Cassies 2005

Brand: Familiprix

Winner: Sustained Success—Gold

Client Credits : Familiprix
André Rhéaume, Vice-President, Marketing

Agency Credits: Alfred
Jean-François Bernier, President & Creative Director
Marc Fabien, Writer
Mélanie Courtois, Account Manager
Josée Moreau, Account Director, Carat Strategem

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 3. Core Equity versus Price and Promotion.
Crossover Note 6. Should the product be improved?
Crossover Note 10. Conventional Wisdom—should it be challenged?
Crossover Note 13. Immediate vs. Long-Term Effect.
Crossover Note 14. Refreshing a continuing campaign.
Crossover Note 18. Keeping it Simple.
Crossover Note 21. Likeability.
Crossover Note 22. Humour in a Serious Category.
Crossover Note 25. Brand Linkage (when should the brand name appear).
Crossover Note 31. Transcending Advertising.
Crossover Note 32. Internal Marketing.

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): October 2002–March 2005.
Start of Advertising/Communications Effort: October 2002.
Base Period for Comparison: Historical trends where appropriate.

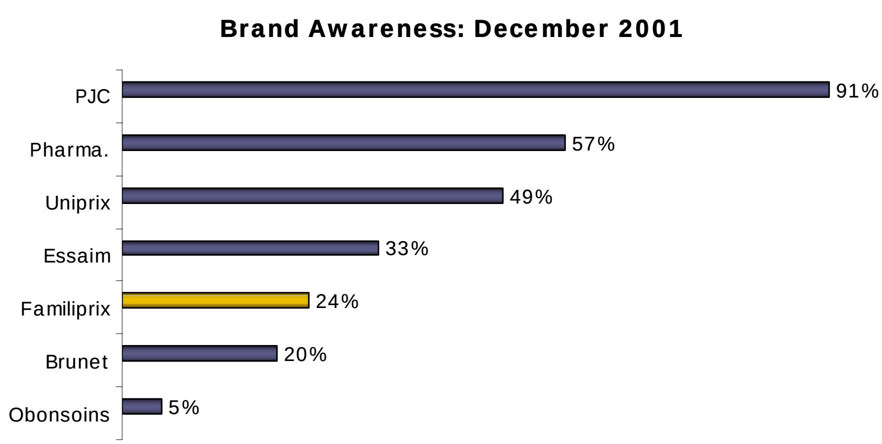
In 2002, a war was brewing in Quebec's pharmacy industry. Loblaws, Wal-Mart, and Zellers were beginning to penetrate the market, and all the industry players were preparing a counter-attack. With 227 pharmacies mainly in regional areas, and brand recognition at only 21%, Familiprix would have to be aggressive to keep its market share.

In October 2002 Familiprix launched an advertising campaign that would become a social phenomenon in Québec. Crossover Note 31. Twenty-one ads and 2 ½ years later, the campaign shows no sign of flagging. Sales have increased 56% over this period, surpassing all objectives. Health-product sales (the focus of the campaign) are up 67%. Moreover, the campaign has won three Coqs d'Or from the Publicité Club de Montréal.[1]

SITUATION ANALYSIS

a) Overall

In October 2002, Familiprix faced a sizeable challenge. A small player, this network of 227 pharmacists who own pharmacies (pharmacist-owners) had to react to powerful new competitors. Pharmacies in superstores such as Loblaws, Wal-Mart, and Zellers were beginning to penetrate regional areas. Obviously, Familiprix's other competitors—like Jean Coutu, Pharmaprix, and Uniprix—were also aware of the threat. A war was about to begin, and Familiprix risked being caught in the middle. With brand awareness stagnating between 21 and 24%, an image that was getting old, and a name that was often confused with Pharmaprix, the network was vulnerable. Familiprix had to act, and avoid a price war it would not be able to sustain.



Source: Léger Marketing, Provincial Omnibus Survey

[1] Publicité Club de Montréal, TV-retailer Coq d'Or in 2003, 2004, and 2005. (www.pcm.qc.ca)

b) Resulting Objectives

Familiprix set itself ambitious objectives:

- Maintain annual sales increases at 15%, despite pressure from the competition
- Stimulate customer traffic
- Attract 20 new owner-pharmacists in Year 1, twice as many as the previous year
- Increase brand awareness from 21% to 30% in one year
- Reduce confusion between the Familiprix, Pharmaprix and Uniprix names
- Give the brand a more youthful image

This had to be done without changing the product offering or prices, and with a limited advertising budget.[2] Crossover Notes 3 and 6.

