

CASSIES 2011 Cases

Brand/Case: Knorr Sidekicks “Salty” campaign

Winner: Off to a Good Start—Gold

Best Integrated—Gold

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 Tamara Gervais – Senior Account Executive
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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 CASSIES1997. The full set for CASSIES 2011 can be downloaded from the Case Library section at www.cassies.ca

- Crossover Note 2.** Brand Truths.
- Crossover Note 6.** Should the product be improved?
- Crossover Note 12.** Changing the Goalposts.
- Crossover Note 17.** Turning a liability into a strength.
- Crossover Note 20.** Emotional versus Rational.

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

Section I – BASIC INFORMATION

Business Results Period (Consecutive Months):	September 2009 – March 2010
Start of Advertising/Communication Effort:	w/o August 17 2009
Base Period as a Benchmark:	September 2008 – March 2009
Geographic Area Covered:	National (Canada)
Annual Budget Range:	\$3 - \$4 million



Section II - SITUATION ANALYSIS

a) Overall Assessment

Knorr Sidekicks had long enjoyed a frequent place in the cupboards of busy families across Canada. Our primary target, the busy Mom, loved them because they were quick and easy to prepare and most importantly because their kids loved the taste – with Sidekicks on the table dinner was stress free.

By addressing the two key drivers to purchase, convenience and taste **Crossover Note 2** Sidekicks had been able to retain a long run as the #1 player in the meal accompaniment segment, However, this was all about to change.

Uncle Ben's had introduced Bistro Express, a rice side dish that was ready to heat and serve in 2 minutes. With Sidekicks taking 20 minutes to prepare, our share was on a three year decline. To make matters worse, our target was following the health trend and Uncle Ben's (who focused solely on rice, versus our pasta, rice and potatoes) were perceived as healthier, despite the actual nutritional value of their product.

With no major innovation to announce **Crossover Note 6** we set our sights on health perceptions, and set out on a 5-year plan to reduce the sodium levels in the 22 top selling SKUs by 25 percent. This was done gradually and silently, as it was critical to be able to promise consumers that the taste they had always loved has not been sacrificed.

In Summer 2009, the brand was finally ready to launch the lower sodium news. But we decided that a functional message would not create the level of consumer engagement needed to turn the business around. A drastically different approach was needed.

b) Resulting Business Objectives

To reverse the brands' share decline and take back the #1 share position. Specifically:

1. Increase dollar share by 1.3 points
2. Improve brand perception as measured by Millward Brown Brand Health Check 2010 – “Combines good taste and nutrition” by 5 points
3. Increase Knorr Sidekicks household penetration by 1.5 points

Section III – STRATEGIC THINKING

a) Analysis and Insight

We knew what drove the busy Mom to Sidekicks was the fact that they were fast, easy and delicious. But what was keeping them away? BASES research confirmed that the #1 barrier was sodium/salt levels.

This would be a challenge. We couldn't simply tout our health news because of the assumed taste trade-off. And while sodium had become a hot topic in the media, consumers had become somewhat de-sensitized to the message. Then came our insight.

It wasn't that they didn't care. It was that they had been hearing the message over and over in a functional almost scientific way. We needed to make sodium reduction meaningful on an emotional level—in a way that had never been seen before. [Crossover Note 20](#).

b) Communication Strategy

The emotional route could take us down many roads. The expected would be to tell the story from the perspective of the loving caring Mom, or through the eyes of happy healthy children – showing what cutting back on sodium could do. However, this had become almost cliché. In addition, past qualitative research had confirmed that while consumers didn't entirely reject this approach, it certainly would not provide the level of breakthrough required to turn around a declining brand.

What was required was a breakthrough that was so emotionally motivating that it would turn a key barrier into a key driver. [Crossover Note 17](#). So, we decided to tell our story through the eyes of someone entirely unexpected, someone who was extremely emotional about what life would be like...with less salt.

