

CASSIES 2001 CASES

Brand: Sunlight Laundry Detergent

Advertiser: Unilever Canada

Agency: Ammirati Puris, Toronto

Winner: Sustained Success Silver

Credits: Unilever Canada

Stephen Kouri – VP Brand Development

Ian Gordon – Category Director

Jeff Jackett – Brand Manager

Credits: Ammirati Puris, Toronto

Doug Robinson – Chairman

Arthur Fleischmann – President

Stephen Jurisic – Co-Creative Director

Angus Tucker – Co-Creative Director

Jane Tucker - Senior VP Director of Client Services

Sandra Querin – Group Account Director

Stephanie Eagan – Account Supervisor

Crossover Notes:

These highlight the learning in CASSIES 2001, and “cross over” to the accumulated learning in CASSIES I, II, III, 99. They are listed at the end of the case. [Crossover Notes were not part of the submitted case. I have added them after the event—David Rutherford.]

Executive Summary

Turning a brand around in the packaged goods market is almost unheard of. *Crossover Note 1.* Especially a brand that has been under siege by an ironclad competitor with far greater resources. Even tougher when your competitor owns the category benefit, has three times your share, and is a North American icon.

Sunlight Laundry Detergent pulled off such a feat. In April 98 – March 99, after the launch of the “Go Ahead. Get Dirty.” Campaign, Sunlight had grown 28% in unit sales in a category growing only 3%. Share had increased strongly, while Tide’s had declined. So, having hit Goliath with a few stones from a slingshot, Sunlight now had to be prepared for Tide’s counter attack.

Crossover Note 2.

This paper will show that against all odds—with a decreasing media budget, a roused and aggressive competitor, and no product news—Sunlight continued to grow faster than the market, and at Tide’s expense, for April 99 – March 2000. It will show how Sunlight rang in the new millennium by continuing to chip away at Tide’s share. And it will prove that keeping a campaign idea consistent, while keeping the executional style fresh, can beat out even the biggest spenders. *Crossover Note 3.*

Situation Analysis

Despite high awareness, Sunlight was a very distant number two brand in Canada’s laundry detergent market. By the end of 1997, share had plummeted to 13%, while Tide dominated with 46%.

After launching the “Go Ahead. Get Dirty.” campaign in April 1998, Sunlight’s fortunes reversed. For April 98 – March 99 unit sales jumped 28% in a category plodding along at 3%. This pushed share up 2.5 points while Tide slid by 2.3 points. All indicators pointed to the new advertising as the main reason for Sunlight’s success, and the brand was awarded the Grand Prix at the 1999 CASSIES.

Then Goliath woke up. In response to Sunlight’s success through 1998, Tide launched the “Tide lets kids be kids” campaign with a similar angle to Sunlight. Tide had invested for years in a single-minded performance strategy, and owned “clean” in consumers’ minds. Now they were trying to usurp our promise of freedom and pleasure. They took an aggressive stance, and increased media spending by 32% in 1999 (AC Nielsen).

Our challenge for the new millennium was to perpetuate Sunlight’s success in the face of Tide’s aggressive effort. Furthermore, we had to do this with a 20% reduction in media, as a result of Unilever’s profitability requirements.

How could Sunlight continue to outpace the market, and defend its “freedom” positioning, despite being outspent in advertising at an index of 240, and with no product news?



Go ahead. Get dirty.



Strategy & Execution

The campaign had been founded on the strategic insight that while dirty clothes are a drag, getting them dirty is fun. Sunlight would let you get dirty because no matter how dirty that is, Sunlight gets your clothes clean. This strategy, to “own dirt,” differentiated Sunlight from Tide, which owned “clean.” *Crossover Notes 4 and 5.*

But now we had to deal with Tide encroaching on our newly-forged territory with “Tide lets kids be kids,” and with significantly deeper pockets.

Aware of how difficult it is to find a relevant and motivating strategy, we agreed not to alter the proposition, “Sunlight is an invitation to get dirty.” We knew, however, that we would have to evolve the “Go Ahead. Get Dirty.” campaign. It would have to be distinctive, to separate it from Tide, with a feeling of bigness, to make up for the reduced spending.

