

Advertising campaign for strongbow essay sample

[Media](#), [Advertising](#)



I. Introduction

Advertising is an essential marketing tool that most companies employ because it creates consumer awareness of the firm's product/service offering thereby generating demand and increasing sales which ultimately lead to profit. Effective advertising must be tailored to resonate with the target market segment (of the brand/product/service being offered). The message communicated to the consumer (about the product) must therefore be catchy, exciting, simple and easy to understand (Exforsys Inc., 2009). Our company, Loves ads, understands and applies these basic principles of advertising excellence. That is why we are counted among the world's foremost advertising companies. This report proposes the activation of a 6-month advertising campaign for Strongbow Cider in the UK. The campaign is aimed at winning over a newer, younger demographic of alcoholic beverage consumers and ultimately increasing market share for our client, Strongbow. The report details how we will attain this objective via our Strongbow 'real man' campaign.

Agency-About us

Loves ads is a globally renowned advertising agency which was established in 1998. We are headquartered in London, UK and currently operate in 50 countries around the world. In the previous year 2011, Loves ads generated revenue of up to 1.1 billion GBP leading to a profit of 110 million GBP. Loves ads' major proficiencies are:

- * Strategic Brand Management
- * Marketing Communications Research
- * Media Buying

- * Strategic Ad & Promotional campaigns
- * Brand Repositioning Campaigns

Through these proficiencies we have consistently delivered the following outcomes for our clients:

- * Improving brand awareness/recognition
- * Boosting sales/Market Penetration
- * Effective Targeting
- * Creating memorable, creative and effective ads

Although we work with a diverse array of businesses in different sectors, we specialize mostly in FMCG's and have delivered excellent results for many of our FMCG clients, in several cases exceeding our projected ROI for our ad campaigns. Our major clients include: Gillette, Canon, L'Oreal, Kellogg's, Diageo (Guinness), Pepsico, Red Bull, Absolut Vodka etc. Most notable among our recent successes, is our 'Red Bull gives you wings to fly' campaign for Red Bull, which culminated in our 'One giant leap for mankind' sub-campaign, chronicling the adventures of brand ambassador; Felix Baumgartner as he defied all odds and became the first man to break the sound-barrier with his 24-mile space jump. Our timely association of the brand with the sky-diver's exploits demonstrates our knack for timely innovation.

Our ethos remains 'Love for creativity and excellence in advertising', and that's why we consistently produce the most profitable ads for our clients. II.

Client brief

The Product:

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Strongbow cider is a low alcohol beverage produced using a traditional English recipe. It comprises an admixture of bitter-sweet cider, apple concentrates and sugar. At least, 50 varieties of culinary apples grown in England and France are used in the production process (GAB, 2012). The Strongbow bottle is strikingly similar in appearance to a beer bottle. The drink is available in the UK on draught (with 4.5% alcohol content) and also in cans and bottles (with 5% alcohol content) (Bargain Booze, 2012). Each Strongbow bottle or can features the signature colours, black and gold with white lettering plus the brand logo; a male figure in relief stretching a bow in order to launch an arrow.

Background

The brand name and logo of Strongbow are based on “Richard Strongbow de’ Clare”, A Norman knight who was nicknamed ‘Strongbow’ for his dexterity with the bow and arrow. The logo depicts his ‘bow-stance’ before shooting the arrow and emphasizes strength and masculinity, values that are associated with the brand (Strongbow Gold, 2012). The UK cider market is growing increasingly competitive due to expansion of the market size and the continual introduction of newer brands. Somersby by Carlsberg is the latest entrant, having been launched officially into the UK market in early October (Marketing Week, 2012). Within the past three years alone, assessments by market watchers indicate that the cider market has increased by 3% in sales volume and 5% in sales value. Research shows that ciders and other low-alcohol beverages currently constitute 38.3% of the alcohol market. The last eight years has seen the market for cider become stronger as initial perceptions of cider as a drink for females (due to their low

alcohol and sweet taste) are waning. This marked consumer attitude change is mainly attributable to Strongbow's marketing communications which remained focused on men while other ciders primarily targeted women. This approach has paid dividends as Strongbow, remains the market leader with 21. 8% of market share, ahead of its closest competitors: Magners Cider with 8. 8% and Stella Artois with 6. 4%.

