

# Cassies 2005 Cases

## Brand: Coricidin II

### Winner: Packaged Goods Other—Certificate of Excellence

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

- Crossover Note 1. What a Brand Stands For.
- Crossover Note 6. Should the product be improved?
- Crossover Note 9. Turnarounds.
- Crossover Note 20. Emotional versus Rational.

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

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Business Results Period:** January 2004 – May 2005.

**Start of Communication Effort:** January 2004.

**Base Period for Comparison:** Historical references.

When Coricidin II (CII) was launched in January 2004, it faced serious hurdles in re-entering the cough and cold medication market. The name itself was a double-edged sword, because though it had limited awareness, the original Coricidin and other cold brands had been pulled from the shelves four years earlier due to potentially serious side effects associated with the decongestant. In the interim, several other very strong brands had come to dominate the cough and cold market, especially Tylenol and Advil.

However, the new CII had a differentiator: because of its active ingredients, it could be taken safely by patients with high blood pressure, which is not the case for all other cold medications. **Crossover Notes 1 and 6.** This led to a threefold strategy:

- 1) First, reassure pharmacists about the safety of Coricidin II. This had to happen *before* the consumer campaign, because a pharmacist recommendation is crucial.
- 2) Given that we could not make overt health claims to consumers (due to stringent regulations) have high-impact effort in store, where consumers could discuss issues with their pharmacists
- 3) Rather than go head to head against Tylenol and Advil, focus as much as legally possible on the “blood pressure” differentiator, being as suggestive as possible in consumer communications, without crossing the line.

With our health care professionals (HCP) flight, there was a noticeable lift in sales, dipping back down when the flight ended. When we launched consumer print there was another lift. And when we ran television (a year after the HCP launch) there was a huge spike. This subsequently dipped, but the overall market share was more than double what it had been with original Coricidin.

Coricidin II had been successfully re-launched. **Crossover Note 9.**

## SITUATION ANALYSIS

### a) Overall Assessment

Coricidin launched 50 years ago, as a first generation antihistamine with decongestant, providing relief to people with cold and allergy symptoms. In November 2000, Health Canada issued an advisory against products containing phenylpropanolamine (PPA) because of a reported association between this decongestant with haemorrhagic stroke. Coricidin and other medications with this ingredient were withdrawn from the shelves.

Four years later, while still with good brand awareness among pharmacists and general practitioners, we needed to face issues of brand equity and brand image, in light of the upcoming re-launch of the product.

Coricidin II has no decongestant, and would be targeted at high blood pressure patients (HBP). They are approximately 14.4% of the population, and are advised not take cold and allergy medications because of possibly serious side effects due to decongestant.

To stimulate sales, our main goal was to rebuild the brand's image among health care professionals (HCPs) and high blood pressure patients. HCPs were a key. If they were not convinced of Coricidin II's efficacy and safety, they would not advise their patients to take it. Or, even worse, they would advise them NOT to take it.

### **b) Resulting Objectives**

Launch CII with an integrated communication plan to HCPs and consumers:

- Rebuilding credibility of Coricidin II among HCP
- Making Coricidin II the cold and flu product of choice for hypertensive patients
- Driving sales and recapturing market share<sup>1</sup>

## **STRATEGY & INSIGHT**

### **The Category**

Cough and Cold is one of the largest OTC categories, with over 850 SKUs, dominated by brands like Tylenol, Advil and Contac.

Pharmacists make over 42 recommendations a month, and we needed to get onto the list of recommended products. Since leading brands have considerable presence on shelf, and big budgets, this was a major challenge.

### **The Strategy**

We went to the HCPs *first*, before launch. This was to raise CII's profile and credibility, generate positive word of mouth and recommendations, and raise awareness that some other decongestants had potentially harmful side effects for hypertensive patients. We did this with an educational campaign at the pharmacy level.

We took on consumers second—men and women, 45 years old and over, suffering from high blood pressure. It was vital to communicate the unique relevance of CII, while respecting the strict regulatory limits on claims that can be made.

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<sup>1</sup> Before withdrawal, Coricidin had a 0.7% share and annual sales in the \$935,000 range. To recapture this, for a product that had been withdrawn, was quite a challenge.

