

Cassies 2005 Cases

Brand: United Way. The "Hand" Campaign

Winner: Not For Profit, Sustained Success—Gold

Client Credits: United Way of Greater Toronto

Judith John, Vice President Marketing and Communications
Sandy Salem, Director of Marketing
Tina McFadden, Marketing Manager

Agency Credits: Arnold Worldwide

Trish Sullivan, Vice President Strategic Planner
Kim Warren, Account Supervisor
Bill Newberry, Senior Vice President, Co-Creative Director
Tim Kavander, Senior Vice President, Co-Creative Director
Samantha Pollock, Account Co-ordinator

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 2. Brand Truths.
- Crossover Note 11. The Eureka Insight.
- Crossover Note 16. When a campaign stumbles.
- Crossover Note 18. Keeping it Simple.
- Crossover Note 23. Problem versus Solution.
- Crossover Note 24. Tough Topics.
- Crossover Note 25. Brand Linkage (when should the brand name appear).
- 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: 2003 (September 2003-January 2004). 2004 (September 2005 – January 2005).

Start of Advertising/Communication: September 2003, September 2004.

Base Period for Comparison: Campaign 2000, 2001, 2002.

Toronto's population is aging and funding for health care is decreasing. One of every four seniors, and one in three children, live in poverty. We are becoming desensitized to these and similar issues. So how do you get people to support the United Way, when the so many charitable causes are closer to their hearts? **Crossover Note 24.**

For 2000, 2001, 2002 we overcame this challenge with the "Testimonial" campaign (Cassie Silver 2003). Donations increased, and unprecedented levels of pro bono media dollars helped reposition United Way on a more human level. This also motivated 20,000 volunteers, staff and agency members. **Crossover Note 32.** However, there were signs that the "Testimonial" campaign was losing its effectiveness. In 2002 we saw a drop in awareness, suggesting wear-out. **Crossover Note 16.**

So what do you do for an encore?

Typically, after a three year pro bono stint, an agency would hand over the baton. But we all wanted to accept this new challenge.

The new 2003/2004 "Hand" campaign was a resounding success on all fronts. Donations for 2003 and 2004 hit new records, at a time of intense donor fatigue. Proving that there is nothing as valuable as a compelling idea.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

In 2003 the United Way was embroiled in an intense battle for "share of compassion." Government cutbacks in health care and social service were creating huge pressure on the charitable sector to raise funds. To make matters worse, the sector was scrambling for dollars from a very small group of people. In Canada, 5% of donors account for more than 50% of donations. Half of those donations go to religious organizations, 20% to disease and health care, and just 10% to social services—which has tens of thousands of organizations asking for money. As well, donorship in 2002 had declined for the first time in 10 years. A weak economy was one factor, but the decline was mostly attributed to headlines such as these about charity scams. "*No one watching charities,*" "*Charity scam preyed on desperate couples,*" "*Bad Boys of Charity waste your money,*" and "*Bogus Parkinson's group thrives on hard sell.*"

Out of necessity, not-for-profits were becoming more aggressive in their fundraising tactics. Many hired packaged goods marketers to build brands and marketing programs. Many had significant marketing budgets to support paid campaigns. In contrast, United Way relied entirely on donated media space. This made compelling creative essential, because the amount of pro bono advertising is very much affected by the media's opinion of the creative.

With this explosion of marketing activity, the public was becoming increasingly cynical. They told us they were tired of having their heartstrings tugged, or being frightened into donating. There was also a particular helplessness about poverty and homelessness. On every street corner it seemed there was someone looking for change. All of this led to the following objectives:

Business

Generate pro-bono advertising dollars equal to 2002
Hit the 2003 and 2004 donation goals

Communication

Break-through the clutter
Overcome donor desensitization
Support the United Way brand image, and strengthen its emotional connection

STRATEGY & INSIGHT

We ran groups (donors and non-donors) in makeshift focus group facilities, to lower costs, and create an unpretentious atmosphere. People brought images that represented the United Way, and we turned these into a collage for discussion. The grassroots atmosphere enabled people to express authentic opinions, without feeling pressure to say the “right” thing (a challenge when doing cause-related work).

