

Cassies 2005 Cases

Brand: Natural Selection - Butter

Winner: Off To A Good Start—Gold

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Crossover Notes: All winning cases contain lessons that cross over from one case to another. The notes for this case are as follows, and are attached. The full set can be downloaded from the Case Library section at www.cassies.ca

- Crossover Note 1. What a Brand Stand For.
- Crossover Note 2. Brand Truths.
- Crossover Note 6. Should the product be improved?
- Crossover Note 11. The Eureka Insight.
- Crossover Note 18. Keeping it Simple.
- Crossover Note 19. Great minds think alike.

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): e.g. October 2004 – April 2005.

Start of Advertising/Communication Effort: October 2004.

Base Period for Comparison: October 2003 – April 2004.

Butter, already threatened by the price gap with margarine, was confronted by a new challenge. This was the rising health consciousness of Canadians, and a corresponding increase in market share for margarines positioned on health, for example Becel.

We believed that butter should continue to communicate its strengths of superior taste and naturalness, but how was it to confront the health issue, given restrictions on direct claims, and budget constraints?

The objective was to maintain sales in this difficult environment. Butter sales actually increased by 4% year over year for October 2004 – December 2004. They then held at +4% for January 2005 – April 2005, despite an 11% price increase for this period.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

The Dairy Farmers of Canada have promoted butter for over thirty years. Margarine, meanwhile, was introduced in the 1950s. It was said to taste like butter, and be easily spreadable, at a much lower price. Today, two-thirds of Canadians say they use butter *and* margarine, and margarine has captured two-thirds of the basic spreads market.

Nonetheless, margarine is not without its weaknesses. Canadians say they don't eat more margarine because it contains artificial ingredients. The main image gaps in favour of butter are that it is natural: it improves the taste of food, and it tastes good.

Some margarine manufacturers have refined their product and have introduced health margarines. **Crossover Note 6.** Becel, for example, is the market leader, and has a completely integrated marketing program focusing on health claims.

Given the health concerns of Canadians, it is not surprising that the health-positioned margarines have been gaining share. This was a threat to butter.

STRATEGY & INSIGHT

Any successful strategy for butter would have to take into consideration three key perceptions: natural, great tasting and healthy. **Crossover Note 1.**

Given that butter and margarine are both to be found in most fridges, the challenge was not to increase consumption of spreads, but to convince Canadians to choose butter over margarine. This, despite the fact that butter is more expensive, and runs neck and neck with margarine in terms of health perceptions.

What would be the single most motivating message?

Butter's great taste is a huge asset, but if that were the focus how could we address naturalness and health? We could not ignore health, but it was not obvious how to approach it, given that margarine could (and does) make compelling health claims. Furthermore, the DFC had ruled out margarine-bashing.

The insight came from exploring the greatest gap in perception versus margarine—the fact that butter is natural. Digging into the research, we found that when consumers are asked what benefits butter offers as a result of being natural, by far the number one answer is that it's healthier. **Crossover Notes 2, 11, and 19.** [See Eggs in Cassies 1999.]

Bingo! If something was more natural, it was also likely more healthy. By focusing on butter's naturalness, we could strongly suggest healthiness, and imply that its alternative was more artificial. And we would find a way to do this without margarine-bashing.

The target was adults 25-54, with a skew to women, since they are the principal grocery shoppers in most Canadian households. We needed high awareness for a limited budget, and selected billboards. We also added other innovations, as discussed below.

EXECUTION

With “natural” and “great tasting” we had two pillars of an ownable proposition—but that still had to be turned into a single-minded thought. This came in the idea of *Natural Selection*, which launched October 2004. The line alludes to Charles Darwin and is an acknowledgement that consumers have a choice (“selection”) that is natural both in the sense of 1) from nature and 2) the obviously correct choice.

