiful model. On closer examination we see that her dress is made of bathroom tissue, with roll upon roll flowing from the bottom. Again, the tagline reads: “Cashmere. Now in a bathroom tissue.”



Meanwhile, in 2004, Strategic Objectives had launched a successful public relations program, using well-known Canadian designers creating fashion from exclusive white cashmere. In 2006, this evolved to a student design competition, this time working with the Cashmere Bathroom Tissue itself. Students from Toronto and Montreal were invited, and [www.cashmere.ca](http://www.cashmere.ca) chronicled the competition, the finalists and the winner.

Promotion was used to deepen the brand relationship, not buy share, as is often the case in packaged goods. The “Vote Couture” promotion launched after the competition so that regular consumers to vote on-line for their favourite student design. The winner attended Fashion Week in New York City.



	16 DESIGN STUDENTS
	2000 ROLLS OF BATHROOM TISSUE
	1 WINNER
	VOTE COUTURE & WIN A TRIP TO NY FASHION WEEK
	VISIT <a href="http://cashmere.ca">cashmere.ca</a> FOR DETAILS

Cashmere's relationship with the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation was also referenced on advertising starting in the fall of 2006. This demonstrated the values of Cashmere, and our target took advantage of the opportunity to advance the cause.

## **MEDIA EXECUTION**

Television, print and on-line played a consistent and important role throughout.

To stand out, we purchased a half-height double-page spread in a new high gloss Fashion supplement in the Toronto Star. This presented the Cashmere brand in a world far removed from the typical bathroom tissue message, delivering tremendous impact.

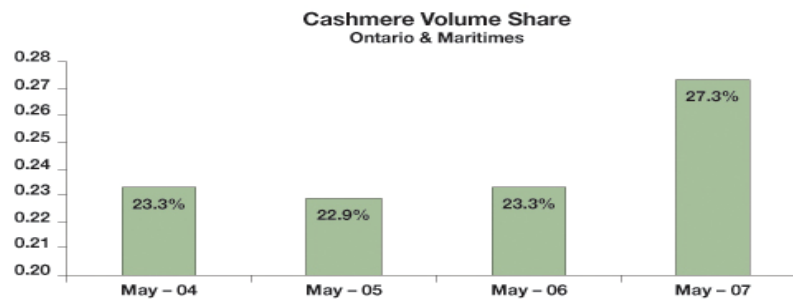
Cinema advertising ran during a pre-roll, Hollywood Fashion Highlights segment, again putting the advertising in a surprising context. Outdoor played a big role in late 2006 and early 2007 with mall poster/transit shelter advertising and high impact outdoor vertical posters. Creative was a modified version of the print. Finally, on-line advertising supported the Vote Couture promotion. The campaign ran on female-targeted fashion-related web sites, driving the target to [www.cashmere.ca](http://www.cashmere.ca).

Overall, this plan delivered 90% reach of women 25-54. TV delivered over 35 million impressions, and our advertising was in over 5 million copies of women's publications.

Further to that, PR delivered over 100 million impressions. Also, on-line achieved above average click-through rates and generated 108,000 entries to the Vote Couture contest, 44,000 of them unique entrants.