The deeper “A-HA” – subtle sense of guilt Crossover Note 2.

We reaffirmed that many donate to causes that have a personal, emotional connection (cancer, heart/stroke, education, church). However, some of the harsher imagery of urban poverty uncovered unease in the group. Shoulders came up around ears, and eyes turned to the floor. While people gave to other causes, and tended to rationalize not giving to the poor, there was an underlying sense of guilt and conflict when they walked past a homeless person. At the same time they felt conflicted. Does this person really need it? What good will it do anyway? We saw opportunity in these feelings.

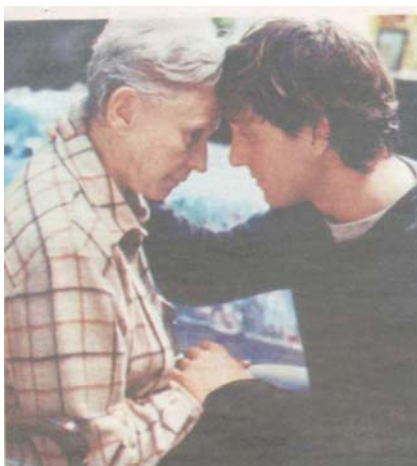
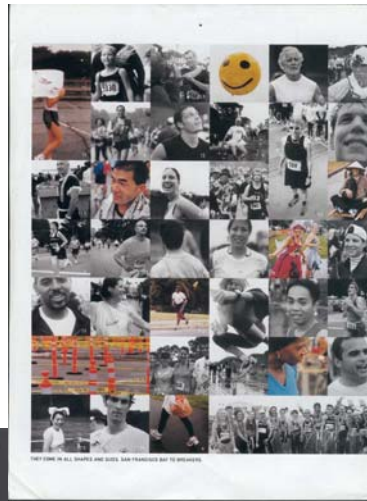
Permission to deliver a kick in the butt

Probing uncovered that United Way could present urgent, almost desolate imagery. Most potential donors said this was really the only way to get them to donate. We checked that this would make sense for United Way. Donors and potential donors felt that tough imagery was consistent with United Way’s role of public education. As well, that United Way had the credibility and trust to present the real story, and not engage in scare tactics.

Previously undiscovered brand equity – the human touch Crossover Note 11.

We found big equity for United Way in hand imagery. Interestingly, this did not come from the UW logo; it was an authentic representation of the essence of United Way at its very best. United Way was no longer just a financial hand up; it was a helping hand to those in need. Crossover Note 1. This emotional connection was not there before the Testimonial campaign. It had primed the pump.

OUR GROUP COLLAGE



Assuaging guilt an easing feelings of conflict

This became our strategy. Giving to United Way is the simple way to take care of the most vulnerable in the city. With one donation you can rest assured that you are doing your part to help those who need it most. No more guilt. No more conflict.

This message would be more urgent and edgier than Testimonial. While we had been granted permission to do this in the qualitative research, it was still a topic of internal debate. It could be risky, given consumer cynicism. If executed poorly it could undo much of the good work done to create a more human image for the brand. The wrong idea could turn people off, turn the media away, and ultimately reduce donations.

Crossover Note 23.

To counter this concern, we mandated that the tone and manner had to capture the personal and compassionate side of the brand character. Still, being urgent, edgy and also compassionate would be a challenge.

EXECUTION

The solution was to use the hand *as an icon of protection*. The lead execution in transit and print showed a hand sheltering a homeless man from the rain. The icon is the hand of the viewer and suggests, “Making a difference is easier than you think.” The image is arresting and compassionate at the same time, and through a series of similar ads we were able to show a multitude of ways that we all can help. **Crossover Note 18.**

The campaign was grittier than Testimonial e.g. with a TV spot of domestic violence. **Crossover Note 25.** This was a risk we were willing to take, to break through. The creative was intensely human, and we were confident this would mediate any backlash.