**Challenge #1: Getting the most out of our investment**

Budget constraints were a major obstacle. A conventional “big splashy” campaign was not an option. The resulting plan had these components:

- Public relations.
- HCP effort, e.g. journal ad, continual medical education, sales tools, direct marketing.
- Interactive effort, e.g. a micro-site for consumers and HCPs.
- Advertising in medical centres.
- Retail displays.
- A TV campaign.
- All fully integrated.

**Challenge #2: Regulatory Framework**

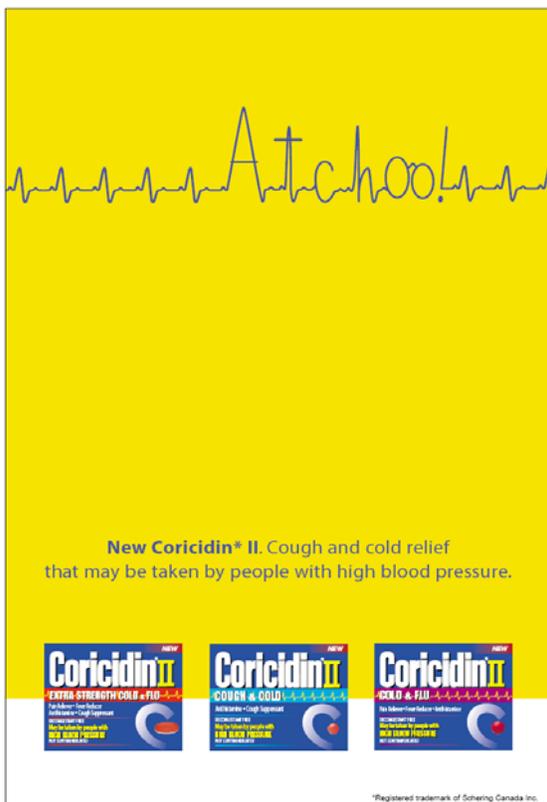
What we could say, show and even suggest about heart-related issues was limited. CII does not cure or treat high blood pressure or heart conditions; but it can be taken by people with high blood pressure, unlike some other cough, cold and allergy medications. We needed to push the limits of the acceptable, and at the same time differentiate ourselves from competition.

**EXECUTION**

How did we bring this to life? First, we needed to be as suggestive as possible:

- 1) We got as close as we could to heart imagery without making a claim.
- 2) We alluded to the serious consequences if the consumer made the wrong choice of medication (flat line).
- 3) We cleverly communicated that it was for coughs and/or colds (“Atchoo”).

We re-launched Coricidin II in January 2004 with a print campaign first addressed to health care professionals. Later, we had in-store activity for consumers, including floor stickers in pharmacies. At the same time, we put Zoom backlit posters in medical centres, and chair banners in waiting rooms. Then, in May 2004, we launched the Coricidin II website, given the serious nature of medical issues surrounding the product and consumer desire for more information.



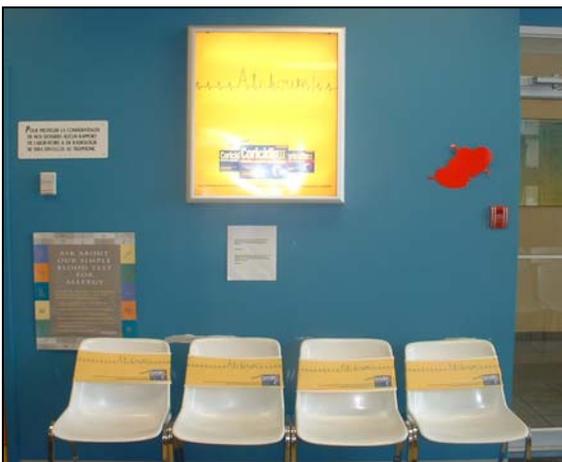
HCPs and Consumer  
English and French Canada  
Jan-May 2004 (HCP)  
End Jan-April and Oct-Dec 2004  
(Consumer)



In-store floor stickers  
In drugstores across Canada  
Feb-April 2004



Website to consumers with HCP section  
May 2004



Chair banners and backlit posters  
Posted in medical clinics across Canada  
Feb-April 2004

Once credibility of the product was established with HCPs, we needed to connect with consumers. We created an ad that focussed on the little things you can enjoy—even if you have a cold and suffer from high blood pressure. We wanted consumers to feel we understand their reality. We wanted to be real, simple and genuine. **Crossover Note 20.**