STRATEGY AND INSIGHT

Familiprix needed an extraordinarily strong advertising campaign. Luckily, the ads of the competition were very conventional. Familiprix would take advantage of this. Objectives:

- To maintain and strengthen Familiprix's positioning: *Familiprix = health products*. We had 70% of sales in these categories, compared to 30% for certain competitors. We reasoned that this positioning would shelter us in an eventual price war.
- To design a highly original, humorous TV campaign promoting the Familiprix name. This went against industry practice, which was to take a serious approach to health. Some might say humour was a risky bet. Crossover Notes 10 and 22.

EXECUTION

The concept is simple. A pharmacist (invisible to the other characters) finds himself among ordinary people who, unbeknownst to them, will soon need a health product. When the inevitable occurs, he exclaims "Ah-Ha! Familiprix!" – followed by the "Ah ha ha ha!" chorus of an old Huey Smith rock song. Crossover Note 18 and 25.

Broadcast in two consecutive 15-second segments, the ads are filmed using a rigorous formula that gives the whole campaign a recognizable and homogenous style. There's the dramatic tension of the scenario, the sudden need for product, "Ah-Ha! Familiprix!" from the pharmacist, "Ah ha ha ha," and the Familiprix logo—all in two consecutive :15s. This has been extremely effective, both on a comic level and for message retention. Thanks to an inexhaustible topic—health problems—the campaign now has twenty-one different commercials, and shows no signs of exhaustion. Crossover Notes 14 and 21.

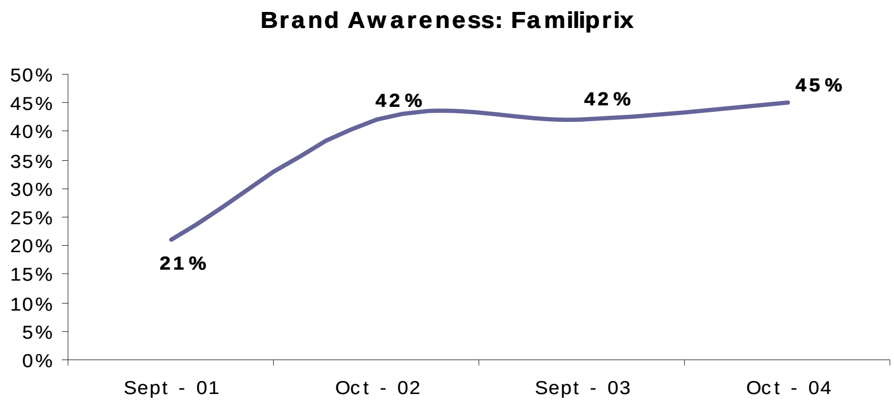
[2] Editor's Note: Familiprix won Gold in Off to a Good Start, and the Grand Prix, in Cassies 2003. This 2005 case covers that initial 6-month period, and the continuing success.

As for the media, Familiprix maximized a budget of about $2 million per year—well short of the budgets of the industry leaders. To reach young families Familiprix focused on the major networks. Familiprix also broadcast on *Télétoon* in order to arouse the interest of children. This was successful beyond all expectations, and “Ah-HAs” resonated in the school yards.

BUSINESS RESULTS

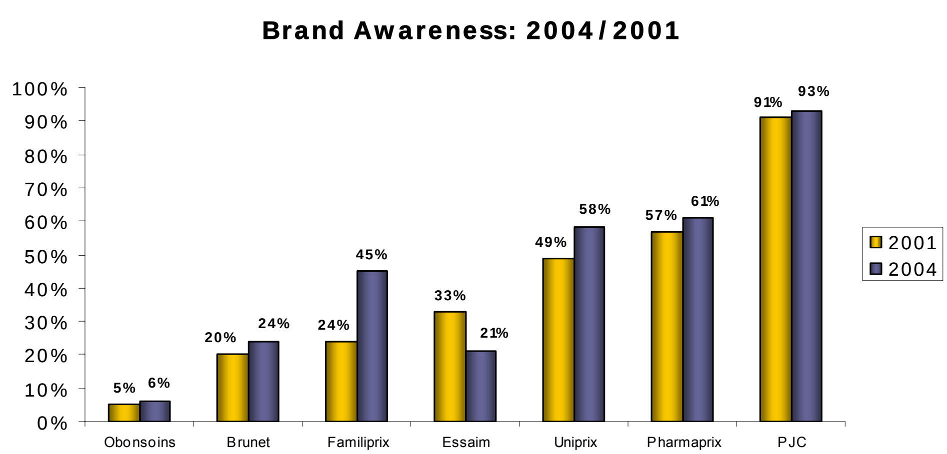
a) Brand Awareness

The initial objective was to increase brand awareness from 21% to 30% in one year. In fact, it reached 42% less than a month after the beginning of the campaign. It stayed at that level in 2003 and increased a few points in 2004, despite the efforts of competitors.



