

Cassies 2005 Cases

Brand: Toyota Tacoma Relaunch

Winner: Off To A Good Start—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

- Crossover Note 1.** What a Brand Stands For.
- Crossover Note 7.** Fighting for the Same High Ground.
- Crossover Note 9.** Turnarounds.
- Crossover Note 11.** The Eureka Insight.

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): November 2004 to May 2005.

Start of Advertising/Communication Effort: November 1, 2004.

Base Period for Comparison: November 2003 to October 2004.

Compact pickup trucks had been in decline for years, as North Americans continued their fascination with big V8s. Toyota, once a major force in compact pickups, had neglected their entry, the Tacoma, since 1998. It had been virtually unadvertised since that time. If ever there is a good argument for advertising, it's when an unadvertised brand begins a campaign and enjoys spectacular success as a result.

The relaunch of Tacoma was not as simple as running advertising and waiting for success. Toyota is preparing to relaunch the Tundra full-size pickup in 2007, and Tacoma was the first step in making Toyota Trucks more serious, tough, and work-related. Toyota Trucks had focused on recreational activity for 9 years, so a dramatic re-positioning was necessary.

In the truck market, the Big 3¹ own "tough." We needed to present Tacoma as tougher than competitors, but we had to do this credibly. **Crossover Note 7.** Toyota does not have a 100-year history of working on farms and construction sites in North America, so many see the brand as something less than the tough trucks they have grown up with.

Post-launch sales have been spectacular, with growth close to triple the previous year. **Crossover Note 9.**

Tacoma is now well on its way to being established as a rugged and serious player in the truck segment.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

a) Overall Assessment

The compact pickup segment has an interesting history in North America. It was created in the 70s when the Japanese started to export the trucks they had made for Japan. These trucks were not much more than a curiosity for North Americans, who were raised on big V8 pickups. But they were inexpensive, and found a market as delivery vehicles.

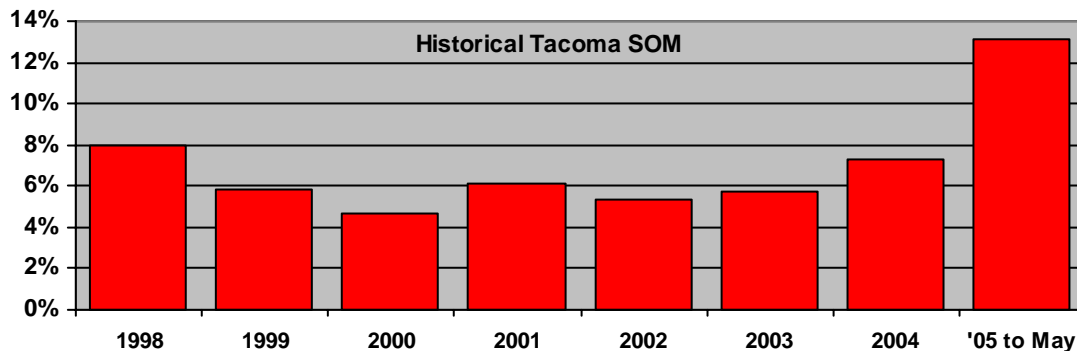
In the early 80s, Japanese manufacturers felt the U.S. would impose import restrictions to curb the growth of Japanese vehicles. They decided to install their own restrictions, and agreed to self-imposed limits on passenger car sales for 1981 - 1983. This excluded "commercial vehicles" and most of the Japanese companies used compact pickups to shore up total sales. During that time Toyota, Nissan and Mazda had the top three compact pickups. Although Canada did not get the self-imposed restrictions, it was affected by the activity south of the border, and the Toyota compact pickup became a number 1 seller.

¹ The Big 3 include DaimlerChrysler, Ford and General Motors

By the mid 1980s the situation had changed. The Japanese turned their efforts to passenger cars, and their interest in compact pickups waned.

Toyota refocused on compact pickups in 1995, with the introduction of the Tacoma. Although highly regarded, Tacoma never contended as a sales leader because the Big 3 were making substantial marketing investments—in advertising support and low pricing. In the U.S. the Big 3 have extra motivation to maintain high sales for compact pickups. They are more fuel-efficient. This reduces the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) rating, thus escaping a surcharge on their V8 pickups.