The campaign ran September 03 - January 04, and again September 04 –January 05. Key elements included:

- 2003:
- 2 x :30 Television ads (“Homeless,” “Apartment”)
 - 4 x Print executions (Homeless, Bridge, Wheelchair, Danger)
 - 3 x Transit poster
 - Zoom media (bars and restaurants)
 - Go Transit total paint
- 2004:
- In 2004 the following first time ever pro bono media was provided:
 - Superboards
 - On-line – banner and skyscraper ads
 - Notable support from www.globeandmail.com, www.tsn.ca, www.toronto.com, www.chatelaine.com and many others
 - Famous Players in-cinema promotion

The creative was also run nationally by many media partners (e.g. *Globe & Mail*, *National Post*, CTV) and picked up by United Ways across the country.

UNITED WAY – “HOMELESS” PRINT



PAID FOR BY FRIENDS OF UNITED WAY

When you give to United Way, you're helping homeless people overcome the obstacles in their lives by providing things like shelter, hot meals and training programs. With United Way-funded agencies helping so many in our community, making a difference is easier than you think. Visit www.unitedway.ca

WITHOUT YOU, THERE WOULD BE NO WAY



United Way

UNITED WAY – GO TRANSIT - “HAND” TOTAL PAINT



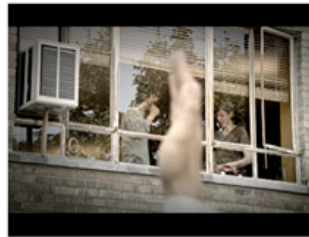
UNITED WAY - :30 TELEVISION – “APARTMENT” [Domestic Violence]



SFX: Man shouting.



SFX: Man shouting. Baby crying.



Annc: Helping those in need is easier than you think.
SFX: Man stops shouting.



Annc: So please give generously.

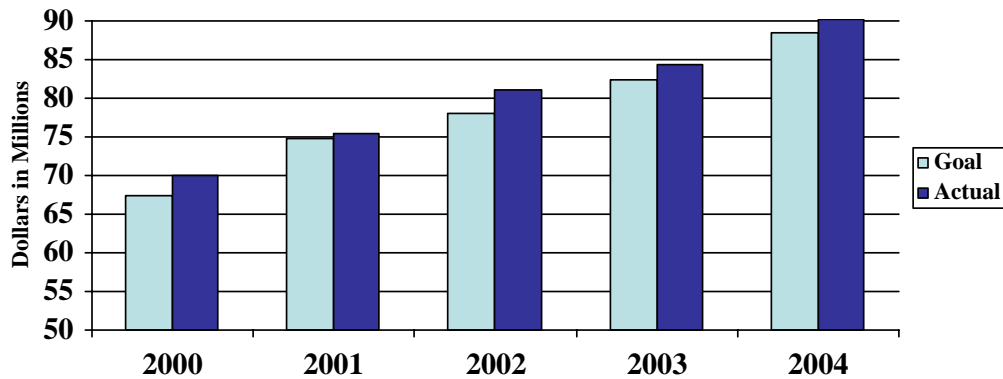
BUSINESS RESULTS

United Way 2003 and 2004 campaigns were a resounding success on all fronts.

Donations

Donations increased year over year, a significant accomplishment in a market where charitable giving was in decline (approximately - 1% as per Canadian Centre for Philanthropy data, 2003), competition was aggressive, and donor fatigue was significant.