Source: Léger Marketing, Provincial Omnibus Survey, October 2004

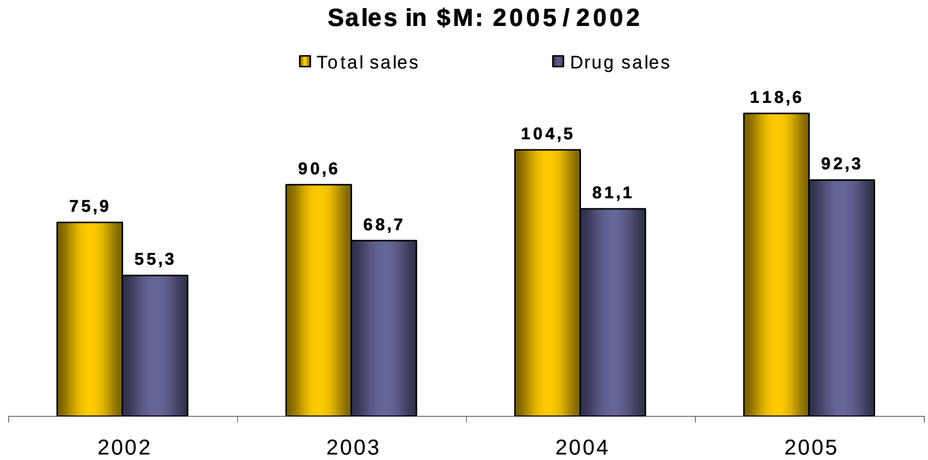
The campaign provoked vigorous response. In June 2003, after being absent from TV since 2001, Uniprix launched seven new TV ads, and five more in March 2004. In Sept 2004, Jean Coutu launched a new image campaign, something it had not done for years, with enormous media weight. Pharmaprix (two new TV ads) and Essaim (one) took to the airways in Oct 2004. Brunet launched three radio ads in Nov 2004 and three more in March 2005. These initiatives had a generally positive effect, but Familiprix still maintained and even grew its brand awareness, without increasing media weight.



Source: Léger Marketing, Provincial Omnibus Survey, March 2003 and October 2004

b) Sales

In 2002, our objective was to stimulate customer traffic to maintain an increase in sales of 15% per year, despite pressure from the competition. This objective was surpassed, with a 56% increase from 2002 to 2004. Crossover Note 13.

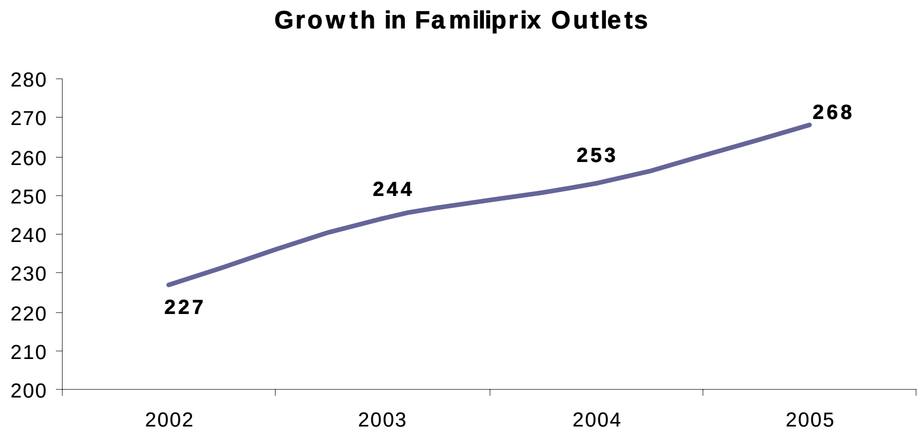


Source: Familiprix 2005

Moreover, health-product sales increased 67% from 2002 to 2005, confirming the success of our positioning: Familiprix = health products.

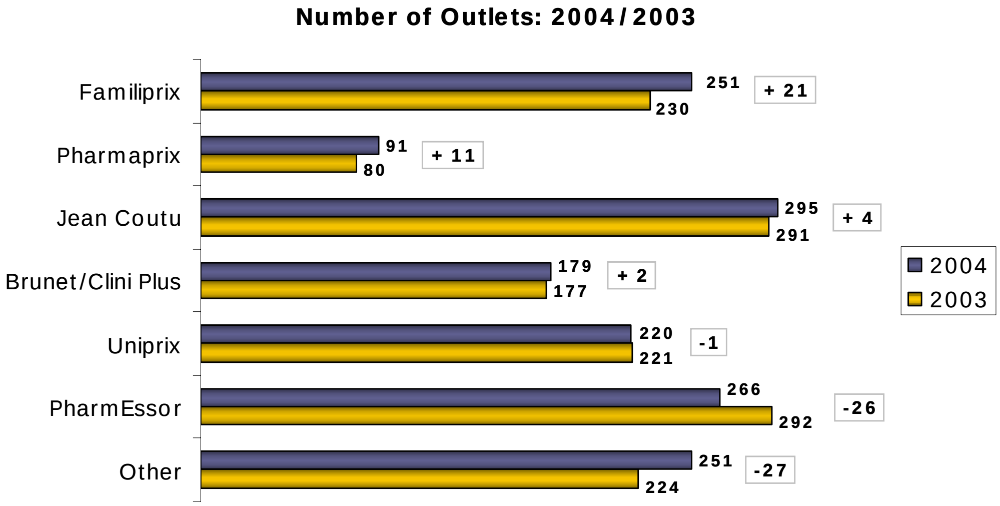
c) Attracting New Pharmacist-Owners to the Network

