

CASSIES 2011 Cases

Brand/Case: Rickard's Pint of Delicious

Winner: Off to a Good Start—Silver

Client Credits: Rickard's

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Agency Credits: TAXI Canada

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 Notch – Colourist/Transfer
 Pirate Toronto – Audio Post Facility
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 58ninety – Digital Strategy
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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 1.** What a Brand Stands For.
- Crossover Note 2.** Brand Truths.
- Crossover Note 14.** Refreshing a continuing campaign.

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 in Consecutive Months: December 2009 – May 2010
Start of Advertising/Communication Effort: December 14, 2009
Base Period as a Benchmark: December 2008 – May 2009

Geographic Area Covered: National, E/F

Annual Budget Range: Over \$5 million

Section II – SITUATION ANALYSIS

a) Overall Assessment

Rickard's competes in the domestic super-premium segment of the market. Its most identifiable variant, Rickard's Red, was first launched in Vancouver in the early 1980s, and Rickard's now offers a series of different variants.

In the years following the introduction of the breakthrough "Pint of Glory" campaign in 2005, Rickard's Red enjoyed considerable success in sales growth and brand metrics. The campaign emphasized pub credentials and heralded the beer as one to be revered. Ongoing tracking showed that Rickard's was distinctive and of good quality. Having introduced Rickard's as a better beer, we were now faced with providing the proof.

Crossover Note 14.

By 2008, Rickard's Red was slowing down. While Rickard's still maintained "red" leadership, stiff competition from Alexander Keith's new challenger, Red Amber Ale, had led to a slowly eroding share in certain markets.

While the successful introduction and launch of Rickard's White in that same year created momentum, research suggested that the brand's franchise was getting fragmented according to variant preference. Moreover, many drinkers still exclusively associated the Rickard's name with "Red," though in addition to White, Rickard's had experimented with other variants over the years, including Pale Ale, Gold, and Honey Brown.

A new variant on the horizon reinforced the pressing need to unify the trademark and re-energize the brand. Moving forward, the family would include the historic Red, the unfiltered White, and the soon-to-be-introduced Dark. This meant that we had to identify a common thread uniting the brand at the trademark and product level. **Crossover Note 1.**

b) Resulting Business Objectives

- Position the Rickard's family in a manner that easily translates at the variant level
- Stabilize the declining sales of Rickard's Red
- Launch Rickard's Dark
- Grow Rickard's overall sales volume and market share

Section III — STRATEGIC THINKING

a) Analysis and Insight

One thing was clear going in: our target would be those drinkers who consider drinking beer a pleasure in and of itself. That said, establishing how to communicate with them required instinct and research.

We needed to identify an insight that resonated and soon confirmed that by choosing Rickard's our drinkers felt that they were exerting "beer maturity." They also responded well to stimuli that emphasized beer appreciation. This created a challenge, however. We would need to strike a balance between beer maturity and appreciation, and not coming across as snobby or sophisticated. After all, Rickard's has always been approachable.

Following up on approachability, concept testing hinted at a prominent role for the Rickard's bartender. We saw promising results when he was depicted more as a coach or mentor than as a judge. This meant we could leverage his personality – credible, knowledgeable, and approachable – to embody the character of the brand.

Finally, a conclusion emerged that might seem obvious in retrospect but, nonetheless, was critical to our strategic thinking. For drinkers, and particularly those habitually consuming mainstream beer, the statement "*Rickard's is flavourful*" was a truth.

Crossover Note 2.

We knew where our focus had to be. But we had a real dilemma.

There was no real language out there to describe a great-tasting flavourful beer. Most beer drinkers' lexicons were limited to what marketers had been bombarding them with ad nauseam for years: "cold," "crisp," "clean," "smooth," etc. What's more, we'd also learned that most mainstream consumers don't care to have an intimate knowledge of ingredients. This only had an impact if it was linked to a clear product benefit (for example, hint of citrus equals refreshing beer) and if it was talked about in a way that sparked imagination.