## **BUSINESS RESULTS**

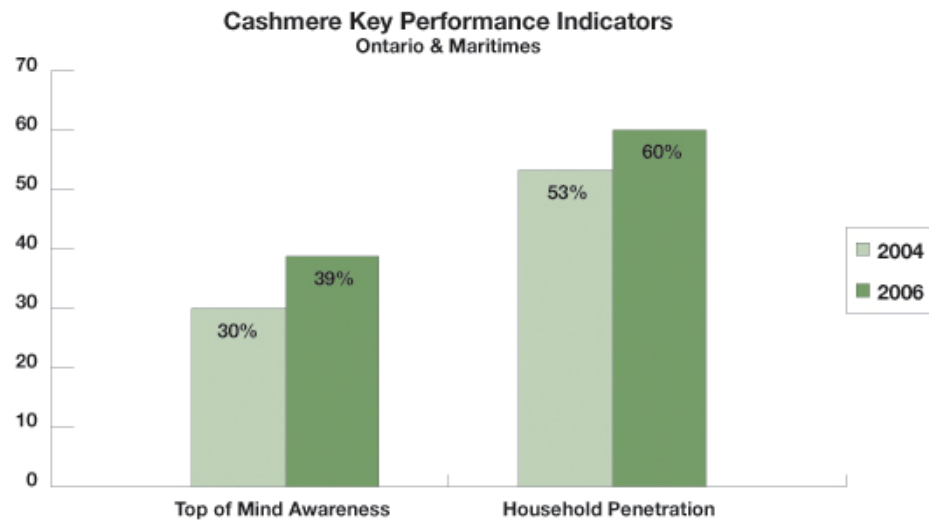
Cottonelle/Cashmere delivered (and in some cases over-delivered) on all three business objectives laid out in 2004.



Most notable was the growth in share from 23.3% to 27.3% May 2006 and May 2007, the period featuring the introduction of the fashion-themed Cashmere brand advertising.

The corresponding increase in dollar volume was 36%: the equivalent of an additional \$28 million in sales or an average \$9.3MM on an annual basis.

Other measures of market leadership; top of mind awareness and household penetration, increased, demonstrating that the advertising was having an impact on consumer awareness and the Cashmere consumer base.



Source: Burak Jacobson, Bathroom Tissue Tracking Research, Fall, 2004 – Spring 2006; ACNielsen HomeScan, 52 weeks ending April 15, 2004, 52 weeks ending April 14, 2007

Success against the objective of a successful transition can be measured by two factors (over and above the share growth): Cashmere brand awareness and brand loyalty.

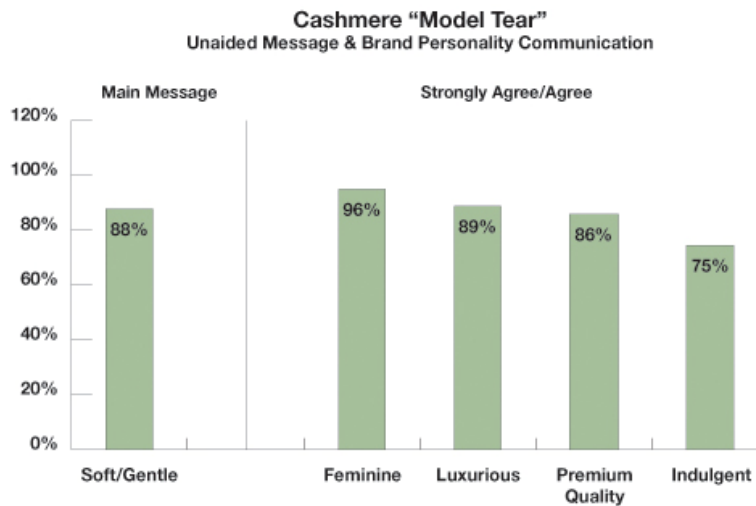
While all sales and brand health measures pointed to strong awareness of the Cashmere name, prompted television advertising recall of the “Model Tear” spot showed that 76% of consumers knew the brand name in the advertising. Similarly, the commercial delivered well above-norm brand association scores with 78% of respondents connecting the advertising with the Cashmere brand. (Burak Jacobson, Bathroom Tissue Tracking Research, Fall, 2005 – Spring 2006.)

Loyalty in this category is measured by share of requirements (SOR), essentially the percentage of a consumer’s bathroom tissue purchases that are made up by any given brand. High loyalty for Cottonelle/Cashmere is defined by the percentage of respondents that cite Cashmere as their main brand and whose SOR is greater than 75%. During this period, the percentage of Cottonelle/Cashmere’s users that would fall into this group grew from 43% in 2005 to 63% in 2006. (Burak Jacobson, Bathroom Tissue Tracking Research, Fall, 2005 – Spring 2006.)