This was another critical objective for increasing critical mass. Between October 2002 and March 2005 41 new pharmacist-owners joined the banner—almost double the number expected.[3] Crossover Note 32.



[3] Editor's Note: Overall Sales for 2002 to 2005 were up 56%. Outlets were up 18%.

Familiprix also attracted twice as many new pharmacists as Pharmaprix, and five times as many as Jean Coutu:



Source: IMS Canada, Annual Report, March 12, 2005

d) Effect on the Network

The campaign has energized the network in their marketing and image initiatives. There were no less than fifty-three revitalizations in the past year. Crossover Note 32.

After

Before

e) Reduced Confusion with Pharmaprix

In the Dominance Publicité survey conducted in October 2002, Familiprix received 3% of mentions, with the same percentage going to Pharmaprix. Two months later, the confusion had practically disappeared. Familiprix had the highest unaided recall, at 27% while Pharmaprix stayed at 4%.[4] In view of the results on unprompted awareness in 2002 and 2004, we can now affirm that the Familiprix name is firmly entrenched in Québec.

f) Larger Recognition

Familiprix also made a remarkable ascent to the top 150 most-admired companies in Québec, as listed in *Commerce* magazine. Not even on the list in 2001, it rose to 5th place in 2004, ahead of the SAQ, Métro, and Cirque du Soleil. In January 2003, the advertising campaign was, according to a survey in *Infopresse*, the campaign most noticed in Québec, with 30% unaided recall. In three years, Familiprix had grown from a relatively unknown regional network to a Québec-wide company.

CAUSE & EFFECT BETWEEN ADVERTISING AND RESULTS

There have been no other major marketing or communications initiatives since 2002, and the media budget has not increased significantly. Familiprix can therefore conclude that it is the advertising campaign that yielded the results presented here.

End of Case. Crossover Notes follow.

[4] *Infopresse*, March 2003.

INTRODUCTION TO CROSSOVER NOTES — CASSIES 2005

[For Familiprix]

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.

INDEX OF CROSSOVER NOTES FOR CASSIES 2005

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

FAMILIPRIX. CROSSOVER NOTES. CASSIES 2005.

3. **Core Equity versus Price & Promotion.** From a financial point of view, a brand is not an abstract notion. It has to make good money as long as you hold onto it, and it has to be valuable if you want to sell it. A brand under price and promotion pressure has to make tough decisions. If you don't fight fire with fire, you lose business in the short term. But if you don't invest in brand-building, you're likely to lose much more over the long term.

   This is the choice between a "clear and present danger" and a "worse but less immediate one." It's hard to get it right, but we probably succumb more than we should to short-term pressures. Fido in Cassies 99; Clearnet and KD in Cassies 2001; Nautilus and Sidekicks in Cassies 2002; Molson's Bubba, Dodge SX 2.0, Manitoba Telecom, MINI, Sola Nero and Toyota Matrix in Cassies 2003; Cottonelle, Réno Dépôt and Toyota Sienna in Cassies 2004; All Bran, K&G Stores, Energizer Lithium, Hubba Bubba, Moores, Stouffer's Bistro and Familiprix in Cassies 2005 all faced this issue. All emphasized brand value, rather than price and promotion.

   Core Equity has more than one meaning. One comes from the "bundle of meanings" in the audience's mind. Another is the equity in financial terms. This is a developing area, and for more information contact the ICA about the publication *Measuring And Valuing Brand Equity.*

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.[5]

   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.

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[5] 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.

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," and rejected it. The Dove Litmus campaign *(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—a taboo in confectionery.
- 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.

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 Mainway Coffee, making a virtue of the caffeine hit.
- Toyota Matrix, breaking all the Toyota “rules.”
- Sola Nero, could not be further away from wine snobbery.
- Super 7, reveling 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:

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

13. Immediate vs. Long-Term Effect. The effects of advertising in the short and/or long-term have been hotly debated for years. I'm can't do justice to all the points of view in this space, but here is a fairly lengthy overview:

Einstein proposed the Theory of Relativity about 100 years ago. Twenty or so years later, Planck and others came up with Quantum Theory, and Hiesenberg advanced his Uncertainty Principle. Since then, physics has continued to be a hotbed of enquiry, but the elusive "theory of everything" stays hidden. In a less cosmic way, advertising has followed the same course. A top UK researcher has identified over a hundred theories of how advertising works. They all capture part of what happens, but none explain the full picture.