The original campaign featured people who embraced the feeling of freedom, relaxed about dirt because they knew that Sunlight would get their clothes clean. For the new campaign, we imagined an entire town filled with people who didn’t get hung up on dirt. What if kids could help little old ladies across the street—and stop to splash in a mud puddle? What if the proprietor of a dress shop didn’t mind that you dripped a chocolate ice cream cone on a dress you were trying on? What if being splashed by a passing bus didn’t ruin your day? This is “Dirtyville.” By creating a mini-series of TV spots, the campaign had a sense of scope and presence.

Furthermore, we found that this devil-may-care attitude could be captured in print, which we posted in laundromats. How would you feel if your kids decided to make snow angels...in the mud? How high would you pile spaghetti if getting dirty didn’t matter? Would you be worried about birds flying overhead while you were sitting on your favourite park bench?

To add further scope and presence we asked ourselves where do you find lots of dirt and lots of people having fun? That led to Sunlight sponsoring the Calgary Stampede, local rodeos, and the western Canada Mountain Bike circuit.

Results

1. Sunlight's sales, in units and dollars, continued to outpace the category in the second year of the campaign. As shown in Exhibit 1 below, unit sales in Year 2 were up another 8% on the 28% already achieved in Year 1. Dollar sales showed an even stronger pattern.

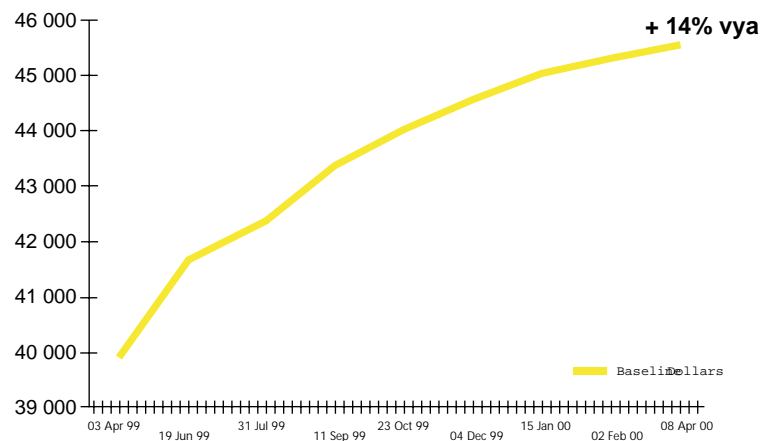
Sunlight Sales versus the Category

	Year 1	Year 2
Sunlight Unit Sales	+28%	+8%
Sunlight Dollar Sales	+31%	+13%
Category Unit Sales	+3%	+2%
Category Dollar Sales	+7%	+5%

Source. Unilever and AC Nielsen.

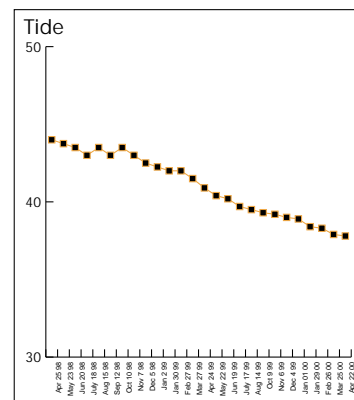
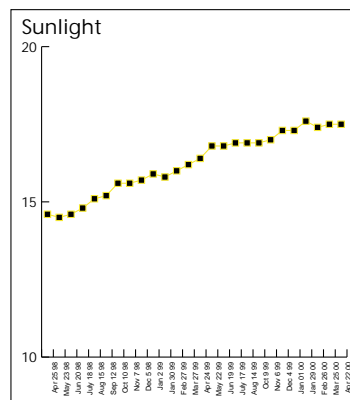
(Year 1 = April 98 – March 99. Year 2 = April 99 – March 2000)

2. Sunlight continued to have strong non-promoted sales. In the launch year for “Go Ahead. Get Dirty.” these had surged at an unprecedented +32% [See CASSIES 99]. As shown opposite, they continued to grow at +14%.