The Tacoma was launched in 1995 with moderate advertising support, and over the course of the next three years this was reduced to zero. For 1998 to 2004 Tacoma enjoyed virtually no advertising support, and the result was declining sales and market share.



b) Resulting Objectives

Toyota's sales objective for the Tacoma re-launch was to double sales in the first year. This was the minimum expectation.

Additionally, Tacoma needed to set a market position for Toyota to build on with the introduction of a completely re-designed full-size Tundra pickup in 2007. Positioning Tacoma in a clever way outside the realm of “trucks” was not a consideration. Tacoma needed to establish Toyota as a serious player in the truck business. This would be accomplished with the first advertising budget on Tacoma in six years.

STRATEGY & INSIGHT

Toyota had considerable success in the commercial vehicles segment in the late 1990s. Campaigns had avoided direct competition with the Big 3. Trucks and SUVs were positioned as recreation vehicles, with the musical anthem “I don't want to work,” and a very successful campaign called “you belong outside.” Tacoma would need to chart new territory to be seen as a serious player in the truck market. **Crossover Note 1.**

The first question was whether to implement a strategy similar to the U.S., where Tacoma enjoys much higher success. This was ruled out, because the market and competitive environment are very different.

In the U.S., the Tacoma is the least expensive truck in its segment. This makes it easier to attract younger buyers in the U.S. In Canada, the median age of a Tacoma buyer is 45. That means the super-youthful U.S. positioning and advertising would probably not be right for Canada. Further, the U.S. positioning would not pave the way to a serious truck positioning for Toyota, in advance of the next Tundra.

The Big 3 make tough trucks. Fords are “built Ford tough.” A Dodge is “Ram tough,” and Chevrolets are “like a rock.” There’s nothing more attractively American than a pickup truck. The image of an American worker, proudly sweating in the hot sun while he earns an honest living, is very motivating to a truck buyer. The Big 3 trade on this, and it seems to be exclusive territory for them. Ironically, in the compact segment, the Toyota is designed and built in North America, while the Ford Ranger is for all intents and purposes a Mazda. For the relaunch of the Tacoma we needed a genuine way to present the brand as tough.

We considered three positionings: Work-tough, with Tacoma on Canadian oil fields and farms. Recreation-tough, with Tacoma in wild off-road situations. International-tough, with Tacoma shown in exotic locals, surrounded by disaster.

Our eureka moment came with CNN-type footage, showing Toyota trucks at work in the midst of disasters around the world. It occurred to us that we could show how tough Toyota trucks are without shooting any footage ourselves. This would be an honest perspective on the world these trucks live in—and it could eliminate the “toughness deficit” that Toyota suffers because of not having a North American work heritage.

Crossover Note 11.

We quickly created a ripomatic, using nothing but news footage and some inspired music.

The theme was “Never Quit.” We showed the creative at Toyota and to focus groups. Consumers had all seen Toyotas in these situations for years. And what could be tougher? Surviving an earthquake in Mogadishu, or surviving a snow storm in the Prairies?

EXECUTION

This began with TV creative based on news footage. It was augmented by a commercial based on Toyota truck “heritage” and the new vehicle. We also created three additional commercials focused on truck features (a dividable bed, high horsepower, larger size).

The campaign began on November 1 with Specialty Network TV, augmented by regular Network TV in the west. There was also national newspaper and magazine advertising. The advertising launch was reinforced with in-dealership events, where key customers were invited to preview the new vehicle. The agency also prepared POP materials to support these events.

Tacoma Print Advertising:

<p>toyota.ca</p>	<p>Out here you don't need a bigger truck. You need a better bigger truck.</p>	<p>Every day, in almost every place on earth, people depend on Toyota trucks.</p>
<p>THE ALL-NEW 2005 TACOMA</p>		
<p>4° 14' South, 15° 14' East</p> <p>In the Congo, fires are as urgent as they are here, just harder to get to. No wonder they depend on Toyota trucks.</p>	<p>Size alone doesn't make the truck. How do we know? Every day, all over the world, people put Toyota trucks of all sizes through their paces. And despite some of the most grueling conditions imaginable, the trucks don't seem to mind.</p> <p><i>Everything we learn out there goes in here.</i></p> <p>All the hard lessons the world has taught us have gone into the all-new 2005 Tacoma. Not only is it one of the biggest in its class, but with a 4.0 litre, 245 hp V6 that makes some V8's nervous, it may just be the best.</p>	<p>A 4.0 litre, 245 hp V6 engine gives the 2005 Tacoma its ample power.</p> <p>The standard bed-rail utility system gives it unmatched versatility.</p>
<p>Never Quit TOYOTA TRUCK </p>		

Tacoma TV advertising:

Toyota Tacoma - :60 second TV – “Heritage”



MUSIC THROUGHOUT.