This leads to an important point. In the absence of a single agreed theory, we've all pieced together our own notion of what effective advertising is all about. Our mental models (while right some of the time) are not right all of the time. But *we all make the mistaken assumption that our own model is right.*[6]

For example, there used to be a view (diminishing, but still with us) that creativity gets in the way of effectiveness. Some years back, the CEO of one of the big packaged goods companies unrepentantly took this line. In his own mind I'm sure he was criticizing "irrelevant creativity" or "self-indulgent creativity." But to others he left the impression that he was only interested in the tried and true.

At the other extreme, there's the view that creativity is all that matters. When people advocate this, they don't mean "irrelevant" or "self-indulgent" creativity, but there are people at the tried-and-true end of the spectrum who suspect that they do.

Between these extremes is a view with accumulating evidence in its favour—that creativity (relevant of course) is a *partner* in effectiveness. All the big Cassies winners bear this out, and an even longer list of examples comes from 20+ years of IPA Effectiveness Awards in the UK. (The Cassies was modelled on these Awards.)

In terms of the theories of how advertising works, many of us carry a subconscious version of the 100 year-old AIDA model in our heads: Attention >> Interest >> Desire >> Action. But there is a lot of evidence that advertising does not work this way, especially for established brands in everyday categories (I dislike the term "low interest" or "low involvement"). Many campaigns act by positive reinforcement.

It seems self-evident that advertising has to "cut through the clutter" but even that is being re-examined. In neuroscience, there is something called "Low-Involvement Processing." It seems that we take in huge amounts of data through the primitive parts of our brain. It doesn't blast its way in. It goes in without our knowledge. To people with an AIDA model, this is about as whacky as it gets. LIP is unproven, but I think there could be something to it, based on a common sense test. It you examine all the thoughts, feelings, knowledge and memories you have, haven't a great many of them have got in by osmosis? (For more on this, see papers by Robert Heath and Jon Howard-Spink in Admap.)

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[6] I think it was Paul Feldwick, a top UK planner, who first made this penetrating comment.

13. Immediate vs. Long-Term Effect (cont'd)

In any event, there's no "theory of everything," but there are lots of mental models. This explains the tension when advertising is being developed, discussed and evaluated.

On the issue of immediate versus long-term effect, there is an "experience" view, and an "academic/research" view. The experience view has four scenarios, based on the different degrees of visible success:

1. Shipments/share etc. respond within days/weeks of new advertising.[7]
2. Advertising has helped an established brand deliver good volume/share/profit. But it is no longer causing growth—it has more of a "retention" role.[8]
3. The advertising is not working, confirmed by careful analysis.
4. The situation is hard to read, either because it is "too early to tell" or there is not enough information to sort out what's happening.

Scenarios 1 and 3 (assessed correctly) are relatively straightforward. Scenario 2 can be more difficult, because some decision-makers are not satisfied with "retention," even though this is sometimes more cost-effective than trying to make a brand grow.

Scenario 4 needs great care. Imagine a new campaign, a couple of months in-market. Media weight has been sufficient, but the business has not taken off. Angst creeps in, and the following could all be valid:

- **The advertising is working, but the effect is masked.** Pricing, promotion, in-store activity, distribution etc. all often have a greater short-term effect than advertising. However, it they are masking an underlying positive trend, then given time, the masking will recede, and all should be well.
- **The "slow burn" situation.** This is based on the assumption that (some) advertising needs time to wear in. If that is case, then all will be well. It has to be said, though, that many people reject wear-in, saying that if a campaign does not have a quick effect, it is unlikely to have one at all. On the other hand, there have been campaigns like "I AM" Canadian which were spectacularly effective but took time to wear in.
- **The "arm wrestler" stand-off.** Two equally matched (and very strong) arm wrestlers can hold each other immobile for an agonizing length of time. This can happen with offsetting ad campaigns i.e. you have to assess the strength of the competition's campaign before coming to a conclusion about your own.
- **The advertising is not working.** It may be too early to know for sure, but this may be the early sign—in which case you need to be preparing some sort of fix.