Source: Nielson Monitor database, rolling 52 weekly data, April 11, 1998 – April 8, 2000

3. Sunlight's share continued the upward trend started in April 1998, and Tide continued to slide.



Source: AC Nielson Monitor 52 wk rolling share

Dirtyville :30 *go to commercial*



Betty (VO): I've lived in this town my whole life.
There's just something about this place.



It's uh.... it's different.
Oh, it's pretty of course...



(Background splash sound)
... but I think it's the people that make it so nice.



No-one gets worked up over things here.



It's like, live your life, have some fun... whatever.



Sunlight. Go ahead. Get dirty.

Isolating the Cause and Effect of the Advertising

It is clear from a number of factors that the “Go Ahead. Get Dirty.” campaign is inextricably linked to the continued success of Sunlight:

- 1. Our growth did not occur because Tide vacated the battlefield—quite the contrary. Their creative moved into our territory, and their media spending increased, to an index of 240 versus ours.
- 2. We did not “buy” the growth with spending—our media spending was down 20%.
- 3. Purchase Intent generated by the commercials, as measured by Millward Brown, increased as the campaign evolved. This helps explain increased advertising efficacy despite reduced spending.

Sunlight Purchase Intent

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Sunlight	39.6	41.5	41.5	41.9	42.0
Tide	24.8	24.8	22.5	20.5	19.3

Source ACN 52 Weeks

- 4. There was no product news or reformulation during the “Dirtyville” time period.
- 5. As a result of all this, as noted in Exhibit 2, non-promoted sales (at regular price, with no discounts, promotions or coupons) grew strongly. These are the sales that reflect the underlying strength of the brand. This can only have come from the advertising.



Go ahead. Get dirty.



CROSSOVER NOTES FOR CASSIES 2001

Introduction.

Please take a minute to read this introduction. It will help you get maximum value out of the Crossover Notes.

Practical Points.

- CASSIES I and II ran in 1991 and 1993.
- Longer & Broader is identified by its current name: Sustained Success.

Overview.

The best way to use these notes is to compare and contrast how they apply to different cases.

Please do not read them with the idea that they contain “rules”, but with the idea that broader knowledge leads to better decisions. Also read them with an eye to the issue of risk.

Risk is a complicated subject. Society admires those who boldly go where none has trod before. On the other hand, despite the rhetoric about breaking out of the box, a lot of advertising decisions are governed by the tried-and-true.

I remember the first time I heard an agency say “there are no rules.” I was at Procter & Gamble, and we stiffened in disagreement. This sounded like anarchy.

Bill Bernbach said it best when he pointed out that there are no rules, but there are principles.

In many advertising situations, there is often a tried-and-true precedent. But the tried-and-true also carries a risk—that because of familiarity it has become the expected-and-ignored.

The CASSIES show clearly that taking a well-judged risk pays off.

The CASSIES also confirm that “there are no rules” in the sense that we see some success stories that follow conventional wisdom, and even more striking ones that fly in the face of it.

Compare and Contrast.

Some Crossover Notes apply to several cases. Others apply to just one or two. To help you browse through how they apply to different situations, see the following Index.

David Rutherford.