So flavour was at the heart of our brand. But we needed a vocabulary to represent that to a national mainstream audience.

b) Communication Strategy

While "flavourful beer" was not necessarily exclusive to Rickard's, no other brand was emphasizing that distinction on a national level to mainstream drinkers. In all communications, one message needed to cut through – Rickard's is delicious.

The creative expression also needed to be easily leveraged in the dialogue-driven arena of social media.

Section IV — KEY EXECUTIONAL ELEMENTS

a) Media Used

This reflected a balance of traditional and new media. It included TV in 30-second and 15-second formats, and an online presence, including IAB standard banners, Facebook, and YouTube. Spending was roughly 75% broadcast and 25% digital.

b) Creative Discussion

Rickard's "Pint of Delicious" 30-second TV



The ad quickly established the creative treatment that would transcend all campaign elements. Three drinkers at the end of the bar, approachable and friendly, reinforce the patron's choice of Rickard's with hyperbolic metaphors emphasizing the deliciousness of the beer, only to be trumped by the slick delivery of the bartender: What does Rickard's taste like? "Take the best day of your life and put it in your mouth."

Outtakes



Outtakes from the shoot and posted to YouTube extended the messaging. Drinkers searching for the TV ad online would discover these shorts, showing entertaining content that didn't make it into the broadcast spots.

Rickards.ca – “Brew Your Own TV Ad”



A banner campaign challenged drinkers to click through and “brew” their own version of the TV ad at Rickards.ca. Drinkers would input their own metaphors into the three fields on the home page and, using text-to-voice technology, generate a version of the “Pint of Delicious” TV spot, with the talent from the ad delivering their lines. Share functionality allowed the spot to be shared with others.

Rickard’s Facebook Fan Page



Rickard’s Facebook Fan Page encouraged users to share their own metaphors through wall postings. In the example above, we see a message from fan Jay Ebel: “My wife made me choose between Rickard’s White and her ... I haven’t seen her for years.”

Rickard’s Dark 15-second TV



We knew from research that the bartender could credibly carry our message, so 15-second TV spots in support of the variants didn’t need the characters at the end of the bar. But a new launch still needed some edge to make it memorable: What does Rickard’s Dark taste like? “It’s like getting punched in the mouth with flavour.”

Rickard's Dark Roulette Banner



Reinforcing the metaphor and adding some dimension to the Rickard's Dark launch, Rickard's "Roulette" encouraged drinkers to pull the tap like a slot machine. Each pull generated a new metaphor. Rickard's Dark: "It's like being" ... "entranced" ... "in a disco" ... "by a ghost writer" ... "with flavour."

Rickard's White 15-second TV



What's the refreshing hint of citrus in a Rickard's White like? "It's like one of those planetarium laser light shows ... in your mouth."

c) Media Discussion

The campaign launched nationally with a 12-week flight on December 15, 2009, with 30-second TV spots, including one developed for the French market. 15-second spots for Rickard's Dark and Rickard's White rolled out nationally for 8-week flights in mid-March 2010 and early June 2010 respectively.

Working with TAXI, Molson's digital AOR 58Ninety helped with online and social media initiatives for the campaign. In addition to posting the 30-second spots to the Rickard's YouTube channel, we uploaded three outtakes in mid-February 2010. Search engine optimization also ensured that viewers would find the spots quickly, and discover the other content.

As noted, online banner ads encouraged users to "Brew Your Own TV Ad." Similarly, Rickard's Facebook Fan Page allowed people to post their own Rickard's metaphors for their friends to see.

Finally, the launch of Rickard's Dark on TV was accompanied online by a banner campaign that used a cleverly executed metaphor generator.

Section V — BUSINESS RESULTS

1) Rickard's Trademark Volume Growth

	Total
Sales Volume, December 2008 – May 2009 (in hectolitres)	138,775
Sales Volume, December 2009 – May 2010 (in hectolitres)	155,428
Growth (VYA)	12.0%

In the six months following the campaign launch, the Rickard's trademark enjoyed 12% volume growth VYA. The biggest increase came in the first quarter of 2010, with media support behind the "Pint of Delicious" 30-second TV spot reaching 1,200 GRP by March.