Grandfather — English Canada, French Quebec. Jan-Feb 2005

## BUSINESS RESULTS

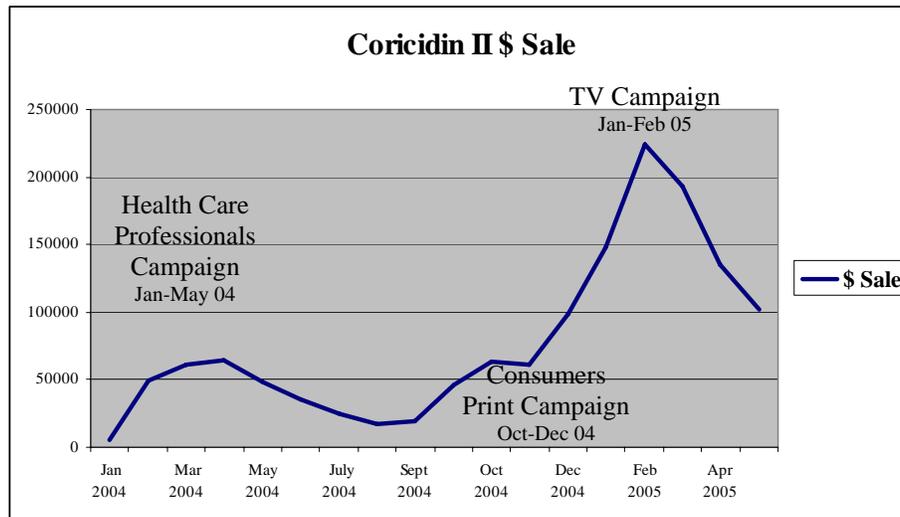
### Overall Advertising Performance and Effect on the Brand

Claimed brand recall jumped from 5% to 22%. Advertising received favourable opinions, e.g. for those who recalled the TV ad 53% (vs. 37% norm) found it enjoyable, 45% (vs. 38% norm) found it very informative, 42% (vs. 34% norm) said it gave them a good feeling about the brand, 37% (vs. 17% norm) said it made them want to buy the brand and 50% (vs. 26% norm) said that it made the brand seem different.

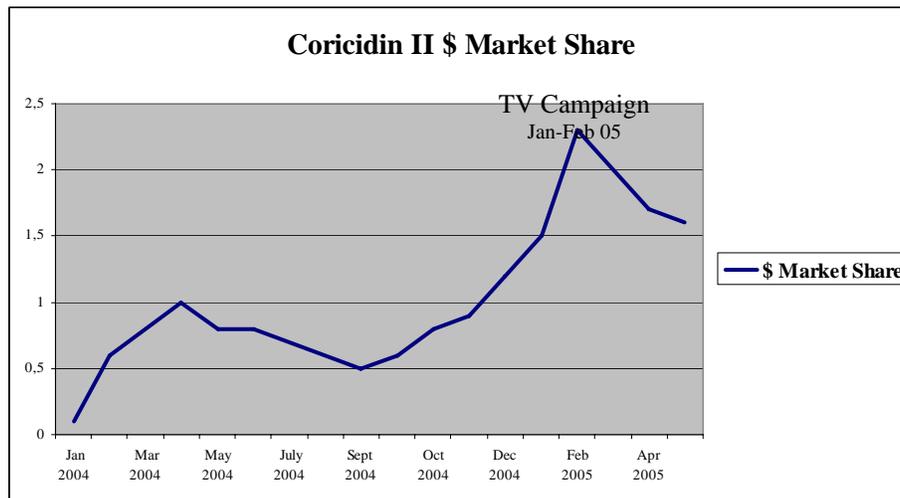
### Sales and Market Share

Sales increased immediately, but when advertising kicked in things really took shape. During the HCP and consumer print flights, sales of CII increased steadily from \$5,373 in January 2004 to \$64,577 in April 2004. While the TV campaign was on air, there was a huge spike in sales from \$99,030 in December 2004 to \$224,755 in February 2005. Sales later stabilized at \$102,014 in May 2005. Coricidin II had been successfully re-launched.

As we can see from the charts below, all 3 phases of the integrated campaign had a direct effect on the CII sales and market share. This more than recovers the \$935,000 that Coricidin used to have – a remarkable achievement for a product that was withdrawn, especially with the shift to a much narrower target group. Share is now averaging 1.6, compared to 0.7 for the old product.