United Way Donations

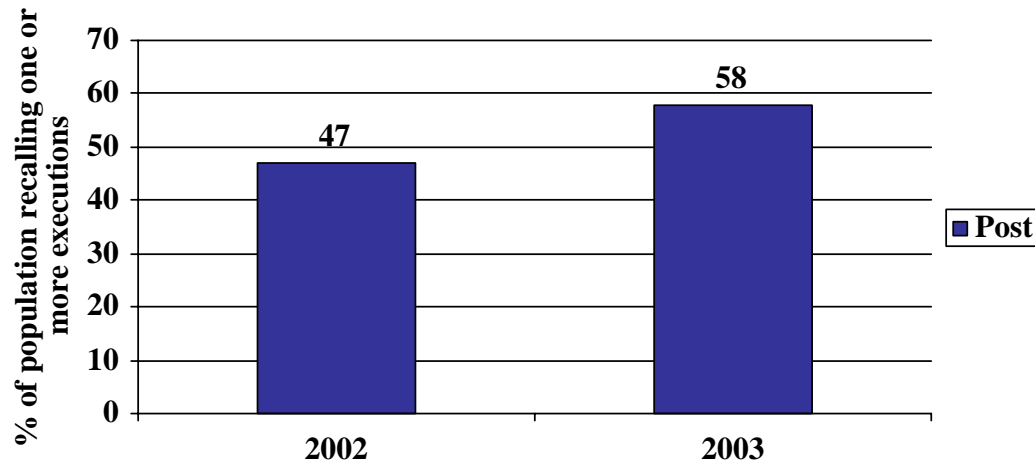


Source: United Way of Greater Toronto, 2005

Advertising Breakthrough

The hand campaign successfully turned around wear-out seen in the last year of the Testimonial campaign. 58% of GTA residents recalled one or more executions in the 2003 campaign – a significant increase versus the 2002 post-campaign executions (47%).

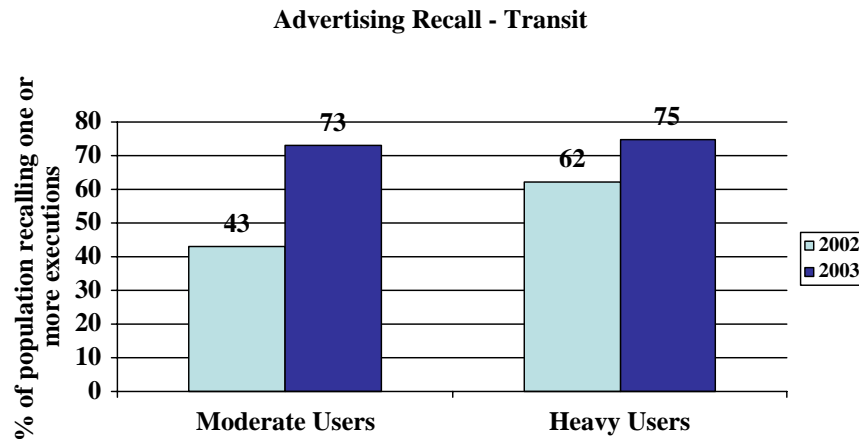
Advertising Recall



Source: 2003 United Way of Greater Toronto, Strategic Council, February 2004

The homeless ad had the greatest recall at 45%. This is significantly higher than the highest score in the 2002 campaign (31%). In particular there were significant recall increases on transit:

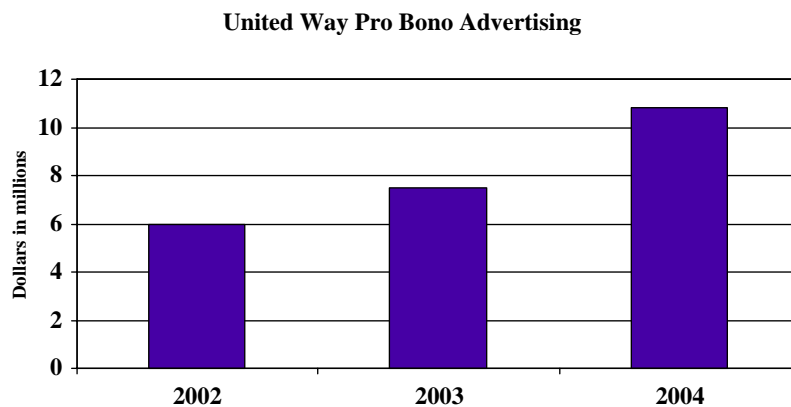
- From 62% in 2002 to 75% in 2003 amongst heavy TTC users.
- From 43% in 2002 to 73% in 2003 amongst moderate TTC users.