MALE V/O: Water. Fire. Earth. Air.



MALE V/O: Impossible roads. Or no roads possible. Whatever gets thrown at them, people all over the world depend on Toyota trucks to make it through.



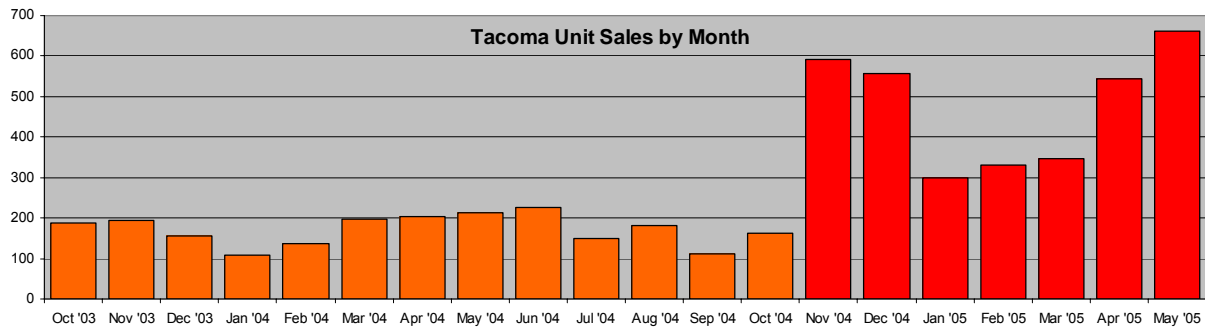
MALE V/O: Everything we've learned out there ...has gone in here.



MALE V/O: Introducing the 2005 Tacoma.

BUSINESS RESULTS

There was an immediate turnaround following the launch of the new truck. November was triple year ago. December continued the climb. Then (because sales were much higher than expected) there were supply problems in January/February. Once supply was restored, growth continued, with sales for the first 7 months post-launch +176% versus previous the year.



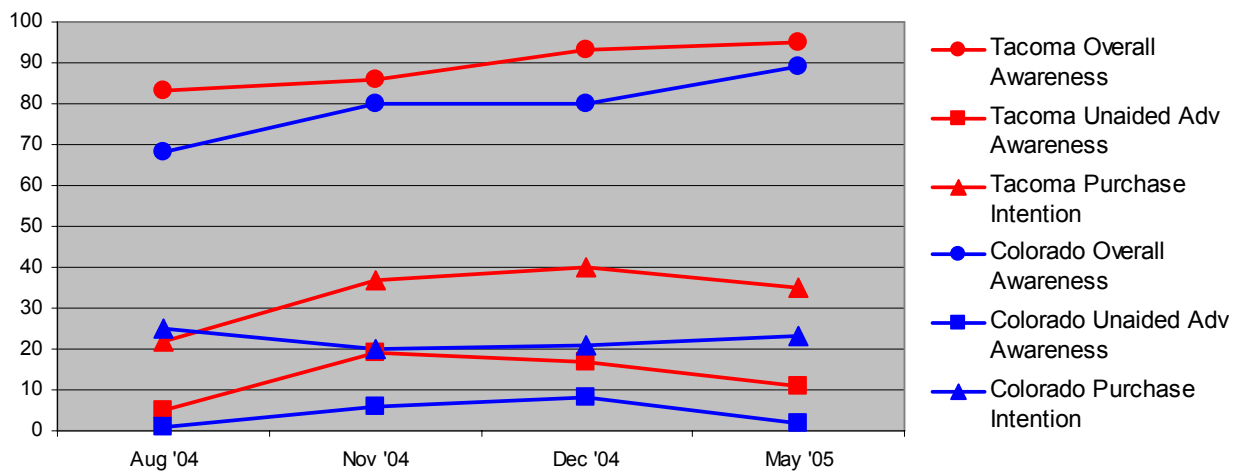
Given that we also had to pave the way for the introduction of the next Tundra, we also needed to see change in consumer awareness and perception of Tacoma. Toyota's on-going tracking by Millward Brown provided data to support our success. [Numbers were supplied.]