From the academic/research side, one question has been, "If advertising works in the short-term, why is this so hard to see?" These issues are still debated, but the following have been influential:

[7] And hopefully a long-running business-building campaign—See *14. Refreshing a Continuing Campaign.*

[8] This is a big topic in itself. See *Crossover Note 34.*

13. Immediate vs. Long-Term Effect (cont'd)

- **John Philip Jones and STAS (Short-Term Advertising Strength).** Jones designed a study to uncover short-term effect, if it exists. He used single-source data to examine "advertised" and "non-advertised" households—and the brands they buy. There are detractors to this work, but the findings seem pretty clear:

  a) There is a definite, short-term effect from advertising. (70% of cases.)
  b) In Jones's words, *a single advertising exposure was shown to be all that was necessary to achieve an immediate sales increase.* (This flies in the face of conventional wisdom about frequency. See *Crossover Note 28*.)
  c) The short-term effect was often followed by a one-year effect (46% of brands) though the sales response at one year was always lower than at one week.
  d) When brands do not show the STAS response, it is likely that the creative is not as strong as it might be, or that it is being out-muscled by more powerful creative from a competitor. [A stronger arm-wrestler, as noted above.]

- **The IRI on long-term effects.** IRI run state-of-the-art split-cable test markets in the US. Consumers are exposed to marketing effort, while a matched control group is not. In the early 90s IRI published the learning from 400 tests that had explored TV creative, media weight, promotion support and so on. They were able to analyze 44 tests for long-term advertising effect. Test areas (A) were measured against control areas (B). Areas "A" only got special effort in Year 1. After that, the test and control plans were identical. In other words, any long-term effect was caused entirely by the effort in Year I. Results were:

  a) In Year I, Plan A markets averaged +22% volume over Plan B.
  b) In Year II, Plan A markets held their advantage, at +14%.
  c) In Year III, they still held an advantage, averaging +7%.

  In other words, in these 44 markets, the 3-year effect was, on average, double the one-year effect. The study concludes that payout for one-year effort should be calculated over three years. More recently, Hess and Ambach have used loyalty program databases to show that advertising's longer term effect "ranges from *1.58 to 3.98* [of the shorter-term effect], with an average multiplier of 2.32."

- **The Millward Brown Findings.** Millward Brown have immense databases in the UK, USA, Canada, Europe and elsewhere. They see a short-term advertising effect in their continuous tracking, but also a long-term effect. Through sales modeling, they estimate that this long-term effect may, on occasion, be as much as 7 times greater than the short-term effect.

- **The Observations of Paul Feldwick**. Paul Feldwick is a top planner in the UK with impeccable credentials. He has proposed a fascinating metaphor for short and long-term effect, based on "brand muscle." When we exercise, the result of any individual activity is small and hard to measure. But over time, results can be dramatic. This is more than just a clever analogy. There is a huge amount of evidence that as consumers get more used to buying a brand, it moves into their habitual (and perhaps even loyal) repertoire.

13. Immediate vs. Long-Term Effect (cont'd)

- **Market Mix Modelling.** A few Cassies winners, and many IPA winners, use econometric modelling to prove the advertising effect. This is a big step forward, though it should be borne in mind that this modelling, at its core, measures shorter-term effects. It uses sophisticated mathematics to examine immediate changes in sales, and relate them to the brand's marketing tactics. This produces a theoretical sales curve. When this is a tight fit to actual, it can be assumed that the model is accurately assessing what each tactic is contributing. However (and this is important) the math does not explain "steady state" or "baseline" volume. In fact, the typical model will fail to explain as much as two thirds of volume. This is the volume that the brand "would have gotten anyway" and is usually attributed to brand equity that the brand has accumulated.

For more, see publications by John Philip Jones, Leonard Lodish (IRI), Millward Brown, Paul Feldwick, and Hess & Ambach. For some academic fireworks, see the disputatious views of Andrew Ehrenberg of the London School of Business.

14. Refreshing a continuing campaign. When I was at P&G and O&M, all the big advertisers and their agencies thought in terms of campaigns. If you presented new advertising, and got the comment "that's just a one-off," it was the kiss of death.

In those days, a campaign was usually defined by television. There would be one commercial, or a pool, refreshed over time. Nowadays, a campaign is more complicated. But it's fair to say that we (clients and agencies) still believe that campaigns are the right/best way to build a brand.[9]

Recently, the idea of "the brand relationship" has taken hold. This is the notion that we treat brands like friends. Brand Truths can come out of this type of thinking, as can other insights.

Relationships can be very different, but for most people, the good ones are based on things like trust and consistency, though not dullness and predictability. This has led to the idea that brands should present a consistent face over time (assuming, of course, that they are standing for the right thing.)

There is still the question, though, of what is a campaign? At one time, packaged goods advertisers (and some agencies) believed in strict pool-outs. But campaigns don't have to be so formatted. The following list doesn't pretend to be exhaustive (some campaigns don't lend themselves to being categorized) but it starts at rigid end of the spectrum, and extends to the holistic. All versions have their successes and failures, and I hope this will help free up some of the rigid thinking:

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[9] A young creative friend said to me, "where does the belief in campaigns come from? Young people want constant change. What's wrong with a stream of one-off ideas?" This would have been heresy at one time, and perhaps still is. But it's food for thought.