Source: 2003 United Way of Greater Toronto Tracking Study, Strategic Council, February 2004

Pro bono advertising

In 2003 United Way received \$7.5 million in pro bono advertising support, an increase of +25% versus 2002. In 2004 the campaign continued to attract supplier attention earning \$10.8 million, an increase of +44% above the record levels set in 2003.

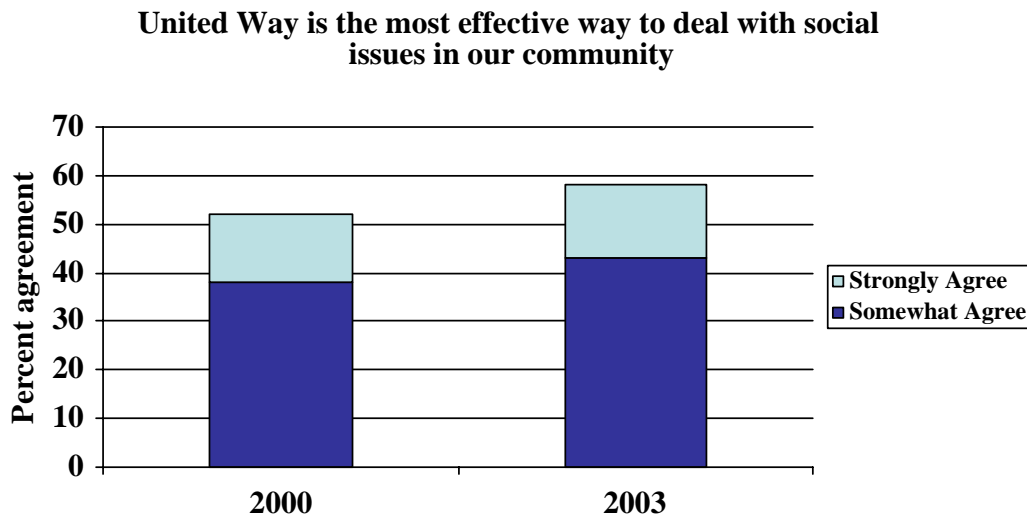


Source: United Way of Greater Toronto, 2005

The agency also secured high profile industry players as a result of their interest in the creative—over \$190,000 in television and print production. This included Director David Tenant for television, Shin Sugino for photography, Untitled for production services, and Panic & Bob for editing.

Brand image

This continued to improve, with more people agreeing that “United Way is the most effective way to deal with social issues in the community” and “United Way makes a positive and lasting difference in people’s lives” versus our 2000 starting point.



Source: 2003 United Way of Greater Toronto Tracking Study, Strategic Council, February 2004

Awards/Recognition

The campaign was recognized with a number of nominations and awards:

2004 London International Awards

Finalist Public Service Campaign

Finalist Public Service Single “Homeless”

2004 Portfolios.com Awards

Gold Poster Single “Homeless”

2004 Applied Arts Photography Annual

Best Photography Public Service Campaign

2004 One Show

Finalist Public Service Single “Bridge”

Feedback from United Way Staff, Volunteers, Donors and Media

United Way received a phenomenal amount of positive feedback on the campaign. Callers, without knowing our campaign name, would refer to it as the Hand advertising. The press praised the work. This qualitative feedback affirmed that the creative was highly noticed and was making an emotional connection. It also suggests that we were striking the right balance between urgency and humanity. [Information was supplied.]

CAUSE & EFFECT BETWEEN ADVERTISING AND RESULTS

Tracking illustrated the campaign was highly noticed

Quantitative tracking demonstrated that the advertising broke through and that it had positive impact on brand perceptions. Moreover, the huge increase in recall in Transit clearly demonstrates the power of the creative to telegraph our message in short order.