Strongbow

Strongbow's position as market leader is however under threat as the combined effect of increasing penetration from direct competitors (Cider brands: Magners, Stella Artois, Somersby by Carlsberg etc.) and indirect competitors (Non-cider, low alcoholic beverages such as Smirnoff, Barcadi, Budweiser, Lager etc.) continues to pry away significant slices of their market share. It is estimated that between 2009 and 2011, Strongbow lost 2. 5% of market share, thus dropping its share from 24. 3% to its current value of 21. 8%. Strongbow's continued dominance of the cider market in the UK is due to its string of successful advertising/promotional campaigns which have excelled in positioning Strong-bow cider as the hard-working man's drink. By doing this, they erased the consumer psychological stereotype which suggests that cider is a woman's drink and gave men permission to indulge themselves in Strongbow cider (Marketing Research World, 2012).

Previous Advertising

In 2009-2010, Strongbow worked with St Luke's Communication Ltd to roll out a series of ads which clearly depicted the brand's core target group; skilled, hands-on workers of age 30years and above, taking Strongbow as

the ultimate reward for hard work. In 'Final Push' one of the successful iterations of the campaign and a spoof of the movie '300', the workers, fully outfitted in work regalia with their work tools in hand, gather to listen to a speech from their leader before charging forth with a roar, tools aloft as though into battle. Subsequently, In a spoof of this spoof the scene is replayed except this time a number of bankers who smuggle themselves into the 'Strongbow army' are smoked out and told to 'Sod off' an indication that higher classes of workers aren't part of their target market (Visit4ads, 2012). Problem Identification

Strongbow's advertising has been remarkably successful in targeting working class men within the C2, D range of ages 35-60years, contributing largely to their status as market leader. Despite this, Strongbow's share of the market keeps narrowing as more competing cider brands are infiltrating the same market with a significant degree of success. From a dominant market share of 52% in May, 2009, Strongbow's share whittled down to 24.3% in 2010 and then 21.8% in September 2011. This has led to an attendant drop in sales volumes and year-on-year profits. Although, the brand is still profitable, there is the need to take pre-emptive action before ascendant ciders like Magners and Stella overtake Strongbow in terms of market share and profitability. Opportunitites

Although competition within the cider market is fierce, the market keeps growing at the expense of other UK alcoholic beverages. As stated earlier, within the past 3years, the market has grown by 3% in sales volume and 5% in sales value. This means that more people are switching from alcoholic

beverages such as Lager and Beer to ciders. Inherently, this presents Strongbow with an opportunity to look for poles (or other segments) of expansion/growth within the burgeoning market in order to shore up its status as market leader and acquire more market share. The key to this is for the brand to expand its target consumer to cover younger men as well as those of a higher social class who were previously alienated by Strongbow ads. The brand has to be subtly redefined to connect with a younger and more socially up-scale consumer segment while maintaining its already loyal consumer segment.

Current Brand Wheel

STRONGBOW CIDER BRAND WHEEL

Attributes| Dry cider, Low Alcohol drink, Traditional English recipe, Simple package, Bitter-sweet cider, Relatively low price| Benefits| Refreshing, De-stressing, Saves money, Easy to drink| Values| You feel relaxed, a sense of reward, feel like having fun/It excites you, socializing, you feel in tune with authentic British tradition.| Personality| Down to earth, hard-working, outgoing/Friendly, active, responsible/reliable, Honest, Has a good sense of humour| Essence| A reward for hard work|

Current Target

- * Artisans, skilled workers e. g. plumbers, gas fitters, mechanics, bus drivers etc.
- * 35-60yrs of age
- * C2, D social class
- * Male

Unique Selling Point

Authentic British cider

Current Positioning Statement

For the hard-working man who braves the elements and breaks a sweat everyday to make life easier for others, Strongbow is an authentic British cider that rewards and refreshes you for your daily toils. Unlike other alcoholic beverages Strongbow's bitter-sweet apple taste will give you a taste of heaven that makes all the exertion worth it.

III. CREATIVE STRATEGY

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

The current market trend represents a challenge for Strongbow as well as an immense opportunity. The challenge is for Strongbow to consolidate its position among the older, "working man's" market (C2, D, 35-60yrs) while concurrently moving into a new, younger and also more socially upscale market segment (C1, C2, D, 21-34years). These objectives require a subtle repositioning of the Strongbow brand to appeal to the new target segment thereby including them in the Strongbow family while retaining the old target segment.