INDEX OF CROSSOVER NOTES FOR CASSIES 2001

- An Integrated Case.* i-wireless.
- Aging Franchise.* St-Hubert.
- Baby with the Bathwater.* Molson Canadian.
- Battling for the Same High Ground.* St-Hubert.
- Brand Essence.* Molson Canadian.
- Brand Value and Stock Price.* Molson Canadian, Clearnet, Clarica, Manitoba Telephone, i-wireless.
- Brand Linkage.* Molson Canadian.
- Brand-Building.* Clearnet.
- Business Strategy.* Dictated by the Brand Positioning. Clearnet, i-wireless.
- Brand Truths.* Lipton Chicken Noodle.
- Changing the Goalposts.* Lipton Chicken Noodle.
- Classic Rivalries.* Molson, Sunlight, workopolis.com.
- Consumer Insight.* Lipton Chicken Noodle, Kraft Dinner, i-wireless.
- Conventional Wisdom. (Staying In the Box.)* Molson, Sunlight.
- Core Equity.* Molson, Clearnet, Kraft Dinner.
- Creating a Brand from the Concept Up.* i-wireless.
- Emotional versus Rational.* Clearnet, St-Hubert.
- Familiar but Fresh—Building a Campaign.* Clearnet, St-Hubert, Sunlight, Tourism New Brunswick.
- Fixing the Product, then Pulling in the Customers.* St-Hubert.
- Handling Multiple Audiences.* i-wireless.
- Humour in a Serious Category.* Clearnet, Clarica, workopolis.com, Manitoba Telephone, Weather Network.
- IPA Cases.* Kraft Dinner.
- Keeping it Simple.* Clarica, Tourism New Brunswick, Manitoba Telephone.
- Likeability.* Clarica, Manitoba Telephone.
- No Change in Product.* Weather Network, Lipton Chicken Noodle, i-wireless.
- Not TV.* Weather Network.
- Out of the Box Thinking.* Molson Canadian.
- Personality versus Product.* Clearnet, Weather Network.
- Pre-emptive Media Timing.* Tourism New Brunswick, i-wireless.
- Portfolio Management.* Manitoba Telephone, Kraft Dinner.
- Positive or Negative Sell?* workopolis.com.
- Problem versus Solution.* Sunlight.
- Reach and Frequency versus Large-Space Impact.* Tourism New Brunswick.
- Re-branding and Re-Naming.* Clarica, workopolis.com.
- Showing the Obvious—Yes or No.* Lipton Chicken Noodle.
- Spending Weight versus Idea Weight.* Molson Canadian, Tourism New Brunswick, Manitoba Telephone.
- Strategic Choices.* Kraft Dinner.
- The Total Brand Experience.* Clarica.
- Transcending Advertising.* Molson, Tourism New Brunswick, Manitoba Telephone.
- Turnarounds.* Sunlight, Lipton Chicken Noodle.
- Undercut by Pricing/Promotion. (See also Brand-Building.)* Kraft Dinner, Clearnet.

Crossover Notes for Sunlight.

1. Turnarounds. Pre 2001, the turnarounds—or significant make-overs—include the following:

- Pepsi. The Quebec “Meunier” campaign in CASSIES I
- Crispy Crunch. The “Someone Else’s” campaign in CASSIES I.
- Listerine. The “Oncle Georges” Quebec campaign in CASSIES II.
- Oh Hungry? Oh Henry! in CASSIES II.
- Molson Canadian. The “What Beer’s All About” campaign in CASSIES I, and the first “I am” campaign in CASSIES III.
- Dove. The “Litmus” campaign in CASSIES III.
- Philadelphia Cream Cheese and the “Angel” campaign in CASSIES III;
- becel. The “Young at Heart” campaign in CASSIES 99.
- Eggs. The “Real-Life Farmers” campaign in CASSIES 99.
- Wonder Bread and “Childhood” in CASSIES 99.
- Sunlight. The launch of “Go Ahead. Get Dirty.” In CASSIES 99.

2. Classic Rivalries. Rivalries with a CASSIES connection have been:

- Pepsi versus Coke in Quebec. (Grand Prix in CASSIES I.)
- Listerine versus Scope in Quebec. (Grand Prix in CASSIES II.)
- Duracell versus Energizer. (Silver for Packaged Goods in CASSIES II.)
- Dove versus Ivory. (Gold for Sustained Success in CASSIES III.)
- Canadian versus Blue. (Gold for Sustained Success in CASSIES I, for Beverages in CASSIES III, and the Grand Prix in CASSIES 2001.)
- Richmond Savings versus the banks. (Gold for Services in CASSIES III.)
- Sunlight versus Tide. (Grand Prix in CASSIES 99.)
- Lipton versus Campbell. (Gold for Packaged Goods Food in CASSIES 2001.)
- workopolis.com versus monster.com. (Silver for Best Launch in CASSIES 2001.)

