

TV helps Solo drinkers lose their Man Cans



Background

Solo has been one of Australia's best loved and most iconic soft drink brands for more than thirty years. However its position in the marketplace has come under increasing pressure due to a proliferation of competitive brands – including numerous “functional” and health-oriented alternatives – from both within Australia and overseas.

Challenges & Objectives

While sales figures remained relatively strong, it had become evident that the brand's relevance and emotional connection with consumers had started to wane. The time was nigh for the Solo brand to reconnect with its consumer heartland – i.e, the fair dinkum Aussie bloke - and do so in a way that leveraged Solo's uniquely Australian brand heritage.

Target Audience

Real Aussie blokes who are hard at work all day and looking for an ice cold drink to crush their massive thirst.

Insights & Creative

A considerable amount of qualitative research yielded several core insights that were key in the development of the advertising idea itself:

1. The Solo man back in the 80's was perceived as the genuine Aussie bloke – but that was twenty years ago – the way that Solo represented blokes had to change.
2. Aussie males have gone a bit soft. The proliferation of male grooming products, tanning salons and Men's Fashion magazines were all evidence of this. In addition, soft-drinks were no longer speaking Aussie bloke's language. This presented an opportunity for Solo as it was known as the brand that helped define Australian masculinity for over 30-years.

CASE STUDY: Solo

Insights & Creative (continued)

3. If there's one thing that guys are afraid of, it's having their masculinity questioned, or even worse, having it taken away. This insight helped springboard several potential campaign platforms, which, when overlaid with the insights outlined above generated the definitive campaign idea: Solo is the antidote for unmanliness!

The creative representation of this idea involved blokes in very traditional Australian environments growing very untraditional appendages as a result of their own unmanly behaviour – we coined these appendages “Man Cans” – and since the campaign launched in August 2007 the term Man Cans has become part of conversations right around the country. From pubs to footy clubs to AFL commentators' broadcasts, not to mention an innumerable number of internet chat rooms and emails, the term ‘Man Cans’ has been everywhere.

The Campaign

The campaign started with a teaser (unbranded) campaign launch in August 2007. The objective for this phase was to get the term “Man Cans” embedded in the Australian vernacular and to prime consumers for the branded launch one month later. The teaser phase comprised of two 15 second television commercials, together with a series of fictitious websites, all developed to get people spreading the word about Man Cans.

In September, the Solo branded launch campaign introduced Solo as the antidote for Man Cans (our hero's physical manifestation of unmanliness). What's more, in line with a key element of Solo's brand heritage (reward for effort) our hero's Man Cans only disappeared after completing a manly act and skolling a well earned, ice cold Solo. The launch campaign featured a 30-second TVC, with support from a dedicated website (complete with Mancanometer and Solo Kayak Challenge), POS, and in-program television and radio.

The Role of TV

Solo has a rich history of memorable TV commercials – and this series sits comfortably alongside the best of them. Only Free TV could provide the mass reach and the instant impact that was required to land the ‘Man Cans’ thought into the vernacular.

According to Paul Donaldson, Marketing Manager of Carbonated Beverages at Cadbury Schweppes “This TV campaign has helped us reach and engage our target of every genuine, solid Aussie bloke aged 25-40. It helped generate massive interaction with the brand, and most importantly increased sales.”

To maximise impact, Solo has continued its sponsorship of the drinks break on Channel Nine's summer of cricket, which is a key ‘must watch’ programme for its target audience over this crucial summer period.

Results

Since the campaign launch in August 2007, Solo has enjoyed more than a 30 per cent increase in sales and improved market share to unprecedented levels.

Who

Client: Solo (Cadbury Schweppes)
Creative Agency: The Furnace
Media Agency: Carat Melbourne