Against objective #3 (Evolve “softness” through the equity of cashmere) the advertising was extremely effective. TV advertising research showed that 88% of respondents (unaided) played back softness as the key message.

Additionally, feminine, luxurious, premium quality and indulgent were strongly communicated as key components of the “softness you’ll notice” idea.



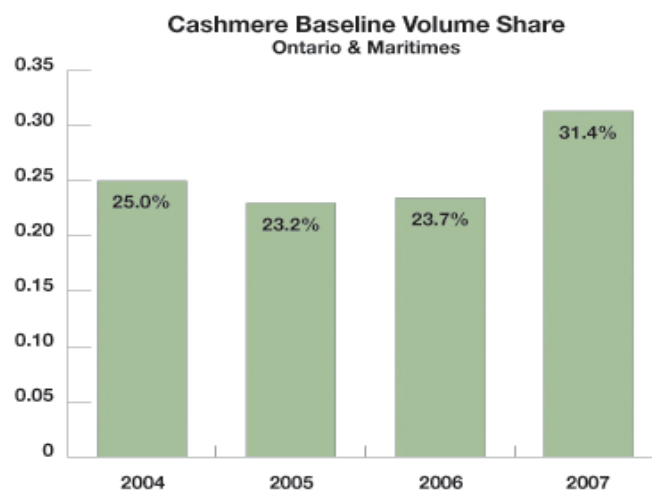


Source: Camelford Graham Research Group, Project Cashmere Adlab, December 2005

## CAUSE & EFFECT BETWEEN ADVERTISING AND RESULTS

There are a number of measures that demonstrate the causal effect of the Cashmere transition advertising on the success of the brand over the same period. Many have been mentioned already, but two additional measures are noted below.

Baseline share (a measure of sales volume in the absence of any in-store price reductions, coop advertising or display) grew from 25% in 2004 to 31.4% in 2007, demonstrating that pricing and/or promotion did not play a role in volume gains. This is a critical point in a category characterized by deep discounting to buy share.



Source: ACNielsen Markettrack, Baseline Sales Tonnage Equiv Case, Ontario and Maritimes, 52 wks ending May 13, 2004 through 52 wks ending May 12, 2007

Additionally, intercept research with consumers in grocery stores in March 2006 showed that while 70% were aware of the name change to Cashmere, 82% became aware through television advertising.

How did you become aware of the Cashmere name change?	
Television	82%
In-store	2%
Packaging	7%

Source: EnviroSell, Bathroom Tissue and Paper Towel Shopping Behaviour Highlights, March 2006.

Crisis averted.

This case demonstrates how a carefully laid transition plan, a new positioning rooted in a distinctive, relevant insight, and a novel and integrated communication plan not only saved a brand from demise, it actually raised it to its highest success levels in 35 years.

## INTRODUCTION TO CROSSOVER NOTES — CASSIES 2007

[For Cashmere]

Each year I update these Crossover Notes. If you've read this cover note before, you can skip it. If not, it's worth a quick read.

My career started with a seven year sentence in brand management at Procter & Gamble. Then I clambered up the ladder at O&M, becoming President and later Vice Chairman, all of this in Toronto. Then I set up as a consultant.

P&G and O&M were passionate about "lessons learned" from advertising effort, and so was I. All the Cassies cases have great lessons in them, though at the pace we work today these lessons are not necessarily easy to find.

I was thinking about this as I was editing Cassies 1997, and I had the idea for Crossover Notes. They started as bite-sized footnotes pointing out lessons that "cross over" from one case to another. Then, as time had gone by, they've evolved to what we have today.

You can use Crossover Notes in two ways. Although they weren't designed 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 close to 200 published cases. And I hope I've helped pass some of the learning on.

*David Rutherford*

Toronto: January 2008.