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO FOR THE BRAND?

To this end we propose a 6-month advertising campaign aimed at repositioning the Strongbow brand such that we reinforce and maintain the loyalty of Strongbow's current group of consumers (C2, D, 35-60yr old men) while targeting, connecting with and including a younger generation of Strongbow drinkers (21-34years) and also moving a notch higher on the

social ladder by capturing the C1 male consumer. Our campaign will revamp, rejuvenate and refresh Strongbow's image, making it appealing for adult men of all ages.

WHAT WILL WE CHANGE?

Strongbow's earlier advertising has communicated the clear message that Strongbow is the authentic British drink of choice for the hard-working man. To wit, after a day of sweaty, physically tasking work, a working man, deserves a reward for his efforts and Strongbow cider is the drink of choice. The adverts have been heavily skewed towards skilled workers and have utilised adult men between the ages of 35 and above as characters thus resonating well with the target market segment. In order to include a younger, upwardly mobile and socially higher consumer into the Strongbow family, Loves Ads proposes a campaign with a theme that the new and old target segments will both connect with (the younger target market being the primary focus of the campaign).

The campaign will be dubbed the ' Strongbow real man' campaign with an emotive focus on the journey from boyhood to manhood and the inherent challenges of being a ' real man'. The adverts will portray Strongbow as a ' coming of age' ritual for men. It will also communicate the idea that ' everyday is a battle and real men are knights who conquer in battle.' This campaign will resonate with young men such as students and those starting independent life afresh because it will inspire them and tie-in with their values and aspirations. It will also feel older men with nostalgia, reminding them of their initial foray into independent life as a man and ultimately

inspiring and instilling a sense of pride in all men. More importantly, it will position Strongbow as the drink of choice for anyone who considers himself to be a real man.

OGSM

Objective: The overarching objective of this campaign is to increase Strongbow's market share and thereby establish an even more dominant position as market leader within the UK cider market. **Goals:** To increase market share by at least 10%, recouping the 2.5% share of market lost to our competitors between 2009 and 2011 (where Strongbow dropped from 24.3% market share to the current 21.8%) and winning an extra 7.5% in order to gain over 30% of the Cider market within a year. **Strategy:** To roll out an advertising campaign that will appeal to a younger market segment and win over a new consumer base while maintaining the extant consumer base. Also to subtly reposition the Strongbow brand by portraying it as a drink that defines what being a man is all about. It should lead all men to perceive Strongbow as the authentic British cider that reinforces their identity as a 'real man' and be seen as a necessary coming of age ritual/lifestyle choice for all 'real men'. **Measures:** The 'real man' campaign will be rolled out on a variety of media targeted primarily at our intended younger market segment. This will include: * Television stations to increase brand awareness by 40%

* OOH -Billboards, on buses and tubes to increase brand awareness by a further 10% * Social Media- 94,000 likes on Face book, 300 retweets on Twitter to be achieved through stimulation and other promotion tools.

STRONGBOW CIDER REPOSITIONED BRAND WHEEL

Attributes| Dry cider, Low Alcohol drink, Traditional English recipe, Simple package, Bitter-sweet cider, Relatively low price| Benefits| Refreshing, De-stressing, Saves money| Values| You feel renewed, You feel like a 'real' man/affirm manliness, a sense of tradition/authentic, a sense of reward for effort, you feel like socialising, You feel relaxed.| Personality| Ambitious, visionary, resilient, driven and dedicated, down to earth, hard-working and efficient, active, responsible/reliable charming| Essence| Authentic man's cider|

New Target

- * Students, graduates, young working class, young men starting out in life, low to mid-level executives * Ages 21-34
- * C1, C2, D Category
- * Male

New USP:

Real British Cider for real men.

New Positioning Statement

For the real man who takes a bold step everyday and overcomes life's daily hurdles in order to reach closer to dreams and ambitions, Strongbow is an authentic British cider that celebrates the man in you. Unlike other alcoholic beverages, Strongbow's bittersweet apple taste gives you a taste of heaven that makes all the effort worth it and spurs you on to greater heights.