To reinforce the message, the foods are fresh and natural, and they are pursuing a tasty rosette of butter: like to like, what is natural prefers what is natural. The butter is a rosette (rather than a block, as in previous campaigns) to enhance taste appeal, and minimize health concerns about cholesterol or fat. The result was a visually stunning campaign that could be decoded in a few seconds, a must for out-of-home. **Crossover Note 18.**

There were four executions. Bread, beets, asparagus and green beans were transformed into predators out to capture their preferred prey.





We used newspapers and the Internet to deliver information, directing Canadians to a web-site which told them about butter's nutritional virtues. All of the visuals were rotated in print, and ran in major markets. Web advertising ran on websites, targeting women in the chosen demographic.

The coup de grâce then came in-store, through specially designed advertising on cart handles, a brand new opportunity. The visuals were the same as the overall campaign, as a concise reminder that butter (*not margarine*) is the natural choice.



BUSINESS RESULTS

The campaign generated extremely positive results, both from a marketing and communication standpoint. ACNielsen Market Tracking reveals that:

- From October 2004 – December 2004 butter retail purchases increased by 4% year over year (vs. an objective to maintain sales in declining spreads category).
- For January 2005 – April 2005, butter sales were still at +4% year over year, despite an 11% price increase across the country.

	1990	Jan 04 – Sept 04	Oct 04 – Dec 04	Jan 05 – Mar 05
Pounds per capita	7.9	6.3	6.6	6.6
% vs. yr ago	na	0%	+4%	+4%
Average cost/pound	na	3.49	3.50	3.89
% vs. yr ago	na	+3%	+3%	+11%

Advertising tracking study by Research Management Group gave the following for the campaign:

- 59% advertising recall (vs. 40% norm for this level of GRPs)
- Appreciation from 75% to 88% for the different executions (vs. 70% norm)
- Low confusion (13% vs. 20% norm)
- Reminded you to consume butter more often (60% vs. 55% norm)
- Unique ads that really stand out (81% vs. 65% norm)
- Believable (65% vs. 55% norm)
- Different from other ads you've seen for butter (87% vs. 40% norm)

The campaign also generated great talk value in the media. It was a finalist for the IMP (International Milk Promotions) Trophy in Dublin, Ireland, and won the “Best of Show” Award from the Quebec Association of Magazine Publishers.

CAUSE & EFFECT BETWEEN ADVERTISING AND RESULTS

There were no significant changes in marketing variables (promotions, media spend, etc.) year over year. The only significant change was the price increase starting in January 2005, and this worked against us. Therefore, it is clear that advertising was the key element in lifting sales.

End of Case. Crossover Notes follow.

INTRODUCTION TO CROSSOVER NOTES — CASSIES 2005

[Butter Version]

Crossover Notes have been going for several years, and now run to 28 pages.

We used to attach a full set to all cases, but to save a few trees, we now include only the Notes particular to any case.

The idea of Crossover Notes occurred to me while I was editing Cassies 1997.

I was a consultant by then. Before that I had reached the category manager level at P&G (what they quaintly called the Associate Advertising Manager). I had then clambered up the ladder at O&M, eventually becoming President and later Vice Chairman—both in Toronto. P&G and O&M were both passionate about “lessons learned,” and so was I. In those days (it seems hard to believe now) we felt rushed off our feet. But we did have time to study if campaigns were working or not, and come to conclusions about why.

There are lessons, like gold dust, in all the Cassies cases. So in 1997 I decided to extract them. This started with bite-sized footnotes about lessons that “cross over” from one case to another. And the idea kept growing. It is still anchored to winning cases, but I also draw on other thinking for more complex issues.

You can use Crossover Notes in two ways. Although they didn’t start out 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 over 150 published cases. They’re a growing body of experience. I hope I’ve helped pass some of the learning on.

David Rutherford

Toronto: December 2005.

For advice on brand-building see *Excellence in Brand Communication*—authored by leading Canadians from across the marketing and advertising spectrum.

It is published by the ICA. See www.ica.adbeast.com.

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The Notes for this case are marked ✓ and come next.