For more on brand-building see *Excellence in Brand Communication*—by leading Canadians from across the marketing and advertising spectrum. See also *Vulcans. Earthlings and Marketing ROI*, commissioned by the ICA, and published by Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

See [www.ica.adbeast.com](http://www.ica.adbeast.com).

## INDEX OF CROSSOVER NOTES FOR CASSIES 2007

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6. Should the product be improved?	
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8. Classic Rivalries.	
9. Turnarounds.	
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The Notes for this case are marked ✓ and come next.

Note: Cassies uses “advertising” in its broad sense. It not only stands for advertising through the main media of broadcast, print, out of home etc. Where appropriate, it also stands for Direct Marketing, PR, Interactive Marketing, Buzz Marketing, Event Marketing, Product Placement etc.

## CASHMERE CROSSOVER NOTES FOR CASSIES 2007

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 the *essence* of this, or the *brand truth* of that.

That said, 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 of 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.*<sup>1</sup> 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 people 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.<sup>2</sup>

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, the brand has to stand for something relevant and different in the consumer's mind. See also *Crossover Note 26*.

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

<sup>2</sup> How do you do this? See *Excellence in Brand Communication*: [www.ica.adbeast.com](http://www.ica.adbeast.com)

- 2. Brand Truths.** Successful advertising (in fact all successful communication) resonates with its audience. As a marketer, you may want people to believe that you have the best-tasting coffee, but simply saying, “I have the best-tasting coffee” will not usually get the resonance you need. One school of thought believes in saying the obvious as loudly and even as crassly as you can. We could call it the Bad Boy syndrome. Another has led to the idea of Brand Truths. These operate on a deeper level than simple claims. One of the top UK agencies described the process as “we interrogate the product until it confesses its strength.”

I was once the Brand Manager on Tide, and when we were asked, “What does Tide stand for” we said, “Superior cleaning. Not whitening. Not Brightening. Not Fabric Care. Superior *cleaning*.”<sup>3</sup>

Superior cleaning was the religion on Tide, and Tide delivered, despite the cliché that all detergents are alike. But this was only a glimmer of the Brand Truth. If you “interrogated” Tide the most startling truth was the *intense belief* of Tide users. This came to life in the immensely successful “Two for One Swap” campaign. Hidden cameras watched as women who had just bought Tide were offered two boxes of another good detergent in exchange. They adamantly refused, delivering off-the-cuff endorsements that no copywriter could ever have written. The campaign ran for years, and only came to an end because of its success—women knew it so well that the “candid camera” interview became impossible. Many Brand Truths are also insights, and for a list see [11. The Eureka Insight](#) and [12. Changing the Goalposts](#).

- 10. Conventional Wisdom—should it be challenged?** Conventional wisdom will sometimes be right. But it can also be a roadblock. When US Pepsi executives first saw the Pepsi Challenge, they apparently said, “that’s not Pepsi.” Dove Litmus ([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:

**From Cassies I, III, 99, 2001:**

- Crispy Crunch, making a virtue of greed. Richmond Savings, poking fun at the Humungous banks.
- Sunlight, saying it’s OK to get dirty. Fido and Clearnet, using dogs and frogs.
- Various financial accounts—so many that humour has almost become the new conventional wisdom: AGF, Clarica, BMO Quebec (and Scotiabank in 2002).

**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.

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<sup>3</sup> P&G defined “what the brand stands for” by a document they called the Creative Strategy. In those days, if anyone dreamt that the Tide Creative Strategy should include whitening, brightening etc. it was seen as an offence against all that was holy. Since then, P&G has changed its views, and now takes a broader view—as recent Tide advertising for fabric care and Tide-with-Febreze attest.

**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 Coffee, making a virtue of the caffeine hit.
- Toyota Matrix, breaking the Toyota “rules.” Sola Nero, debunking wine snobbery.
- Super 7, revelling in the excesses of the super-rich.
- Université de Montréal, with no smiling students and ivy covered buildings.