Campaign creative contributed significantly to getting pro bono advertising

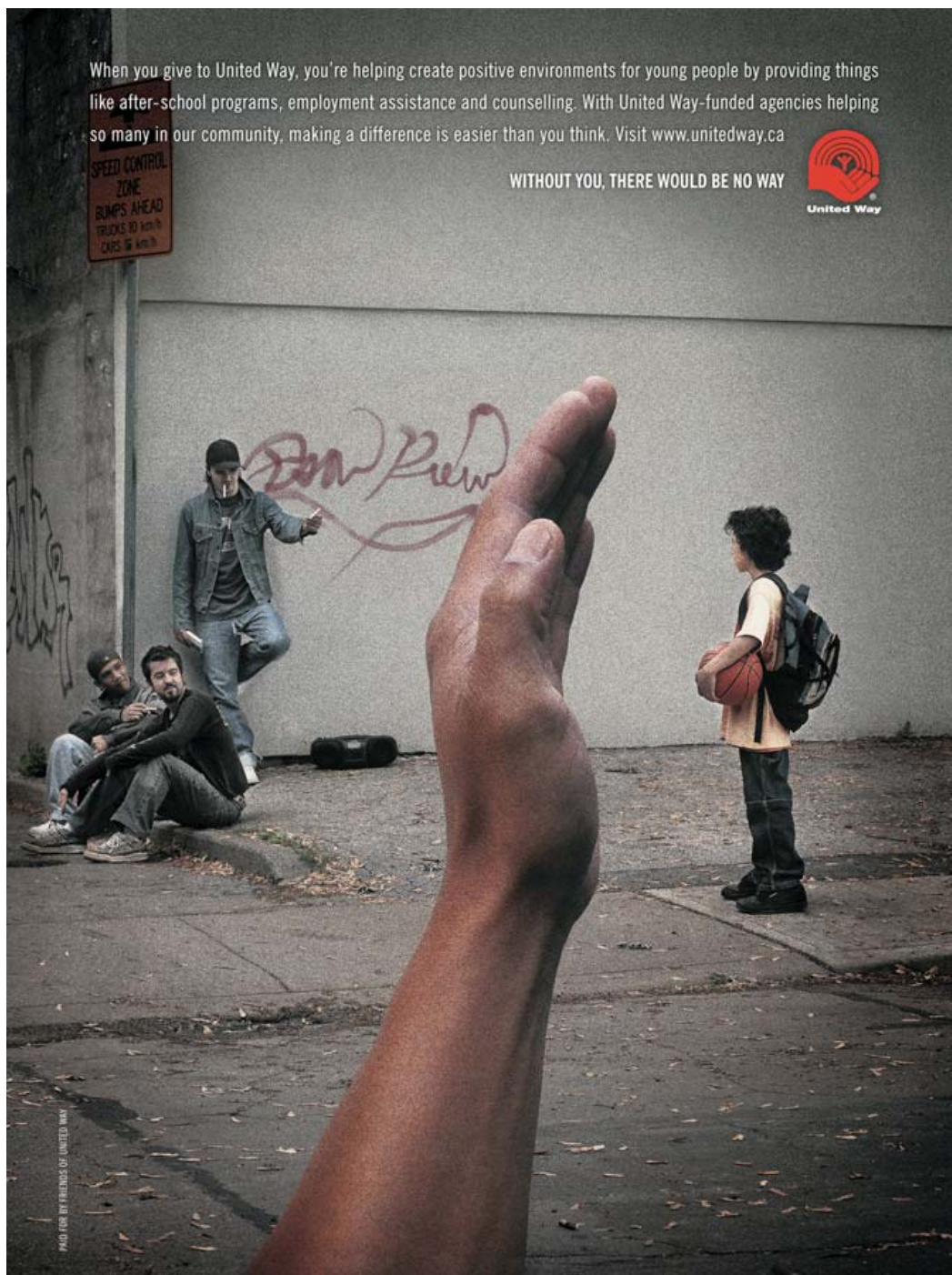
Creative impact is vital to securing pro bono media support. In many instances United Way had a number of media companies approach them with offers of free ad space because they had seen and liked the ads. As well, because the creative was highly visual, many new media partners, such as West Palm Media (Go Transit), were eager to sign up.