Source: AC Nielsen, Drug channel, ending May 14th, 2005



Source: AC Nielsen, Drug channel, ending May 14th, 2005

## CAUSE AND EFFECT BETWEEN ADVERTISING AND RESULTS

The data in the business result portion clearly demonstrates a direct correlation between advertising activity and the remarkable increase of Coricidin II sales and market share.

End of Case. Crossover Notes follow.

## INTRODUCTION TO CROSSOVER NOTES — CASSIES 2005

[For Coricidin II]

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](http://www.ica.adbeast.com).*

## INDEX OF CROSSOVER NOTES FOR CASSIES 2005

<b>All Cases</b>	<b>Coricidin II</b>
1. What a Brand Stands For.	✓
2. Brand Truths.	
3. Core Equity versus Price & Promotion.	
4. Business Strategy dictated by the Brand Positioning.	
5. The Total Brand Experience.	
6. Should the product be improved?	✓
7. Fighting for the Same High Ground.	
8. Classic Rivalries.	
9. Turnarounds.	✓
10. Conventional Wisdom—should it be challenged?	
11. The Eureka Insight.	
12. Changing the Goalposts.	
13. Immediate vs. Long-Term Effect.	
14. Refreshing a continuing campaign.	
15. Baby with the Bathwater.	
16. When a campaign stumbles.	
17. Turning a liability into a strength.	
18. Keeping it Simple.	
19. Great minds think alike.	
20. Emotional versus Rational.	✓
21. Likeability.	
22. Humour in a Serious Category.	
23. Problem versus Solution.	
24. Tough Topics.	
25. Brand Linkage (when should the brand name appear).	
26. Awareness Alone.	
27. Share of Mind, Share of Voice, Spending.	
28. Media Learning.	
29. Pre-emptive Media.	
30. Reach and Frequency versus Large-Space Impact.	
31. Transcending Advertising.	
32. Internal Marketing.	
33. Changing the Target Audience.	
34. Longer and Broader Effects, and <b>A Closing Thought.</b>	

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

## CORICIDIN II. 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*.<sup>2</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 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>3</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, "what the brand stands for" is critical.

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<sup>2</sup> This is a phrase of mine, though the idea that a brand is "more" has been described by many authors.

<sup>3</sup> How do you do this, and evolve? See *Excellence in Brand Communication*: [www.ica.adbeast.com](http://www.ica.adbeast.com)

- 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.<sup>4</sup>

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.

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.

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<sup>4</sup> 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

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.

**9. Turnarounds.** There are a number of these in the Cassies:

**Cassies I**

- Crispy Crunch. Molson Canadian.
- Pepsi. Quebec.

**Cassies II**

- Listerine. Quebec.
- Oh Hungry? Oh Henry.

**Cassies II**

- Dove. "Litmus."
- Molson Canadian. "I AM."
- Philadelphia Cream Cheese.

**Cassies 99**

- becel. "Young at Heart"
- Eggs. Wonder Bread
- Sunlight. "Go Ahead. Get Dirty."

**Cassies 2001**

- Kraft Dinner.
- Lipton Chicken Noodle.

**Cassies 2002**

- BMO Quebec.
- Campbell's Soup. Listerine.
- CFL. Pro•Line.
- Easter Seals Relay.
- Sleeman Quebec.

**Cassies 2003**

- Aero.
- Bait Cars.
- Crown Diamond Paint.
- Dodge SX 2.0.
- Motrin.
- Pro•Line.
- Super 7.
- Université de Montréal.
- VodKice.

**Cassies 2004**

- Cottonelle.
- Gaz Metro.
- Kit Kat.
- Milk (Quebec and Prairies).
- Toyota Sienna.

**Cassies 2005**

- Crescendo.
- Energizer Lithium.
- Toyota Tacoma.
- Eggo French Toast Stix.
- Twix. Hubba Bubba. Juicy Fruit.
- Coricidin II.
- Moores and Harvey's.
- Quebec Lotto 6/49.
- Pepsi – Quebec and Quebec Milk.

**20. Emotional versus Rational.** There's a great quote that "a brand is a bundle of meanings." Many of these meanings are rooted in emotion rather than reason, so if we showed a Vulcan a typical Creative Strategy (especially one from the packaged goods companies in their heyday) he would be puzzled. The key consumer benefit is always rational, and the rationale is, well, rational too. Our Vulcan would say that it is not logical to be so logical, because Earthlings are, well, not logical.