Section IV – KEY EXECUTIONAL ELEMENTS

a) Media Used

The campaign consisted of two waves of support. Wave One (Q3/Q4 2009) included TV, Print, Digital and In-Store. Wave Two launched in Q1 2010 and included TV, Print, Promotion, In-Store and Social Media.

b) Creative Discussion

Enter Salty, a lovable but dejected little saltshaker after Knorr Sidekicks severely reduced his role in the family. Sure Moms were happy about the 25% less sodium news, but what about his feelings? Had no one thought about how he would take the news? **Crossover Note 12.**

The benefit of telling the story through Salty's eyes was the immediate emotional link between the brand and the audience. This could then be carried through multiple channels including TV, Print, Direct Mail, Social Media and In-Store. The message was simple and powerful: now that Sidekicks has found a way to reduce sodium without sacrificing taste, it's good news for you and your family, bad news for salt.

TV

Consumers meet Salty as he discovers the 25% less sodium news. Realizing he's no longer wanted, he trudges out into a dark and stormy night, as Michael Bolton's "How Am I Supposed to Live Without You" plays. The V/O explains that Sidekicks has reduced the sodium by 25% with the same great taste. "It's something everyone will appreciate...well almost everyone". And with this, Salty lowers his head and cries salty tears.



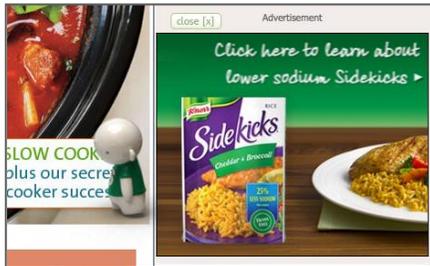
Print

Two executions ran simultaneously to support the rice and pasta SKUs, again with the message "The great taste you love with 25% less sodium. Almost everyone's happy about it". In both ads we see a distraught Salty being consoled by his trusted sidekick Pep as he stands next to a plate of Knorr Sidekicks.



Digital (Banners and Website)

Online rich media banners feature Salty who at first sight of the 25% less sodium news dejectedly walks out of frame and across website editorial. Viewers are then invited to view the recipes Salty is no longer a part of. On Sidekicks.ca viewers see Salty, alone in the cupboard, passing the time surrounded by his old Sidekicks family. Here visitors can view a slideshow of Salty’s fondest Sidekicks memories, find new recipe ideas based on some of Salty’s former favourites, and learn more about sodium reduction in the Sodium 101 section.



Voken banner ad



Lower



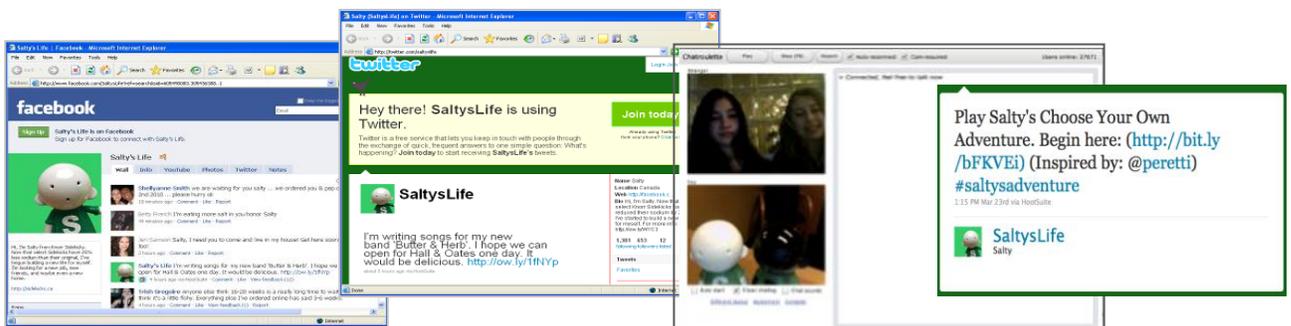
Direct Mail

This provided a teaser about the upcoming campaign, introduced Salty to medium Sidekicks users, and enticed families to try the new SKUs by using an enclosed coupon (buy one package of lower sodium Sidekicks and get a pack of Sidekicks FREE). It also included an easy to follow recipe – perfect for busy Moms.