Additional media alone would not have driven increased donations.

The only variables to change in 2003 and 2004 versus the 2002 Testimonial campaign were the creative and media received. It is clear that additional media alone would not have been enough to increase donations. In fact, given the cynical consumer environment, increased exposure with an inappropriate message might have had a negative impact on donations, at least in line with market decline.

Additional Executions follow:

UNITED WAY HAND CAMPAIGN - PRINT EXECUTIONS



When you give to United Way, you're helping people who are unable to cope with the difficulties in their lives by providing things like counselling, distress centres and crisis intervention. With United Way-funded agencies helping so many in our community, making a difference is easier than you think. Visit www.unitedway.ca

WITHOUT YOU, THERE WOULD BE NO WAY





PHOTO BY FRIENDS OF UNITED WAY

When you give to United Way, you're helping people with disabilities overcome barriers by providing things like home support, rehabilitation services and skills development. With United Way-funded agencies helping so many in our community, making a difference is easier than you think. Visit www.unitedway.ca

WITHOUT YOU, THERE WOULD BE NO WAY



United Way

End of Case. Crossover Notes follow.

INTRODUCTION TO CROSSOVER NOTES — CASSIES 2005

[For the United Way]

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.

UNITED WAY. 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.¹ 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.²

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.

¹ This is a phrase of mine, though the idea that a brand is "more" has been described by many authors.

² How do you do this, and evolve? See *Excellence in Brand Communication*: www.ica.adbeast.com

- 2. Brand Truths.** Successful advertising (in fact all successful communication) resonates with its audience. As a marketer, you may want people to believe that you have the best-tasting coffee, but simply saying, “I have the best-tasting coffee” will not usually get the resonance you need. One school of thought is to say the obvious as loudly and crassly as you can. We could call it the Bad Boy syndrome. Another has led to the idea of Brand Truths. These operate on a deeper level than simple claims. One of the top UK agencies described it as “we interrogate the product until it confesses its strength.”

I was once the Brand Manager on Tide, and when we were asked, “What does Tide stand for” we said, “Superior cleaning. Not whitening. Not Brightening. Not Fabric Care. Superior *cleaning*.”³

Superior cleaning was the religion on Tide, and Tide delivered, despite the cliché that all detergents are alike. But this was only a glimmer of the Brand Truth. If you “interrogated” Tide the most startling truth was the *intense belief* of Tide users. This came to life in the immensely successful “Two for One Swap” campaign. Hidden cameras watched as women who had just bought Tide were offered two boxes of another detergent in exchange. They adamantly refused, delivering off-the-cuff endorsements that no copywriter could ever have come up with. The campaign ran for years, and only came to an end because of its success—women knew it so well that the “candid camera” interview became impossible. Many Brand Truths are also insights, and for a list see *11. The Eureka Insight* and *12. Changing the Goalposts*.

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.

³ P&G defined “what the brand stands for” by a document they called The Creative Strategy. In those days, if anyone even dreamt that the Tide Creative Strategy should include whitening, brightening etc. it was seen as an offence against all that was holy.

- 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*.

16. When a campaign stumbles. This might be a momentary stutter and (if we were clairvoyant) we would know what was needed to make a minor fix. But it might be the first clue that something is going off the rails. In this situation, the pressure can lead to snap (and wrong) judgments. The best answer usually comes from a blend of experience, judgment, intuition, vision, and research. Here are some pointers.