3. Familiar but Fresh—Building a Campaign. How do you connect to what has already been done, while breaking new ground? At one time many companies—particularly the big packaged-goods advertisers—favoured pool-outs. Pool-outs retain the structure of the original ad, with a combination of continuing visual elements, slogans, catch phrases, and tonality. Such campaigns can certainly be effective, but that does not mean that successful campaigns have to be this tightly formatted. Some examples will illustrate the spectrum:

- **Formatted Pool-Out.** Campaigns like “Who wants Gum? I do. I do.” with multiple situations to the same structure. Some practitioners regard this type of campaign as old-fashioned. Others regard it fondly as the way it ought to be. They will point out that the “young at heart” campaign by becel was based on pooling-out, and it won the Gold for Sustained Success in CASSIES 99.

Note: The formatted pool-out can still deliver fabulously effective and creative advertising—for example the UK’s campaign for Hamlet cigars, with 20-year longevity and the type of creativity that has made it one of the most admired campaigns ever.

- **Visual Icons.** Campaigns held together by icons like the Maytag Repair Man and the Marlboro Cowboy and Tony the Tiger. The icon approach is seen by some to be out of date, but that is a mis-call. Certainly, some icon-based campaigns have a dated feel, but others are fresh and current. Absolut Vodka would be an example. So (depending how broadly you define an icon) would Fido.
- **Spokes-people, and Spokes-animals.** Dave Thomas, God rest his soul, would be a recent example, as would Morty the Bison in the 2001 Manitoba Telephone case.

- **Storytelling.** These campaigns are a sub-set of the previous two types, involving a continuing story with character(s) we get to know. The Oxo campaign in the UK is one of the longest-running, with a family evolving over several years, always with Oxo as part of their lives. Storytelling campaigns with well-known personalities have been very successful in Quebec. The Pepsi and Listerine Grand Prix winners in CASSIES I and II would be examples.
- **Music-Based.** This covers a lot of territory. Soft Drinks, Cars, Fast Food, and Beer have all built campaigns this way.
- **Consistent “Voice and Attitude.”** This type of campaign is held together by more subtle things than anthems, slogans, structure, and visual icons. Perhaps the most impressive was the Volkswagen advertising that started in the 60s. Individual executions were very different (some quite serious, some comical, some ironic, some dramatic) but they all had the Volkswagen voice and attitude. Brands like Nike are in this category today.
- **Core message. Customized Execution.** This is the most difficult campaign to define, because individual executions can be totally different from each other. The best CASSIES example is Dove, which built its business spectacularly. (Gold for Sustained Success CASSIES III). The campaign started with an exquisite demonstration commercial called “Litmus” with no people. This was followed by a candid-camera of women in a focus group doing the Litmus test. Then came a “talking head” of the scientist who invented Dove. Then back to another demonstration commercial—a dermatological test—of the effect of Dove on the skin.

These executions were held together by the message of mildness, an element of surprise, and a straightforward brand character. There were no continuing slogans or visual icons.

Caveats:

- It is usually not a good idea to pre-set the type of campaign that you need. Best practice is (1) define the issue (2) create the best solution (3) let the type of campaign fall out of this.
 - The list above is not a checklist. There are many other types of campaign, including those that combine various of the approaches discussed.
4. **Conventional Wisdom.** Tide had established the conventional wisdom that the high ground for detergents was “gets clothes clean.” Though this hardly seems like rocket science, it meant that any brand contesting that high ground had to deal with the fact that Tide owned it. Over the years, various brands—including Sunlight—tried to take on Tide for “clean” and were rebuffed. Sunlight broke out of this straightjacket by focusing on the fun of getting dirty. All markets have conventional wisdom—sometimes top-of-mind, but sometimes unspoken and unchallenged. For this reason it can be extremely difficult to break out of it. Apparently, when US Pepsi executives first saw the prototype executions for the Pepsi Challenge campaign they said, “that’s not Pepsi” and refused to approve it.
 5. **Problem versus Solution.** A cornerstone of conventional wisdom is “focus on the solution, not the problem.” In my experience this belief—when applied to advertising—tends to come more from clients than from creative people, who often find the problem a more compelling way to dramatize what the brand is promising. Like all conventional wisdom, the “solution focus” has examples to support it—Clearnet would be a good (and highly creative) example from the 2001 CASSIES. However, this type of thinking can also stifle new ideas. Sunlight’s advertising, while ultimately delivering a positive message, spends most of its time on the problem. Dove, in CASSIES III, did the same with its highly effective “Litmus” advertising.