2) Rickard's Red Volume Growth Comparison

	Total
Sales Volume, December 2008 – May 2009 (in hectolitres)	85,942
Sales Volume, December 2009 – May 2010 (in hectolitres)	91,928
Growth (VYA)	7.0%

As 2009 neared a close, Rickard's Red was hovering around a 7% decline VYA on the year. The "Pint of Delicious" campaign turned this around. In addition to a 17.1% spike (VYA) in February when media weight behind the 30-second TV spot reached 1,000 GRPs, volume for the first six months of the campaign was up 7.0% VYA. This brought sales back to levels not seen since 2008.

3) Total Canadian Beer Market Volume Growth

	Total
Sales Volume, December 2008 – May 2009 (in hectolitres)	10,353,705
Sales Volume, December 2009 – May 2010 (in hectolitres)	10,459,436
Growth (VYA)	1.0%

Rickard's performance far outpaced the overall market.

4) 3-Month Rolling Share Comparison

	December	January	February
3-Month Rolling Share: December 2008 – February 2009	1.37%	1.28%	1.28%
3-Month Rolling Share: December 2009 – February 2010	1.44%	1.49%	1.55%

Rickard's three-month rolling share in December 2008 was 1.37%, and it declined in the months that followed, dropping to 1.28% by February 2009. In contrast, during the campaign, share took off in the opposite direction, increasing to 1.55%.

Section VI —CAUSE & EFFECT BETWEEN ADVERTISING AND RESULTS

a) General Discussion

The advertising effort corresponded directly with the sales volume growth that we saw in the Business Results section. Additional sales growth in the Spring continued with the launch of the Rickard's Dark 15-second TV spot and its online banner campaign. In fact, in the three months following the launch of the TV spot, Dark was tracking over 50% above forecast nationally and contributing 11% of Rickard's total volume.

Two additional measures help confirm that message was reaching drinkers and influencing their behaviour:

Success in advertised vs. non-advertised markets

Tracking results in April demonstrated a greater relative top of mind awareness, unaided awareness and purchase intent following the "Pint of Delicious" TV portion of the campaign in markets where drinkers saw the advertising. A comparison during February, when sales volume increases were greatest, reinforces this conclusion:

	Non-TV Advertised Markets: February 2010	TV Advertised Markets: February 2010
Top of Mind Awareness	1%	3%
Total Unaided Awareness	18%	26%
Rickard's Red Purchase Intent	18%	26%
Rickard's White Purchase Intent	12%	17%
Rickard's Dark Purchase Intent	3%	5%

Key messaging got through to drinkers

Tracking results in April confirmed key messaging was breaking through:

Agree with	Male	LDA-29	Norm
I enjoyed watching it a lot	79%	80%	67%
It contained different information	58%	50%	40%
It made the brand seem more appealing	79%	89%	65%
It made me more likely to drink the brand	56%	57%	51%
It's the sort of ad I would talk about with my friends	61%	52%	31%

Strongly gave me the impression	Male	LDA-29	Norm
That Rickard's is delicious	81%	83%	71%

b) Excluding Other Factors

- **Spending Levels** – Spending did not reflect additional investment. Upfront media investment for the new TV campaign reflected typical launch weights (1,200 GRP); and the overall media spend in the first half of 2010 was almost identical to that invested in 2009.
- **Pricing** – Rickard's is offered at a price just above mainstream premium beers. Price levels were maintained during the campaign and did not reflect a departure from pricing leading up to the launch. Rickard's Dark was introduced at the same price as other variant offerings in the trademark. For example, in Ontario the Rickard's Taster's 12-pack, a 12-pack of Rickard's White, and a 12-pack of Rickard's Dark are all priced at \$22.95.
- **Distribution Changes** – There were no changes in distribution strategy during the course of the campaign.
- **Unusual Promotional Activity** – There were no limited time offers during the course of the campaign.
- **Other Potential Causes** – The launch of Rickard's Dark could be argued to have helped generate new interest in the brand during the business results period. However, this should be considered as part of our overall effort. The campaign was intended to communicate Rickard's as a family of delicious, flavourful variants, and the inclusion and introduction of Rickard's Dark during the course of the campaign helped reinforce the overall message we were hoping to get across.

END