Social Media

Salty must pick up the pieces - find a new job, new friends.. He gets a [Twitter profile](#), a [Facebook profile](#), and once in awhile, he pops up on *Chatroulette*. Through these and similar sites he engaged fans and told them what he was up to each day.



On-line Videos

We developed three online videos to show how Salty was faring with his new life. In one he tries his luck at online dating, in another he dons a pepper mask in the hopes of once again being used and loved, and in the last he has an unfortunate accident in a diner. The close of each video brings the story back to the 25 percent less sodium message, in addition to supporting a Shaker giveaway promotion.



'Dating'



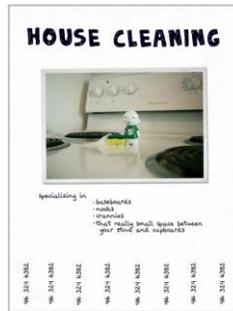
'Mask'



'Neck Brace'

Wild Postings

Offline channels followed Salty's job search in Toronto and Vancouver, from coffee shops to grocery store message boards. The voicemail recording would provide options to go online to find out how to take Salty and Pep home or hear the sound of Salty's tears.



Promotion

In February 2010, with awareness and buzz well underway, we launched "Buy 3 Sidekicks to get a free Salt and Pepper shaker". This was supported through TV (tags placed on 30s & 15s), through the now viral Salty online videos, third page print, various social media channels and in-store.



Salt & Pep Gift with purchase



TV spot with Promo Tag

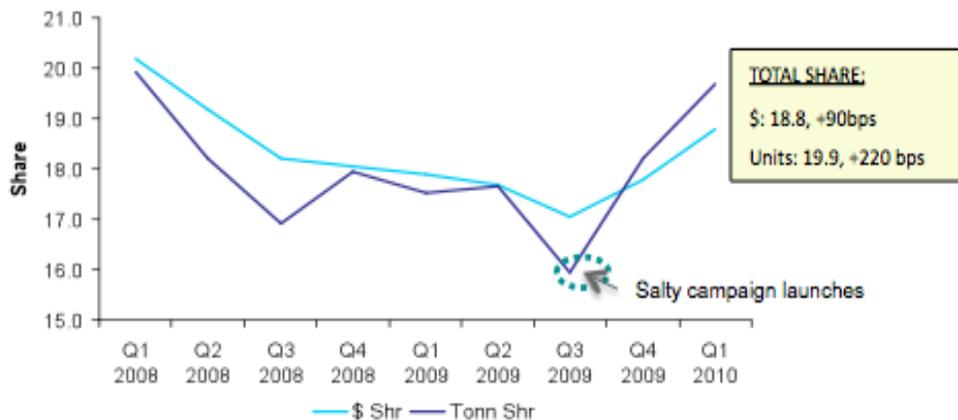


Online Video with Promo Tag

Section V — BUSINESS RESULTS

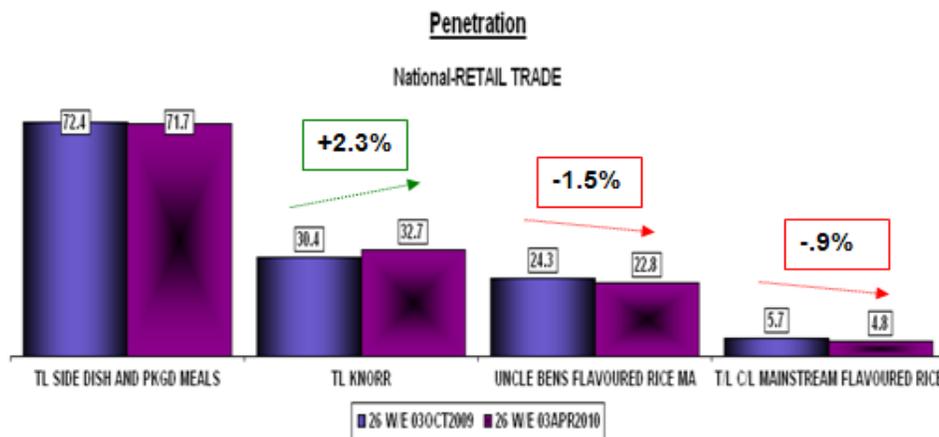
As consumer adoration for Salty grew, so did their appetite for lower sodium Sidekicks. All objectives were exceeded with every media channel achieving success.