**From Cassies 2004:**

- Cirque du Soleil, breaking convention as a corporate philosophy.
- Elections Ontario, resisting the temptation to use social responsibility.
- The 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.

**From Cassies 2005:**

- Baileys, breaking out of the liqueur cabinet.
- Crescendo, moving away from “delivery/takeout” as the high ground.
- Cruisin’ to Win, thinking small. Energizer Lithium, ignoring the conventions of battery advertising.
- Familiprix, selling health products hilariously.
- Hubba Bubba, using brand thinking in a merchandizing category.
- Moores, redefining the way to look at men shoppers.
- “Stupid.ca” anti-smoking, being hilarious in how it talked to teenagers.

**From Cassies 2006:**

- Bloody Zit – need we say more? Chocolate Milk, torturing cute chocolate animals.
- Eterna, choosing an emotional (rather than technical) story to sell film.
- Holiday Inn, moving away from “comfort.”
- Listerine, breaking away from “kills the germs that cause bad breath.”
- MINI and Yaris, breaking car conventions.
- VanCity, challenging the unwritten rules of financial marketing.

**From Cassies 2007:**

- Dove, with its campaign for real beauty.
- Reversa, by targeting Cougars
- Cashmere, finding an analogy between fashion and toilet tissue.
- Prairie Milk, appealing to teens in a decidedly un-commercial way.
- The Capital G Bank in Bermuda, with its “We’re Gifferent” campaign.
- Benylin, with “Take a Benylin Day.”
- Coors Light, walking away from the approach that had made it the #1 light beer.
- La Parisienne detergent, with advertising that threw aside the “rules” of the category.

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

- Oh Henry! Gut-fillers had tried to own hunger. Cassies II and *Crossover Note 7*.
- Buckley’s. Rather than side-step their bad taste, Buckley’s relished it. Cassies III.
- Chrysler. Used *emotion* as the key to an immensely successful launch. Cassies III.
- Philadelphia Cream Cheese. Creating “permission to indulge.” Cassies III.
- Richmond Savings. Creating the “Humungous Bank.” Cassies III.
- Eggs. (See also *12. Changing the Goalposts*.) Farmers 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. 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 in Cassies 2002. The “forever young” campaign.
- Listerine in Cassies 2002. Healthy gums, after a century of bad breath.
- Pro•Line in Cassies 2002. Appealed to non-experts with “Anyone can win.”
- Aero. Saw the power of “melting” in Cassies 2003.
- Super 7. Ignored the political correctness of being tasteful. Cassies 2003.
- Quebec Milk. Saw the obvious. Asked people to drink more. Cassies 2004 and 2005.
- Toyota Sienna. Realized that the answer lay not in what SUV buyers do. Cassies 2004.
- Irving’s Cruisin’ to Win. Saw the power of *small* prizes. Cassies 2005.
- Crescendo. Like Oh Henry! saw unoccupied high ground. Cassies 2005.
- Butter. Saw a way to use “natural” to connote taste and health. Cassies 2005.
- Anti-Smoking. Saw the power of “Stupid.” Cassies 2005.
- Jergens Ultra Care. Saw a way to reposition skin. Cassies 2005.
- Whiskas. Saw things from the *cat’s* point of view. Cassies 2005.
- Moores. Used the fact that their target audience hates shopping. Cassies 2005.
- Harvey’s. Realized the significance of The Grill. Cassies 2005
- Quebec Lotto 6/49. Realized that 6/49 winners are generous, so be nice to them.
- United Way. Saw power in the Hand icon. Cassies 2005
- CIBC Run for the Cure. Saw the power in the Pinnie idea. Cassies 2005
- Juicy Fruit. Saw how to build a new image by destroying the old one. Cassies 2005
- Yaris. Realized that you *could* use aspiration in the sub-compact category. Cassies 2006.
- WestJet saw the power in the “owners” idea. Cassies 2006 and 2007.
- Monster saw the power in the “best boss” idea. Cassies 2006.
- Dove. Saw the leverage in the Self-Esteem Fund. Cassies 2007.
- Brita. Changed how we think about tap water for ever.
- SpongeTowels. Brought absorbency to life, almost literally.
- Benylin. Realized what we really want to do!
- Newfoundland. Realized that the problem was the opportunity.
- Plus virtually all the cases in *Crossover Note 10*.