CAUSE & EFFECT BETWEEN ADVERTISING AND RESULTS

Millward Brown Data:

Overall awareness increased 12 points, from 83% in August '04 to 95% at the end of the 7-month results period. Advertising awareness increased immediately from 5% in August '04 to 19% in the first month of the campaign. Purchase intent increased from 22% in August '04 to 40% at the end of the first flight of advertising (Dec '04).

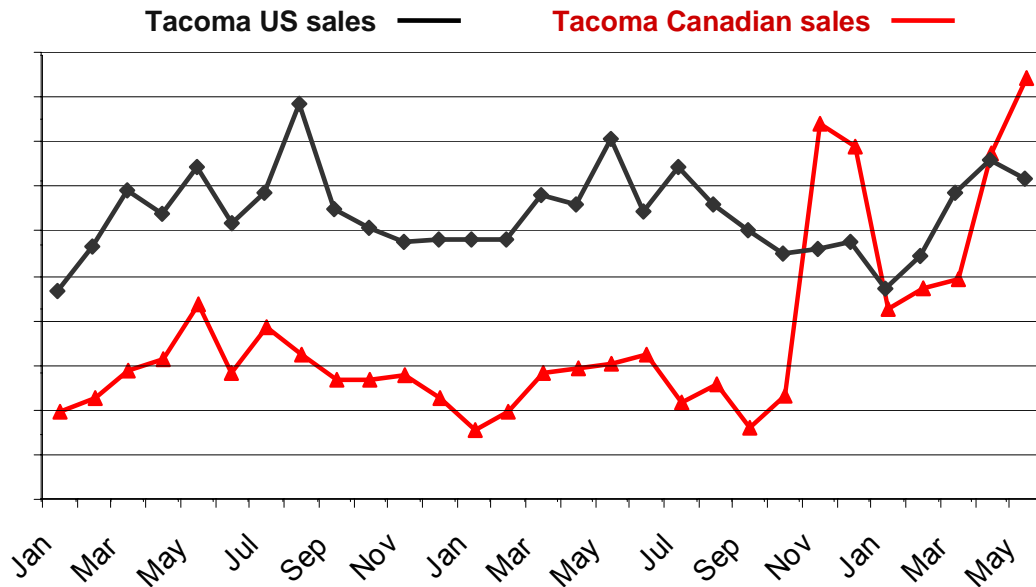
This compared very favourably to the campaign for Chevrolet Colorado, which was launched into the same segment earlier in 2004.



Canada versus U.S. Tacoma launch:

The same product was launched into the same segment at the same time, supported by different positionings and strategies. Tacoma sales in Canada grew by +176% versus the previous year for the first seven months post-launch. In the U.S. Tacoma sales declined 3.5% during the same period, though it should be noted that the run up to launch in the U.S. included a large sell-off of old stock, making subsequent sales increases difficult to achieve.

Tacoma US sales versus Canada sales – Jan 2003 to May 2005



The chart shows the relative sales pattern for U.S. and Canada, without quantifying absolute volume (actual U.S. volume is more than 10 times the Canadian volume)

End of Case. Crossover Notes follow.

INTRODUCTION TO CROSSOVER NOTES — CASSIES 2005

[For Toyota Tacoma]

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

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

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

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

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

You can use Crossover Notes in two ways. Although they didn’t start out as a crash course in advertising, they are worth reading as a whole. You can also dip into them selectively. The headings on the next page will help you choose.

I’ve tried to be even-handed on controversial issues, but here and there you will sense my point of view. For this I thank the Cassies for not editing their Editor.

We now have over 150 published cases. They’re a growing body of experience. I hope I’ve helped pass some of the learning on.

David Rutherford

Toronto: December 2005.

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

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

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

TOYOTA TACOMA. 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*.² 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.³

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.

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

³ How do you do this, and evolve? See *Excellence in Brand Communication*: www.ica.adbeast.com

7. Fighting for the Same High Ground. Some people feel that a brand should not fight for high ground already held by a competitor. It comes out as “our positioning has to be unique.” This sounds so right, how can it be wrong? Consider Cassies III. Lever wanted to pre-empt the arrival of P&G’s Oil of Olay bar from the US, and decided to kick-start Dove sales via new advertising. They had a spectacular product demonstration. Dove is not a soap, and when it is subjected to litmus paper, the colour does not change. With soaps—including Ivory—the paper turns an ugly blue. But this is essentially a mildness demonstration, and Ivory owned mildness. Some heavy hitters in international management (at the client and agency) predicted disaster if Dove took on Ivory. But Dove attacked anyway. At the start of the case, Dove and Ivory had the same dollar share. Four years later Dove’s dollar sales were up 73%, and Ivory had dropped to half of Dove’s dollar share.