IV. Creative Brief

*Please refer to appendix for creative brief.

The creative solution outlined below provides a link between the identified problems/opportunities of Strongbow and the strategic objectives of the proposed ‘real man’ campaign. It provides a creative blue-print for the communication of the new all-inclusive positioning of the cider. The ‘real man’ campaign will take the form of a TV ad that will further be translated into similarly themed ads for Press and OOH. All the ads will run the tag-line ‘Authenticity Required’ to indicate the merger of two authentic objects: ‘the real man and the real British cider.’ The ads will also make mention of the product USP: ‘Real British cider for Real men’.

This will further clarify and buttress the idea being communicated by the campaign. In the same vein, the TV ad will utilize James Brown’s famous song, ‘This is a man’s world’ as a soundtrack to compliment the message. Aside the congruence of the song and the ad’s message, the well-loved song is also expected to aid in grabbing viewer attention and sparking recall of the ad as well as a positive association between the Strongbow brand and the song. The ads will depict drinking of Strongbow cider as a coming of age ritual for men while simultaneously conveying the message that ‘everyday is a battle and real men are knights who conquer in battle and after their daily victories on the battlegrounds of life, they celebrate with Strongbow cider’.

Creative Solutions

This is a summary of the creative execution of the Strongbow ‘Real man’ campaign. It is further illustrated by a storyboard below. TV Ad: At the onset of the ad, a young-man in his mid to late twenties is seen sleeping on a bed

in his bedroom. Only his profile is shown, his face remains hidden. The alarm clock at the head of his bed rings and a signage on the TV screen indicates that the time is 6am. The young man turns round and reaches out to put off his alarm clock. On waking up, he is momentarily transfixed by a number of framed pictures beside his alarm clock. He looks at the pictures -which chronicle his journey from boyhood to manhood- in turn. The first picture shows him as a crawling baby. The next depicts him as a pre-teenager posing beside his football. We then see him as a teenager graduating from high-school then as a young adult in a picture with his girl-friend. The scene pans forward to show the young man, in an official-looking suite, his back to the camera gazing at his diploma on the wall with a sense of pride.

He turns round then (at this point viewers will realize that he's the same young man in the pictures, albeit now grown into a man) to face the camera, straightens his tie and picks up his briefcase (at this point, James Brown intones: ' This is a man's world' and the soundtrack begins playing in the background). Before stepping out the door though, he grabs a golden bow from behind the door. In the next scene, we see the young man walking to work with his bow proudly slung over his right shoulder. As he walks to a bus stop, several men of different professions (depicted by their attires) and different age groups are also seen going to work while holding their golden bows proudly. They wink and smile knowingly as they by-pass each other. The voice-over booms: ' Real British Cider for Real Men'. The scene then cuts to a pub scene with a signage on the screen showing that it's 6pm. Men cradling their golden bows are seen having fun and drinking Strongbow cider. The camera zooms to a close up of the young man and a friend of his

as they clink their glasses together (Their bows proudly displayed on the table between them). This scene cuts to show the 'mandatory' thudding arrows beside a glass of Strongbow as the voice over announces: 'Strongbow, Authenticity Required'. The ad concludes with a close-up of the Strongbow logo.

The press and OOH iterations of the 'real man' will show a young-man attired on one-half as a corporate executive or post-grad student and on the other half as a knight. The OOH will reiterate the Strongbow tag-line and USP boldly while the press version will go into more written detail, further conveying the idea that 'everyday is a battle and real men are knights'.

V. Media

Three types of media will be used:

- * TV because it makes very big impact on the consumer.
- * Press because it allows us to target a precise audience.
- * Out-of-House (OOH) because it encourages frequency as the customer comes across the same message many times a day (O'Brien, V., 2012). The 'real man' advertising campaign for Strongbow will last for three and a half months, from September 23, 2013 till January 6, 2014. In deciding which TV channels or newspapers to choose, the main consideration is the demography of the media's audience. Accordingly, we selected TV channels and papers whose audience is identical to our primary target segment.