- The sales objective was to increase \$ share by 1.3 pts. This target was surpassed as Knorr achieved a lift of 2.0 shr pts during Wave Two of the campaign. In a nearly \$400M category, this is very significant growth.



AC Nielsen Workstation Plus GROC + DR + MM Period Ending March 13, 2010

- During Q1 2010, the campaign drove Sidekicks to the highest \$ volume (by quarter) the brand had witnessed in 3 years. Dollar volume grew by +7% vs. Q1 2009.
- Within 3 months of the campaign launch, dollar sales of the lower sodium SKUs had increased by +6% with unit sales up +11% vs. YA. After 6 months dollar sales had grown by +18% with unit sales up by +30%.
- Household penetration increased by 2.3 points, well exceeding the business objective of 1.5 points. Most notably, this increase was achieved at the expense of Uncle Ben's and Control Label whose penetration had declined by 1.5 and 0.9 points respectively during the same period.



AC Nielsen Workstation Plus TL Sidedish & Packaged Meals L26W period Ending April 26, 2010

Section VI — CAUSE AND EFFECT BETWEEN ADVERTISING AND RESULTS

a) General Discussion

To evaluate the impact the campaign had on the brand's success it is important to review the results from several points of view:

- Millward Brown Brand Health Check 2010, PreView testing and post ad tracking
- Consumer engagement and interaction with the campaign
- National sales and dollar share growth impact from advertising support
- National news coverage and industry recognition

Millward Brown PreView Quantitative testing

Before launching the campaign, quantitative ad testing confirmed we had a campaign with extremely strong breakthrough potential. Action standards for enjoyment, engagement, persuasion and relevance all fell within the top 1% - 10% of all ads ever tested.

Millward Brown Ad Tracking

The campaign far exceeded norms for ad recognition, enjoyment, relevance, and motivation. Perhaps one of the most important measures was the assurance of 'same great taste' - 95% of consumer agreed with this statement***.

		CAMPAIGN SCORE	CDN TV NORM	CDN CAMPAIGNS NORM	
		%	%	%	
	BASE: TOTAL	579	217 ads	**20 campaigns	
	Ad Recognition	75	42	42	
	BASE:	437	186 ads	**19 campaigns	
Branding	Branded Recognition	37	20	*	
Engagement	Enjoyed watching	85	55	67	
	Wear Out	14	26	21	
	Relevance	85	36	66	
	Learned something new	81	26	61	
Brand Association (Communication)	Difficult to understand	11	10	17	
	Ad suggests this brand of side dish has flavours with 25% less sodium	96	75	91	
	Ad suggests this brand of side dish still has the same great taste	95	68	81	
Motivation	More likely to use the brand	68	35	45	
			Above Average	Average	Below Average

***Millward Brown Knorr Sides Brand Health Check March 2010

National Ad Recognition

All mass channels far exceeded industry norms. It was clear the campaign was being noticed and heard.