And how do you decide whether to attack or not? On winnability. Yes, Ivory held the mildness position, but with “litmus” Dove had a superb claim on that territory.

The key is how you think about distinctiveness. It does *not* have to come from positioning. Consider Duracell and Energizer. Duracell was the first brand to stake out “lasts longer,” and Energizer (believing they could not attack this high ground) languished in other territory for years. Eventually they decided to attack, and the Energizer Bunny has been going and going ever since. Both brands have the high ground positioning. They get their distinctiveness from execution.

One last variation on this theme. Sunlight wanted to attack Tide on cleaning, but decided that a frontal assault on such a powerful brand would fail. They still attacked, however, but they re-defined “clean” as the joy of getting dirty. This brilliant insight helped them win the Grand Prix in Cassies 99.

I’m not saying you should always attack a competitor on the high ground. There are many Cassies successes based on side-stepping or re-defining the high ground. Cottonelle, Desjardins, Gaz Metro and Réno Dépôt did this in Cassies 2004. Cruisin’ to Win, Crescendo, Whiskas, Twix, Moores and Lotto 6/49 did this in Cassies 2005. Even so, I think the high ground is still one of the first places you should look.

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.

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

- Oh Henry! None of the gut-fillers had tried to own hunger, even though it was the high ground for the category. Cassies II. See also *Crossover Note 7*.
- Buckley's. Rather than side-step their bad taste, Buckley's relished it. Cassies III.
- Chrysler. Minivans were "my most expensive household appliance." Even so, *emotion* was the key to an immensely successful launch. Cassies III.
- Philadelphia Cream Cheese. In research, people often do not own up to what they really want, which in this case was "permission to indulge." Cassies III.
- Richmond Savings. Almost everyone hated banks, but it still took insight to turn this into the "Humungous Bank." Cassies III.
- Eggs are natural, but in word-association tests, consumers did not say so. (See *12. Changing the Goalposts*.) The farmer campaign brought "natural" to life.

- Sunlight. Getting dirty is fun. This is diametrically opposed to the conventional wisdom, dominated by Tide, that clean is good and dirt is bad. Cassies 99.
- Fido in Cassies 99. In an echo of Apple vs. IBM, Fido saw that consumers needed the human touch. See also Clearnet and “the future is friendly” in Cassies 2001.
- Diet Pepsi in Cassies 2002. They found a way to be youthful without being too young in the “forever young” campaign.
- Listerine in Cassies 2002: healthy gums, after a century talking about bad breath.
- Pro•Line in Cassies 2002: Appealed to non-experts with “Anyone can win.”
- Aero. Saw the power of “melting” in Cassies 2003.
- Crown Diamond. Used the fact that men hate to paint in Cassies 2003.
- Super 7. Ignored the political correctness of being tasteful. Cassies 2003.
- Cottonelle. Talked to women as women, not as “family.” Cassies 2004.
- Quebec Milk. Saw the blindingly obvious. That just asking people to drink more milk might cause it. Cassies 2004.
- Toyota Sienna. Realized that the answer lay not in what minivan buyers do, but in what SUV buyers do. Cassies 2004.
- Irving’s Cruisin’ to Win. Saw the power of *small* prizes. Cassies 2005.
- Crescendo. Like Oh Henry! saw unoccupied high ground. Cassies 2005.
- Butter. Saw a way to use “natural” to connote taste and health. Cassies 2005.
- Anti-Smoking. Saw the power of “Stupid.” Cassies 2005.
- Jergens Ultra Care. Saw a way to reposition skin. Cassies 2005.
- Whiskas saw things from the *cat’s* point of view. Cassies 2005.
- Moores used the fact that their target audience hates shopping. Cassies 2005.
- Harvey’s realized the significance of The Grill.
- Quebec Lotto 6/49. If 6/49 winners are so generous, be nice to them.
- United Way saw power in the Hand icon.
- Leucan realized that there is still hope, despite childhood cancer.
- CIBC Run for the Cure saw the power in the Pinnie idea.
- Juicy Fruit saw how to build a new image by (almost literally) destroying the old one.
- Quebec Milk saw power in the obvious—if one glass is good, two are better.
- Plus virtually all the cases in *Crossover Note 10*.

End of Tacoma Crossover Notes