TV

The research showed that the two channels which are watched mainly by Strongbow's target audience are Channel 4 and Channel 5. Both of them are

watched mainly by young male adults in their twenties and early thirties coming from lower social classes. Viewership of the Channel 4 in October 2012

Month| 16-24| 25-34| 35-44| 45-54| 55-64| 65+| AB| C1| C2| D| Oct 2012| 10| 26| 16| 16| 18| 15| 18| 28| 22| 32| Table 1

Source: BARB Audience Profile (%) - Adults, Sunday -Monday

Viewership of the Channel 5 in October 2012

Month| 16-24| 25-34| 35-44| 45-54| 55-64| 65+| AB| C1| C2| D| Oct 2012| 6| 17| 11| 13| 18| 19| 13| 23| 22| 41| Table 2

Source: BARB Audience Profile (%) - Adults, Sunday -Monday

Since Strongbow is an alcoholic drink, the adverts will be shown only from 9 PM till 11 PM, Monday to Saturday. The advertising TV campaign will start with a burst. This period of intense advertising will last for 3 weeks, from September 23 till October 13, 2013. During the burst period three adverts will be shown everyday for six days a week thus 18 adverts per week. Each TV advert lasts for 30 seconds thus there will be 540 seconds of advertising every week (30 sec/advert × 18 adverts/week). Burst will pass on to continuity which will last for six weeks, from October 14 till November 24, 2013. Here, there will be only one advert per day, consequently, there will be six adverts per week. Thus, during continuity period there will be only 180 seconds of advertising every week (30 sec/advert × 6 adverts/week). The last stage of the advertising campaign will employ pulsing. It will last for three weeks, from November 25, 2013 - January 6, 2014. There will be two regimens of advertising which will alternate. In one week there will be 540

seconds of advertising, similar to the initial burst. In the next week, there will be 180 seconds of advertising, similar to the continuity period. Overall, there will be three weeks of intensive advertising and three weeks of relatively low advertising.

Out of Home Advertising (OOH)

The OOH advertising campaign will utilize busses nation-wide and London underground. The bus advertising will be implemented on super-siders since that is the most recognizable format. The underground adverts will be made in corridors, on stairs, lifts and escalator panels as these are the most conspicuous positions to attract passengers' attention. OOH advertising will last for the 15 weeks of the whole campaign. Social Media

Strongbow pages will be created on the most popular social networks, i. e. Facebook and Twitter, since social media is already popular among the target audience. 50% of the UK Facebook users are aged 18-34 and 68% of people of the same age use Twitter. Moreover, 49% of Twitter users are men and 76% of them belong to C1, C2 and D social classes.

VI. Evaluation

Evaluation is essential for an advertising campaign; it helps the agency to find out if the ad campaign is going to work, if it did work, and how to know. Pre-evaluation is useful because it gathers feedback from potential consumers early in the process. By doing this, the agency gets information from their target market regarding their impressions about the ad; how they understand the ad, what they don't understand, what should be changed,

whether the message is clear etc. This direct feedback is extremely important because the impressions of the focus group(s) is reflective of the likely response of the target market. Focus groups help the agency to predict if an ad is going to be successful as well as save money in the long run. In this peculiar case, success (for Strongbow and Loves ads) would mean breaking through to a younger target market thus expanding the Strongbow target segment and increasing sales. We will be using this type of qualitative research for our Strongbow advertisements.

This is an appropriate choice because we are targeting a new market with an updated message about the Strongbow brand. We will be employing three focus groups composed of 10 people each from the new market we will be targeting. In each focus group we will communicate the message and concept of our adverts in the "Roughs" stage (i. e. we will be running the focus groups before the actual creative production is fully completed). We will use the lone moderator method in which the one person drives the discussion, encouraging participants to share reactions, thoughts, feelings, levels of understanding likes/dislikes and ideas. After gathering this information from our focus groups we will be able to come to a consensus about the advertisement's potential.

This will help us decide whether to move forward to tweak the concept or abandon it entirely. Following the launch, we will use behavior and attitude tracking monitors to ensure that the campaign is resonating with the target audience. Our key performance indicator (KPI) will be sales increase. We will be using a continuous tracking device since this is a longer running

campaign. Ad hoc behavior and attitude tracking monitors will be used from the launch of the campaign until it is completed. We will also utilize social media platforms such as our Facebook and Twitter pages as a method of observation. These sites operate as open forums for younger consumers to voice their opinions, generate discussion and provide positive or negative feedback about the campaign.

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