- **Strict Pool-Out.** Campaigns like "Who wants Gum? I do. I do." There is a repeated format, often with a USP demo or slogan. Some people think this type of advertising is passé. Others remember it fondly.
- **Hall of Fame Pool-Out**. Some think pool outs are dull, predictable and clichéd. Not necessarily. The 20-odd year campaign for Hamlet cigars in the UK is rigidly formatted, but spectacularly creative and effective. Familiprix is the same.
- **Situational Pool-Out.** These don't have the format of the strict pool out but still have a clear connection between executions. Diet Pepsi's "Forever Young" and Pro•Line's "Anyone can Win" are examples. Huggies "Happy Baby" is one of the longest-running. Clearnet/Telus is in this camp too.

  This category also includes spectacular executions like "Manhattan Landing" and "Face" for British Airways, though it can be hard to keep coming up with ideas this big. Kit Kat is a different type of example, where the "break" continues, and the challenge is to keep it up to date.

- **Icons.** These can anchor a campaign (Maytag Man, Marlboro Cowboy) or be a property (Tony the Tiger, Pillsbury Doughboy). Some see icons as a yesterday idea, but I think that's a mis-call. Absolut Vodka uses its bottle as an icon, and it's brilliant. The Familiprix pharmacist is hilariously effective.
- **Spokes-people, and Spokes-animals.** Dave Thomas and Colonel Sanders, god rest their souls, are examples, as is Morty the Bison for Manitoba Telecom.
- **Storytelling with continuing character(s).** The Oxo family in the UK is a long-running examples. Bartles and Jaymes was a wonderful success story in the US. Personalities have been very successful in Quebec e.g. the Pepsi and Listerine Grand Prix winners in Cassies I and II.
- **Music-Based.** Music sometimes goes beyond a supporting role, and becomes part of the brand character. Soft Drinks, Cars, Fast Food, and Beer have all built campaigns this way. In packaged goods, becel's "young at heart" campaign would be an example.
- **Consistent "Voice and Attitude."** These campaigns are held together by something more subtle. Perhaps the most impressive was Volkswagen in the 60s. Individual executions were different (serious, comical, ironic, dramatic) but they all had the Volkswagen voice and attitude. Brands like Nike are in this category. Benneton is an extreme example.
- **Same core message. Customized execution.** To people with a strict "pool-out" mindset, this hardly qualifies at all. But the overall effect can be very powerful. The best Cassies example is the 4-year Dove Case from Cassies III.[10]

  The campaign started in late 91 with "Litmus," a strikingly simple demonstration, with no people or voice over—just haunting music, and some supers. Then came a raucous candid-camera commercial of focus group women doing the litmus test for themselves. Then a talking-head scientist who invented Dove. Then another demonstration—similar in style to "Litmus," with the haunting music again.

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[10] Another example is Budweiser in Quebec. Its 10-year campaign has always been centred on rock 'n roll, but it has always evolved.

> The first three executions are so different that some people would not have approved them. Given the subsequent results, that would have been a pity. What holds it all together? The continuing promise of mildness. A scrupulously honest and consistent brand character. And an element of surprise in each execution. Note, though, that there are no continuing slogans or visual icons.

More generally, It's an open question whether today's obsessively short-term attitude is causing us to lose the drive we once had for great campaigns. I hope it isn't.

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*.[11] 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.

21. Likeability. Nowadays, It's generally felt a advertising should be *likeable.* But there was once an opposite school of thought. The poster-child was "Ring around the Collar" for Wisk—highly disliked *and* highly effective. Dissonant views on likeability, in part, reflect the long-running feud between creativity and selling power—do they work together, or does creativity get in the way? Cassies winners demonstrate that *they work together,* and the day may come when this ancient vendetta is put to rest.

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[11] 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.

Likeability hit the headlines in the mid 80s, with a paper by Alex Biel. Later, in the early 90s, the Advertising Research Foundation caused another stir. The ARF Copy Research Validity Project[12] examined major copy tests. The results showed modest predictive ability on shipments and share, but no technique did particularly well. This caused a blizzard of rebuttal from the research firms. But it also caused a surprise. Likeability, which until then had been seen as a bit of a non-issue, was (apparently) one of the better predictors of in-market success.

A bandwagon started. For quite a lot of people their mental model is that advertising has to (mostly) entertain to do its job. They seized on the "entertaining" meaning of liking. Others pointed out that "liking" means different things to different people. Alex Biel found that it is closer to "meaningfulness" than "entertainment." Others say that it is a combination of positives (Entertaining, Relevant, Newsworthy, Empathetic) and/or the absence of negatives (Unfamiliar, Confusing, Alienating). In other words, it's simplistic to assume that liking just means "entertaining."

