

Cassies 2005 Cases

Brand: ICBC 'Bait Cars'

Winner: Sustained Success—Certificate of Excellence

Client Credits: Insurance Corporation of British Columbia

Laurie Baker, Manager Road Safety
Dennis St. Aubin, Manager, Autocrime
Jeanie Pan, Manager, Communications
Danny Ho, Communications Specialist

Agency Credits: DDB Canada

Alan Russell, VP Creative Director
Lara Palmer, Associate Creative Director
Paul Little, Senior Copywriter
Dean Elissat, Group Account Director
Maureen Atchison, Account Supervisor
Brett MacFarlane, Account Manager

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 9.** Turnarounds.
- Crossover Note 14.** Refreshing a continuing campaign.
- Crossover Note 18.** Keeping it Simple.
- Crossover Note 33.** Changing the Target Audience.

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Business Results Period: CY03 – CY04.

Start Of Communication Effort: September 2002.

Base Period For Comparison: CY01.

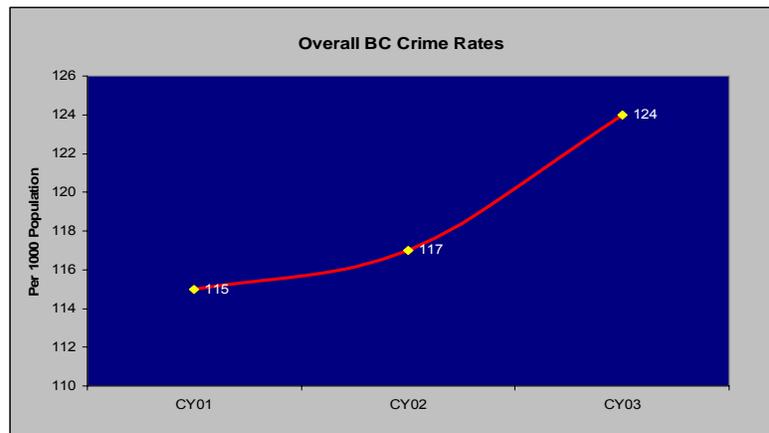
Car thieves are ingenious, and will always discover inventive methods to steal. Once they've discovered methods of stealing a certain type of vehicle, they will pass the information on to anyone who cares to know—even on the Internet. For too many criminals, car theft is a game, and they have become very good at it. The average theft takes less than thirty seconds. **Crossover Note 24.**

In early 2002, the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) and the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) launched the Bait Car program – specially-designed cars rigged with lots of added equipment to trap car thieves.

This case shows the longer-term success of the initiative.¹

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Crime In BC Was Getting Worse: The overall crime rate in BC was spiraling upward from a low in 2000, and in 2003 it became the third highest in Canada:



Source: BC Stats

Car theft also reached its highest level in 2001 with 5,281 cars stolen in Vancouver alone. Things were bad and it didn't look like it would get any better. **Crossover Note 9.**

Time To Change Direction: Over the years, the Vancouver Police Department and ICBC have partnered to combat car theft. As a team, they focused most communication effort on getting drivers to crime-proof their vehicles with steering locks, car alarms and immobilizers. While this helped, something more drastic was needed.

¹ Editor's note: The initial launch of the program won a Gold for Off to a Good Start in Cassies 2003.

In early 2002, the VPD began testing Bait Cars. These are cars designed to catch thieves in the act. Bait Cars are left in high theft areas such as gas stations, convenience stores, underground parking lots, and malls. When a thief gets into a Bait Car, a silent alarm goes off, telling the police that the car has been stolen. Video and audio catch what the thieves do in the car, collecting evidence that is used against them in court. The car also has a global positioning system, so police know exactly where it is. They track it, surrounding the accompanying streets to prevent high-speed chases. When the car is in a safe spot, they turn off the engine by remote control. They then catch the suspects red-handed and arrest them.

At launch, the objective was to reduce auto thefts by 10% over the next year.

STRATEGY AND INSIGHT

You can only do so much to protect your car from theft. It was time to talk to the thieves. **Crossover Note 33.**

It's important to note that this was quite a departure for the VPD and ICBC. Deterring crime is basically foreign to police forces in North America, because they are evaluated primarily on *arrest* records. Deterrence disrupted and challenged traditional thinking.

What Does a Car Thief Look Like?

The agency, ICBC and VPD combined to develop a rich profile of the car thief, relying heavily on police profiling and one of Canada's most-respected criminologists—Simon Fraser University's Dr. Pat Brantingham. Many of these insights were instrumental in developing the media program. They also helped identify two sub-targets that make up the bulk of car thieves:

The Joyrider. The primary target group. Most car thieves steal their first car at age 13. They do it for thrills, and usually dump the car off when they're finished. Joyriders are the most likely to be deterred by the Bait Car program.