1. **Dig deep into trends and tastes.** You could be on the wrong side of a tectonic shift. They can be massive. “Made in Japan” used to mean a cheap, shlocky, knock-off, and North American business took years to see what was coming. *Crossover Note 6*. Consider Listerine. “Always a bridesmaid, but never a bride” started life in a Listerine advertisement, reflecting a bad breath positioning that had been in place for as long as anyone can remember. But a shift was happening, towards the idea of a healthy mouth. (See Cassies 1995 and 2002). Something similar has happened in toothpaste. At one time, Pepsodent (“you’ll wonder where the yellow went...”) was the leader, and whitening was the high ground. Crest came along with fluoride (and dental association endorsement). This transformed the market, and Pepsodent slid into history. Over the next generation, though, cavities stopped being the problem they once were.⁴ The market started to shift towards “mouth health” and Colgate got there first with Colgate Total, knocking Crest off its #1 perch. Crest responded with Crest Complete—and now the whole market has come full circle with a furious battle for whitening again.

⁴ Ironically, Crest had helped make this happen, by driving the whole market in this direction.

2. **Look at the goalposts.** If they really haven't changed, then it's likely that you just have a short-term stutter. But if they have, try to envisage the new game. See *11. The Eureka Insight*, and *12. Changing the Goalposts*.
3. **Think through the change needed.** See *6. Should the product be improved?* and *14. Refreshing a Continuing Campaign*.
4. **Change for the right reasons.** It's broadly true that long-running campaigns—kept fresh and relevant—are great brand-builders. And it's sadly true that new people, wanting to make their mark, change things for change's sake. But once in a while, wholesale change is right. Molson Canadian (Cassies I) was a niche player when it launched "What Beer's all About" in the late 80s. Canadian became mainstream, and displaced Labatt Blue as market leader. You'd think they'd keep going with "What Beer's all About." And they did for a few years. But tastes were shifting. To stay ahead of this, they launched "I AM" in the mid 90s (Cassies III). This was successful, but eventually it too ran out of steam. Canadian then re-incarnated again with "Joe's Rant." (Cassies 2001.)

More recently, though this time the need for change more obvious, Juicy Fruit (almost literally) destroyed its former image with the guitar-smashing campaign. (Cassies 2005.)

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*.⁵ 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.

⁵ 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.

23. Problem versus Solution. There's a widespread idea that advertising works better when it is positive—i.e. a mental model that advertising should spend more time on the solution than the problem. But this can be challenged:

- Quebec's "Buckle Up" campaign in Cassies I.
- The campaign against Quebec's Medical Bill 120 in Cassies I.
- The Heart and Stroke campaign in Cassies I.
- Oxfam Canada in Cassies II.
- Buckley's in Cassies III.
- Dove Litmus in Cassies III. (Most of the commercial is showing harshness.)
- Big Brothers Vancouver and Ethical Funds in Cassies 99.
- Sunlight in Cassies 99. (Most of the commercial is spent on getting dirty.)
- Erectile Difficulties in Cassies 2002.
- SAAQ anti-speeding in Cassies 2002.
- Bait Cars in Cassies 2003.
- Familiprix in Cassies 2003.
- Motrin in Cassies 2003.
- Elections Ontario in Cassies 2004.
- The "Stupid" campaign in Cassies 2005. Also the United Way.
- Moores in Cassies 2005.

Note: When I tell people that the Dove and Sunlight commercials spend most of their time on the problem they often disagree, until they re-look at the commercials.

This is why the conventional wisdom needs to be re-examined. The issue shouldn't be the *time* spent on this or that, but on the *net impression* taken away.

24. Tough Topics. The Cassies don't have a lot of cases about complex social issues. However, we do have the following:

- Quebec's "Buckle Up" campaign in Cassies I.
- The Heart and Stroke Foundation in Cassies I.
- Oxfam Canada in Cassies II.
- Goodwill Industries in Cassies II and III.
- ABC Literacy in Cassies III.
- Big Brothers Vancouver in Cassies 99.
- Erectile Difficulties in Cassies 2002, and Viagra in Cassies 2003.
- SAAQ anti-speeding in Cassies 2002.
- Bait Cars and United Way in Cassies 2003.
- Elections Ontario in Cassies 2004.
- The "Stupid" campaign against tobacco in Cassies 2005.
- United Way in 2005

Note: The British and Australian databases have more cases on tough topics.

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.⁶ 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.

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 United Way Crossover Notes.

⁶ 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*.