It's worth asking why Creative Strategies are this way. First, there's the tendency to assess issues analytically rather than intuitively. This was fertile ground for the ideas of Claude Hopkins, writing *Scientific Advertising* in 1922, and Rosser Reeves, writing *Reality in Advertising* in 1960. The resulting hard-sell advertising appealed to the mentality of many North American advertisers. Hard sell then had enough successes to make the beliefs self-fulfilling. Selective perception expunged the failures.

Others, led by Bill Bernbach, argued for a more intuitive approach, and recently the "emotion" approach has shone more brightly on the radar screen. But even today, there are Creative Strategies that just tuck the emotional benefits in under Brand Character, or don't mention them at all. I used to make that mistake. When I was Brand Manager on Tide we said implacably that Tide stood for cleaning. At an unwritten level, we knew that Tide also stood for *trust*, but this emotional benefit did not appear in the Creative Strategy—and we could easily have overlooked it.

Make sure your mental model of advertising rings true to what people are really like. Often, we are too rational, which could be tragic. John Bartle of Bartle Bogle Hegarty (the UK agency famous for creativity that works) calls for us to think in terms of the

### ~Unique Emotional Proposition~

Agencies and clients factoring this in more than they used to, but it still doesn't get pride of place. Given what we are learning about Emotional Intelligence, this strikes me as illogical, and lord knows what a Vulcan would say. Here are winners that *could* have focused on the rational, but chose emotion:

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Cassies III | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chrysler NS Minivan. It had functional improvements, but the campaign was heavily infused with emotional benefits.</li> <li>• Philadelphia Cream Cheese. "Permission to indulge," along with the rational benefit of 60% less fat than butter or margarine.</li> <li>• Richmond Savings. The Humungous Bank campaign.</li> <li>• AGF Funds. The "what are you doing after work" campaign charmed its way into people's pocketbooks.</li> </ul>   |
| Cassies 99  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• becel. With hard-hitting print, and a strong doctors/nutritionist plan, it reached #1. They then wanted to get on TV, but regulators forbade hard-hitting claims. This led to the "young at heart" campaign, and spectacular long-term business growth.</li> <li>• Clearnet MiKe. It appealed to the self-image of its pragmatic, project-driven target audience.</li> <li>• Fido. Has rational benefits, but the main pull is user-friendliness.</li> <li>• St-Hubert tapped into chez-nous.</li> <li>• Sunlight captured the joy of getting dirty.</li> <li>• Wonder Bread. They could have sold on taste + nutrition, but instead used the joy of childhood.</li> </ul> |

- Cassies 2001
  - Joe's Rant made us proud.
  - Clarica made it all look simple.
  - Clearnet gave us the future is friendly.
  - Kraft tugged at our heartstrings with KD moments.
  - Manitoba Telecom gave us Morty, the talking bison.
- Cassies 2002
  - The Bank of Montreal and Scotiabank made us smile.
  - Campbell's gave us the less-than-perfect family.
  - CFL fanned the flames of rivalry.
  - Diet Pepsi and Five Alive gave us back our youth.
  - ED made us think.
  - Home Furnaces tickled the fancy of an older audience.
  - Nautilus gave us joie de vivre.
  - Philly showed us that a less-than-perfect angel was still working.
  - Pine-Sol took a quirky look at keeping the house clean.
  - Sidekicks gave the family a helper.
  - Sloche appealed to teen rebelliousness.
  - The SAAQ campaign scared us to death.
- Cassies 2003
  - Manitoba Telecom showed that Morty the bison was still working.
  - Toyota Matrix went for emotion rather than reason.
  - Sola Nero made wine youthful and hip.
  - Viagra was, well, Viagra.
  - The United Way cast off its "administrative" image.
- Cassies 2004
  - Cottonelle talked to women as women.
  - Gaz Metro dealt with the fear of Gas.
  - Prairie Milk appealed to teens' need for growth.
  - Toyota Sienna positioned itself as the cool minivan.
- Cassies 2005
  - Smoking is just "Stupid."
  - Energizer Lithium found that the rational approach was not working.
  - Coricidin II had to find a way to get a blood pressure benefit across.
  - Activia had to do the same with the "digestive" benefit.
  - Run for the Cure, perhaps not surprisingly, found that emotion was appropriate.

End of Coricidin II Crossover Notes