BUTTER. CROSSOVER NOTES. CASSIES 2005.

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 what is the essence of this, or the abiding truth of that.

But 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 on 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.¹ 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 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.²

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, "what the brand stands for" is critical.

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

² How do you do this, and evolve? See *Excellence in Brand Communication*: 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 is to say the obvious as loudly and 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 it 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*.”³

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 detergent in exchange. They adamantly refused, delivering off-the-cuff endorsements that no copywriter could ever have come up with. 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](#).

- 6. Should the product be improved?** Some years ago it was an axiom that your product, functionally, had to have an advantage over competitors. In packaged goods, it was considered foolish to launch a new brand unless it was a blind test winner over its major competitor—ideally overall, and at least for a desirable benefit.⁴

That thinking has shifted, and it’s commonly said today that it’s impossible to sustain a functional advantage; that competition can match you in a matter of weeks or months, or even days with some technological products. This has had a paradoxical effect. Some people are almost frenzied in their desire to keep their product (or service) improving—fearing that if they don’t, they will be left behind. Others go into a slipstream mode—letting others face the headwinds, then matching what they do.

John Philip Jones (the Professor of Communication at Syracuse University) is vocal on this, saying that we do *not* live in a parity world—that imitators may try to match the innovators, but they often don’t quite succeed. His view (and I share it) is that it is dangerously complacent to assume that functional parity is the way of the world.

Another danger is the belief that “marketing” can compensate for a weak product. This led to the debacle a decade or two ago when North America systematically under-invested in product. The Japanese, and later the Europeans and others, did exactly the opposite—and carved out the market shares we see today.

³ P&G defined “what the brand stands for” by a document they called The Creative Strategy. In those days, if anyone even dreamt that the Tide Creative Strategy should include whitening, brightening etc. it was seen as an offence against all that was holy.

⁴ There was still the “pre-emptive” possibility i.e. staking out a convincing claim for a parity benefit before anyone else did. But, in general, having a product edge was seen as important

There's no question that the cost to upgrade can be daunting. Nevertheless, many cases reflect the investment. For example:

- Listerine in Quebec in Cassies II, with an improved taste.
- Chrysler in Cassies III, with the NS Minivan.
- Pontiac Sunfire in Cassies III.
- St Hubert in Cassies 99, upgrading their entire operation.
- Sunlight in Cassies 99, with improved cleaning.
- Home Furnace in Cassies 2002.
- Lipton Sidekicks in Cassies 2002.
- Irving Mainway Coffee and Source Yogurt in Cassies 2003.
- MINI in Cassies 2003.
- Motrin in Cassies 2003, adding stronger skus.
- VodKice in Cassies 2003, remodelling the Boomerang portfolio.
- Cirque du Soleil in Cassies 2004, by adding Zumanity to their portfolio.
- Kit Kat in Cassies 2004, keeping Original the same, but launching Chunky.
- Toyota Sienna in Cassies 2004, with multiple upgrades.
- Coricidin II in Cassies 2005 (Re-launching a new version, after the original brand had been withdrawn)
- Penaten, Hubba Bubba, Stouffer's Bistro, and Juicy Fruit, all launching line extensions in Cassies 2005.

Still others achieve their gains with no change—though the existing product is in all cases good, and sometimes better than the competition. These cases include:

- Crispy Crunch and Pepsi Quebec in Cassies I.
- Oh Henry! in Cassies II.
- Buckley's, Dove, and Philadelphia Cream Cheese in Cassies III.
- Eggs, becel, and Wonderbread in Cassies 99.
- Kraft Dinner and Lipton Chicken Noodle in Cassies 2001.
- Campbell's, Diet Pepsi, Listerine, and Pro•Line in Cassies 2002.
- All the major beer winners over the years.
- Aero, Dodge SX 2.0, Familiprix, Super 7, in Cassies 2003.
- Cottonelle and Milk in Cassies 2004.
- Crescendo, Jergens Ultra Care, Whiskas, Twix, Energizer Lithium, Moores, Familiprix in Cassies 2005.