	Knorr (%)	Cdn. Norm (%)
TV	75	42
Print	26	14
Online	21	6

Millward Brown Knorr Sides Brand Health Check, March 2010

Changing Brand Perceptions

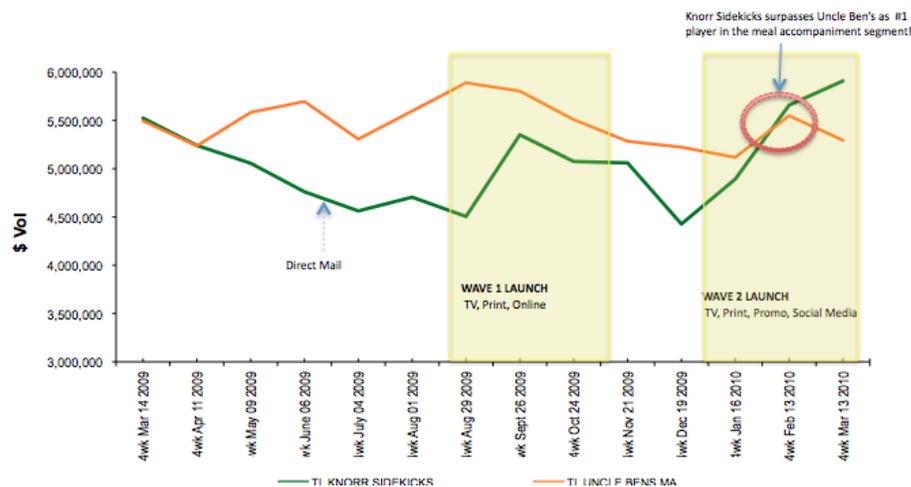
Brand perception witnessed a 8 point increase as measured by the Millward Brown statement “Combines good taste and nutrition”. (2008: -7 vs. 2009: +1). The increase exceeded the objective of +5 pts.

Direct Mail – Driving Purchase In-Store

The Direct Mail piece achieved a coupon redemption rate of 3.38%, well exceeding the target of 2%.

Sales Growth Correlating with Ad Effort

Following the campaign launch, dollar volume increased in Wave One, fell slightly when the campaign went black, and climbed steadily once Wave Two started in Jan. 2010. In fact, as noted earlier, the 7% increase in Wave Q1 2010 took the brand to its highest dollar volume in three years. It also took over the #1 position in the meal accompaniment segment from Uncle Ben’s.



AC Nielsen Workstation + GROC + DRUG + MM Period Ending March 13, 2010, Meal Accompaniments

Consumer Success & Engagement

- 500% increase in consumer traffic to Sidekicks.ca, the highest in the brand's history
- Over 6500 fans on Salty's Facebook site, 70,000 + consumer generated site fans
- 150+ consumer photo and home movie uploads
- Salty became a star with 450,000+ YouTube views, and 1,140+ followers on Twitter

Talk Value - Media Coverage and Industry Recognition

- Featured on top industry sites including Strategy Online, Advertising Age, Creativity Online (3x), Campaign, Best Ads on TV, Communication Arts, and Marketing Magazine. Articles also appeared in the National Post, Globe & Mail, with a segment on CBC National News
- Media coverage extended to Russia, Japan, Germany, China, France and beyond.

Promotion – “Buy 3 Sidekicks get a free Salt and Pepper Shaker”

- Over 900+ Salty & Pep inquiries to the Unilever call centre
- Within 25 days all 25,000 Shakers were SOLD OUT!
- Fans took to eBay where “Limited Edition” Shakers were going for \$200
- 30,000 Shakers sold meant 90,000 units of Sidekicks flying off the shelf

b) Excluding Other Factors

Ad spend: This was below the category leaders during the campaign period

Pricing: Side Dishes is a heavily promoted category that typically sees high levels of pricing promotion during Q1. While advertising was the primary driver of Knorr's success, the combination of steady pricing activity coupled with the highly effective communication campaign helped drive Knorr's sales lifts.

Distribution Changes: No new distribution or geographic coverage increases occurred during the campaign period.

Promotional Activity: Minus the Shaker promotion, which was directly tied to the campaign, no unusual promotional activity ran during the campaign period.

In summary, we created a campaign well worth its salt, even if it had been reduced by 25%.

END