The Repeat Criminal. The bulk of property crime in Vancouver traces back to hard drug users. They are primarily male and likely reside in the Eastside of Vancouver. They steal cars (and other property) to support their drug habit.



EXECUTION

Tough Talk

We made no attempt to sweet-talk thieves. **Crossover Note 18.** “Steal a Bait Car. Go to Jail” is to the point and deadly simple. We also agreed never to show the Bait Cars in any advertising. (Not knowing what they look like, or how many there are, adds to paranoia in the thief.) Finally, we decided that the VPD logo would be more intimidating and put it at the forefront of the advertising, with the program “sponsored by ICBC.”

In Their Ear And In Front Of Their Face

We created three “trap” metaphors, morphed them to be car sized, and placed them where a car would normally be. One was a giant 13-foot mousetrap, with the VPD logo and tagline. On radio, we ran four very special :30 second ads. They were produced to sound as “anti-radio” as possible. In fact, they sounded as if the police were talking to a thief over the car’s stereo speakers.



We Know Where They Steal

Working hand in hand with the VPD and Dr. Pat Brantingham, the agency developed a media plan for a group not regularly tracked via syndicated research. Each out-of-home location and radio day-part was based on criminal profiling of the target groups.

We put posters in transit shelters and washrooms based on data that showed where cars were historically being stolen or recovered, for example East Hastings. As for radio, the police noted that many stolen cars were tuned to the local hip-hop station, so “The Beat” became a lead player in the buy. Hundreds of parking signs said “Bait Car program is in effect.” Removable spray painted graffiti said “Steal a Bait Car. Go to Jail.” in the back alleys of the East Hastings area, where heavy drug users fuel their habit.

Evolving Our Language For The Long Term

Bait Cars Are Everywhere. This copy line became a second rallying cry as the program started to instill fear and paranoia in thieves through *Steal A Bait Car. Go To Jail.* This was a friendly reminder that we weren’t going to start the program, then stop once a few thieves were caught. **Crossover Note 14.**

BUSINESS RESULTS

Strong Right Out Of the Gate

The official Bait Car program launched in late 2002, and in the launch quarter we saw an immediate drop of -23% of car thefts against the previous quarter.

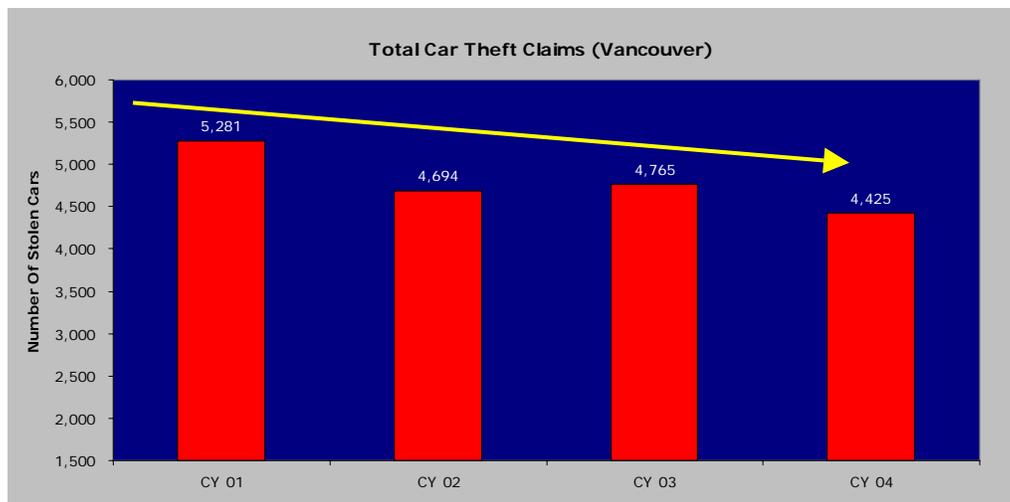
Within the first year, we saw an 11% decrease in annual car theft claims over the previous year. This resulted in 587 fewer cars being stolen.

Based on an average \$4000 claim, ICBC saved \$1.2 million in the first three months of the program, against the initial start up program investment of \$950,000 (including the cars, equipment, advertising media, production and fees).

Keeping The Momentum Going

When compared against the base year of 2001 (prior to the program launch) the ongoing reduction of stolen cars was sustained over the next two full years of the program:

- 10% decrease in 2003, 516 fewer stolen car claims
- 16% decrease in 2004, 856 fewer stolen car claims



Putting It Into Perspective

What makes the success that much more remarkable is what's been happening in BC during our program period.



From 2001 to 2004, the population has grown by 118,000, mostly in the Lower Mainland area. More people, more opportunity for thieves to steal cars.



From 2001 to 2004 there have been 14,283 more cars on the road.



Meanwhile, BC's overall crime rate has become the third highest in Canada, and Vancouver's illicit drug use/offences reached an all time high in 2002.