Technology cases usually have improvements. Services (e.g. Desjardins, Gaz Metro, Réno Dépôt in 2004) usually improve as part of the "total brand experience." Some cases (e.g. Clearnet in 2001 and Lipton Sidekicks in Cassies 2002) say that if your functional advantage is going to be matched, you'd better develop an advantage through brand personality/character/equity. There is no cookie-cutter answer. Each situation has to be assessed on its merits.

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

- Oh Henry! None of the gut-fillers had tried to own hunger, even though it was the high ground for the category. Cassies II. See also *Crossover Note 7*.
- Buckley's. Rather than side-step their bad taste, Buckley's relished it. Cassies III.
- Chrysler. Minivans were "my most expensive household appliance." Even so, *emotion* was the key to an immensely successful launch. Cassies III.
- Philadelphia Cream Cheese. In research, people often do not own up to what they really want, which in this case was "permission to indulge." Cassies III.
- Richmond Savings. Almost everyone hated banks, but it still took insight to turn this into the "Humungous Bank." Cassies III.
- Eggs are natural, but in word-association tests, consumers did not say so. (See *12. Changing the Goalposts*.) The farmer campaign 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. They found a way to be youthful without being too young in the "forever young" campaign.
- Listerine in Cassies 2002: healthy gums, after a century talking about bad breath.
- Pro•Line in Cassies 2002: Appealed to non-experts with "Anyone can win."
- Aero. Saw the power of "melting" in Cassies 2003.
- Crown Diamond. Used the fact that men hate to paint in Cassies 2003.
- Super 7. Ignored the political correctness of being tasteful. Cassies 2003.
- Cottonelle. Talked to women as women, not as "family." Cassies 2004.
- Quebec Milk. Saw the blindingly obvious. That just asking people to drink more milk might cause it. Cassies 2004.
- Toyota Sienna. Realized that the answer lay not in what minivan buyers do, but 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.
- Quebec Lotto 6/49. If 6/49 winners are so generous, be nice to them.
- United Way saw power in the Hand icon.
- Leucan realized that there is still hope, despite childhood cancer.
- CIBC Run for the Cure saw the power in the Pinnie idea.
- Juicy Fruit saw how to build a new image by (almost literally) destroying the old one.
- Quebec Milk saw power in the obvious—if one glass is good, two are better.
- Plus virtually all the cases in *Crossover Note 10*.

18. Keeping it Simple. We've all been to a presentation that was so complicated that nothing registered. In other words, we know from real life that KISS works. But when it comes time to approve a creative strategy we 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. But it's also hard for an agency to say "we should leave it out" when the client says, "let's leave it in."

There's a sub-set of this 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.

Something has to give—and 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*.⁵ 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.

19. Great minds think alike. Strong brands always differentiate themselves. That said, the underlying thinking does not necessarily have to be totally unique. In Cassies 2002, Diet Pepsi, Five Alive and toronto.com all came to similar conclusions about the young men i.e. they are media savvy, cynical about marketing, feel responsibility looming, and don't want to give up on the best and craziest parts of being young. Fido and Clearnet in earlier Cassies both identified a confused and intimidated public. The car cases in Cassies 2003 (Dodge SX 2.0, MINI, and Toyota Matrix) all had similar conclusions about the joy of driving. Butter in Cassies 2005 and Eggs in Cassies 99 uncovered similar ideas about "natural." Designer Depot and K&G stores in Cassies 2005 came to similar conclusions about the quality/price shopper. Twix, looking at 20-somethings, found attitudes similar to what Diet Pepsi and Five Alive had found. See also [7. Fighting for the Same High Ground](#).

End of Butter Crossover Notes

⁵ Simplicity is not simple as it used to be—in the sense that Direct Marketing relishes multiple copy points, provided they have selling power. Also, the notion of "the brand" involves layers of meaning. That said, a piece of communication must still be easy to take in.