**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, though I am not sure if they are still with us. 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, properties get discarded because the people who believe in them go off the brand. This happened on Smarties with “Red Ones Last” though it, too, has made its way back. Sometimes properties 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. The global powers-that-be (client and agency) reacted as if Dove was committing suicide, and said so. Their sense of bereavement turned to horror when their advice was ignored. “Litmus” ran without the pour shot, and was immensely successful.



This is an important point about long-running properties. Many believe they should be used in every 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<sup>4</sup> consumers will not forget it. These images have a grip on long-term memory. Put another way, imagine you had to *erase* an entrenched image. Could you do it? I watched Lever try for years to kill “ring around the collar” on Wisk. They couldn’t.

That said, my view in general is that we are too quick to change things for changes sake. One of the main reasons that brands are valuable —*Crossover Note 1*—is that they accumulate added values over time. The evidence says that this does not happen if a brand keeps changing the face it presents.

I need to stress that I’m 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.

**17. Turning a liability into a strength.** Usually, advertising strategies are based on obvious strengths, but once in a while there’s an advantage in what looks like a liability. Some examples:

- Buckley’s—Tastes awful but it works. Cassies III.
- Irving Home Furnaces—Made a virtue of age. Cassies 2002.
- Listerine—Was seen as “Margaret Thatcher” and displaced this image with the Action Hero campaign. Cassies 2002 and again in 2006.
- Pine-Sol—Far too strong. Softened this with “thorough clean.” Cassies 2002.
- Sleeman in Quebec—Took an Anglo-heritage beer in a declining category and re-vitalized it with “honest frenglish.” Cassies 2002.
- Pro•Line—Made the un-knowledgeable sports fan realize that anyone can win. Cassies 2002 and 2003.
- Crown Diamond—Appealed to men who hate painting. Cassies 2003.
- Super 7—Made a virtue of excess. Cassies 2003.
- Cirque du Soleil—showed eroticism without really showing it. Cassies 2004
- Gaz Metro—Made the (feared) gas flame the hero. Cassies 2004.
- Short Film Festival—Made a virtue of brevity. Cassies 2004.
- Irving’s Cruising to Win—Made a virtue of *small* prizes. Cassies 2005.
- Moores—Found a way to appeal to men who hate shopping. Cassies 2005.
- Juicy Fruit—Destroyed the oh-so-sweet Juicy Fruit jingle. Cassies 2005.
- Chocolate Milk. The image of chocolate milk was too child-like for teens, so the campaign was based on torturing the little creatures! Cassies 2006.
- Bloody Zit. As we said before, need we say more? Cassies 2006.
- Royal Bank. Given the image of banks, “bigness and power” could be a liability if positioned wrongly. The “First” campaign made sure it came across as a customer benefit. Cassies 2006.
- Newfoundland and Labrador made a virtue of remoteness. Cassies 2007.

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<sup>4</sup> Prairie Milk in Cassies 2004 dropped the classic pour shot because it would be a cliché to teenagers.

Separately, some famous examples not from the Cassies:

- Johnson's Baby Shampoo—They used mildness to reposition the brand against adults who wash their hair every day, and took over as market leader, despite being a blind test loser to adult shampoos.
- Heinz ketchup—They made a virtue out of the irritating s-l-o-w-n-e-s-s.
- IBM. In the early 90s IBM lost close to \$20 billion over a few short years. Apparently, the then CEO regarded IBM's size as a problem, and he had tried to decentralize operations into smaller, almost self-contained units. Then Lou Gerstner, formerly of American Express took over. He had no computer/tech experience whatsoever, but one of his first strategic decisions was to declare that IBM's size was its *strength*. The challenge was how to harness this.
- Volkswagen in the 60s. One of the iconic campaigns of all time with "Lemon," "Think Small" etc.