In the Cassies, much of the advertising is likeable in the ordinary sense of the word, but some (Big Brothers Vancouver, Dove Litmus, Ethical Funds, Pfizer's ED, SAAQ's anti-speeding, Canadian Blood Services, Motrin, United Way, Leucan, Run for the Cure come to mind) could only be called likeable in the "meaningful" sense.

And then, as with so much in advertising, we must also be alert to exceptions. Tim Broadbent, in his speech at the 2004 Cassies, showed a very unsettling UK winner from the 2003 IPA Awards. Lennox Lewis, talking about wife abuse, smoulders with repressed rage in a very disturbing (but effective) commercial for police recruitment.

For myself, I've found the best approach is to think of liking on the broader lines defined above. For more, see such papers as *Love the ad. Buy the product?* Alexander Biel. Admap 1990, *Do our commercials have to be liked?* Colin McDonald. Admap 1995. *Like it or Not, Liking is not Enough.* Nigel Hollis. Journal of Advertising Research 1995.

22. Humour in a Serious Category. It doesn't make sense to trivialize what you are trying to sell, but this does not mean that humour cannot sell in serious categories.

Money is serious stuff, but Richmond Savings (Cassies III) blew the doors off with its "Humungous Bank" campaign. Other examples include Buckley's, Claritin, and Goodwill in Cassies III; Fido and AGF in Cassies 99; Clearnet and Manitoba Telephone in Cassies 2001; Familiprix and Université of Montréal in 2003; Miller for Mayor and Elections Ontario in Cassies 2004. The "Stupid" campaign, Leucan, and Familiprix I Cassies 2005.

[12] It tested commercials that were known to be effective (or not) to find out if copy tests could pick winners from losers. This required pairs of commercials for the same brand (to remove the "brand" effect). The commercials also had to have shipment/share results (good or bad) over at least a year in split-cable test markets. It was hard to find these pairs of such commercials, but eventually five pairs were validated. The ARF replicated the major techniques, and "pre-tested" each commercial. The results, while modestly positive, did not show especially strong predictive ability for any technique.

The two financial cases in Cassies 2002 (Bank of Montreal and Scotiabank) both use humour. As of Cassies 2003, I was saying that the financial category had thrown off its “serious” straightjacket. And in Cassies 2004 the Desjardins case-writer suggests that the pendulum had swung too far, pointing out that virtually all the Quebec banks are using humour.

Sometimes humour must be avoided, even when there must be a strong temptation to use it. Jokes about erectile dysfunction are an easy laugh, but not to men who have the problem. So the ED campaign in Cassies 2002 was conspicuously serious. But by the time we get to Viagra (“Good Morning” in Cassies 2003) the mood has become distinctly jaunty.

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 (knowingly or not) you run the risk of 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.[13] 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.

Some very successful advertising puts the brand name front and centre, but it’s possible in today’s over-hyped world that “early and often” is a turn-off to consumers. Each situation has to be assessed on its merits. But an unthinking belief in “early and often” should come to an end.

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[13] 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.*

31. **Transcending Advertising.** A number of Cassies campaigns have moved into popular culture—at least for a while. Generally, advertisers and agencies are pleased when this happen, though there are always nay-sayers asking "Is it on strategy? Is it relevant? Is it building the business?"

"Where's the Beef?" had a lot more than 15 minutes of fame. But did it build the Wendy's business? I've seen arguments on both sides. Budweiser and "Whassup" faced similar questions. Cassies cases that mention the effect—and they all do it positively—include Richmond Savings (Cassies III); Molson Canadian, Tourism New Brunswick, Manitoba Telecom (Cassies 2001); Bank of Montreal and ED (Cassies 2002); Familiprix, Irving Mainway Coffee and Motrin (Cassies 2003); Desjardins and Quebec Milk (Cassies 2004). Crescendo Pizza, Familiprix, Pepsi – Quebec and Quebec Milk (Cassies 2005).

Viral marketing is the latest incarnation of effort that transcends advertising. There has not yet been a Cassies winner based on this, but it would be good to see one.

32. **Internal Marketing.** When the Cassies started in 1993, internal marketing, as an idea in its own right, hardly existed. Now it's seen as a crucial part of brand-building, and it had an important role in most of the cases listed under *5. The Total Brand Experience.* Laurie Young and Guy Stevenson give a spectacular example in the ICA book *Excellence in Brand Communication:*

> Between 1990 - 1995, British Airways flew every employee from around the world to London, in batches of 100, to explain the idea behind the World's Favourite Airline campaign. The brand idea wasn't just about serving business travelers. It meant treating coach passengers (World Traveler Class) with great respect and dignity, because their once-a-year trip most likely had more emotional impact than any trip a frequent business traveler took. And British Airways was the world's most profitable airline during that era.

In Cassies 2005, Harvey's, United Way, and Familiprix touch on this topic.

End of Familiprix Crossover Notes.