There were also 176,150 more tourists/visitors who are more easily preyed upon by thieves. Especially those visiting by car with out-of-province license plates.

Source: Statistics Canada; BC Stats; Tourism Vancouver; ICBC Motor Vehicle Branch

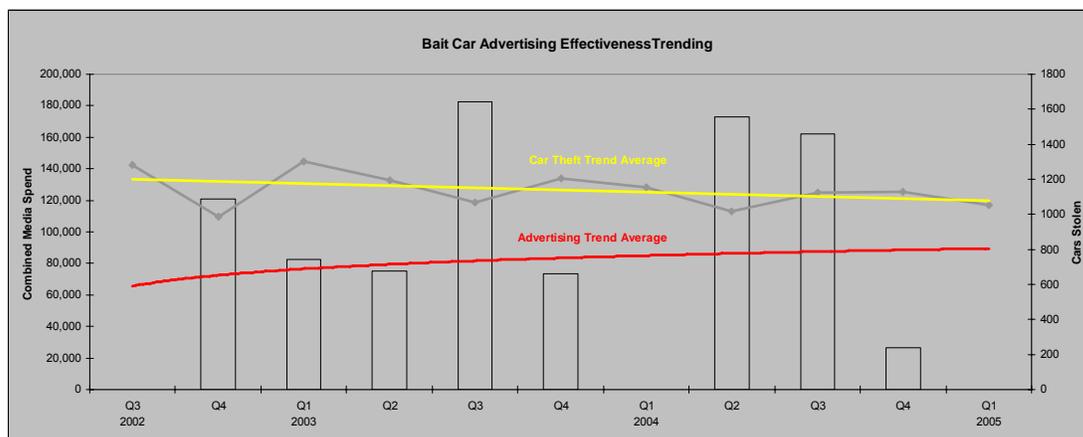
Success Breeds Expansion

The Bait Car program is currently being expanded beyond Vancouver to the GVRD (Greater Vancouver Regional District), Fraser Valley, Victoria, and Nanaimo.

CAUSE & EFFECT BETWEEN ADVERTISING AND RESULTS

It's difficult to measure advertising effectiveness against our target audience directly (as most car thieves tend not to take part in advertising tracking awareness studies).

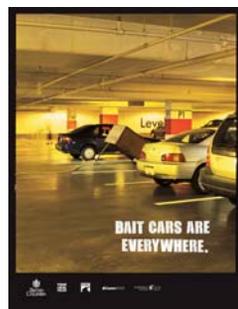
What we can measure, however, is the trend of average advertising spend to car theft reduction. As shown, our yellow line represents the average decline of car thefts over the last three years, with our red line representing averaged advertising activity during the same period. As our average advertising activity increases, car theft averages decrease.



Note: The actual number of Bait Car arrests is a police matter and remains confidential.

Sometimes You Can't Measure Success In Numbers Alone

One person was caught within five minutes of stealing a car, directly as a result of the radio campaign. When listening to the ad on the car radio, the perpetrator mistakenly thought the police were talking to him. Worried that they were in pursuit, he ran a red light. A police car happened to be at the adjacent stop. As the officer pulled him over, the thief kept asking how they were able to speak to him in the stolen car. Perhaps he never figured it out. He pleaded guilty in court.



INTRODUCTION TO CROSSOVER NOTES — CASSIES 2005

[For Bait Cars]

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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34. Longer and Broader Effects, and A Closing Thought .	

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

BAIT CARS. CROSSOVER NOTES. CASSIES 2005.

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.

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.²

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.)

² 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.

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:

- **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.³

³ Another example is Budweiser in Quebec. Its 10-year campaign has always been centred on rock 'n roll, but it has always evolved.

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.

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.⁴ 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.

⁴ 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.

33. Changing the Target Audience. The most famous example is Marlboro, originally positioned against women, with red filter tip so that lipstick didn't show. The Leo Burnett people changed all that with the Marlboro cowboy. This looks easy with hindsight, but when the decision has to be made it can be tough. There's usually a fair amount of angst about losing current users, leading to the sort of creative brief that says "appeal to X without alienating Y."

I recall two spectacular IPA examples that were prepared to alienate previous users: Batchelor's SuperNoodles and Peperami (chewy, sausagey sticks) Advertising had been aimed at Moms for years. They decided to go after young men. Batchelors came up with "men behaving badly" ads. Peperami had a riotously sadistic cartoon campaign. This was anything but "Mom" advertising, but both businesses took off. That's not to say we should always crash around in the china shop, alienating longstanding audiences. But there may be less risk than we think.

Cassies winners who risked alienation include CFL and 5 Alive in 2002, Family Channel in 2004, Crescendo, Eggo, Moores, Harvey's, Juicy Fruit in 2005.

End of Bait Cars Crossover Notes.