**18. Keeping it Simple.** We've all been to a presentation that was so complicated that nothing registered. In other words, we know that KISS works. But when it comes time to approve a creative strategy a lot of people get overtaken by the urge to cram everything in. This has to be resisted. P&G say that you have to "feel the pain of leaving things out." Trout & Ries give similar advice.

Scott Bedbury (of Nike and Starbucks, and himself a client) blames clients for the habit. He points out that it's hard to see what's wrong with adding another benefit or copy point. I can add from personal experience that the agency advice to leave things out unfortunately does not have much traction against a client who says, "let's leave it in." A pity.

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

This is where expectations have to be realistic. The more points there are, the lower the impact of each. This is where experienced research companies can help. They have evidence about the trade-offs involved.

The points so far have been at the Creative Strategy level, but the execution should also be simple—or, said better, *simple for the audience to take in*.<sup>5</sup> The danger is that we know what we are trying to say, and so may not realize that an ad is unclear. I've also seen directors complicate commercials, in an effort to make them more interesting. Overall, though, virtually all Cassies advertising is simple.

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<sup>5</sup> Simplicity is not as simple as it used to be. Direct Marketing and Websites relish multiple copy points, provided they have selling power. Also, the "visual landscape" has changed, and people raised on music videos and video games can absorb a plethora of images that leave older baby boomers bewildered. Finally, the notion of "the brand" is often more complex than it was in the days of Volvo = Safety and Tide = Clean.. That said, a piece of communication must still be easy to take in.

**25. Brand Linkage (when should the brand name appear).** How often do we hear, "I saw this great ad last night...but I can't remember what it was for." This is a brand linkage problem, and it's two-edged. Highly engaging advertising can drown out the brand identity (we used to call it "video vampire"). But advertising that sells crudely runs the risk of being physically or mentally zapped.

When you assess advertising, your mental model will affect your attitude to brand linkage. But there are no simple answers. Some executions with seemingly bullet-proof linkage don't work. Some with seemingly minimal i.d. hook the brand into the consumer's mind. The challenge is to be relevant *and* different at the same time. Relevant, by the way, is *not* the same as familiar. Something can be relevant, but be expressed in a totally new way. If "familiar" is part of your mental model you run the risk that you will only approving advertising that has been seen before.

One of the (supposed) ways to ensure brand linkage is to say/show the brand name "early and often." This idea seems to have taken hold in the 60s.<sup>6</sup> However, a great many Cassies winners do *not* reflect this, e.g. Chrysler NS Minivan, Dove, Imperial Margarine, Molson Canadian, Budweiser, Claritin, Pontiac Sunfire, Richmond Savings, Metro Toronto Zoo, Goodwill, Sunlight, becel, St-Hubert, Clearnet, Clarica, Manitoba Telecom, Lipton Chicken Noodle, i-wireless, Pro•Line, Pine-Sol, Bank of Montreal, Scotiabank, Aero, Cottonelle, Prairie Milk, Réno Dépôt, Crescendo, Harvey's, K&G Stores, Energizer Lithium, Quebec Lotto 6/49, United Way, Moores, Familiprix, Chocolate Milk, Yaris, Eterna, Monster.ca, and Holiday Inn.

Some very successful advertising puts the brand name front and centre, of course, but it's possible in today's over-hyped world that "early and often" is a turn-off for some consumers. Each situation has to be assessed on its merits. But it's time that an unthinking belief in "early and often" came to an end.

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<sup>6</sup> This belief came out of Day-After-Recall testing. The technique has since been largely discredited, but debates continue about the role of recall, recognition, and the like. See *Crossover Note 13*.