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Best Use of Innovation: Guinness Gogglebox Christmas Cracker



Finding a Better Way

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Best Use of Innovation – Guinness Gogglebox Christmas Cracker

Entry Details

Client: **Diageo**

Product / Service: **Guinness**

Campaign Name: **Guinness Gogglebox Christmas Cracker**

Entrant Company: **PHD Media**

Address: **1 Richview Office Park, Clonskeagh**

Lead Contact: **Gemma Teeling**

Email: **gemma.teeling@phdmedia.com**

Phone: **083 424 6859**



Background and Objectives

Guinness is an essential part of an Irish Christmas, it's one of the things that Irish people abroad most look forward to coming home to enjoy. It is the centre of many over due catch ups between friends and loved ones. But not in 2020, when so many Irish people were forced apart due to the pandemic.

For Guinness to remain relevant at Christmas, we had to find ways for Guinness to deliver moments of connection when people couldn't enjoy it together in pubs.

A sales challenge for the brand at this important time of year was that Irish Guinness drinkers are OBSESSED with the perfect pint poured in a pub. Irish consumers had not embraced canned Guinness during lock down as much as in other markets. Pre-pandemic, pubs and bars' contribution in Ireland was 87% (vs. 72% in the UK, for example). It was crucial that over Christmas, with bars still closed, we showed consumers that Guinness in a can, at home, could still offer that perfect pint.

Our challenges were heightened due to no new creative being available.

Our objectives for our Christmas activity were clear but by no means easy to achieve:

Communications Objective: Reignite the magical feeling of an Irish Christmas by using media to allow Guinness to connect people at a time that they could not physically be together.

Business Objective: Contribute to an increase in sales for Guinness Draft in a Can (GDIC).

The Strategy

Consumer Insight:

17.5% of Irish adults live abroad, that's the highest figure of any OECD country.

An Irish Christmas is defined by the mass return of people back to Ireland and brands often celebrate this with content filmed at the airports and competitions to bring loved one's home. Not in 2020.

Consumers were severely missing moments of connections (*satisfaction levels of personal relationships dropped 60% to 42% in 2020, Central Statistics Office*) and both home and abroad, the Irish were craving Christmas connections.

Brand Insight:

Guinness is part of the fabric of Irish Christmas. It connects people and it's one of the things people look forward to coming home to experience.

The innovative idea at the heart of our Christmas media plan was driven by the realisation that at a time when people couldn't meet up - Guinness COULD come to them whilst stranded on their sofas. **We would do this by co-creating the first ever 'global' episode of Gogglebox.**

Strategic Development:

Gogglebox Ireland (a TV show featuring people's reactions to watching TV) is one of the highest rating shows for our Guinness recruitment audience of 18-44s. It brings hundreds of thousands of Irish people together weekly, to feel connected to other Irish homes.

Our innovative idea was to create a Gogglebox Guinness Christmas special that included the usual families featured in the show but also recruited some Irish people living abroad, all watching nostalgic Irish TV to remind them of Irish Christmases gone by.

Their inclusion would help those abroad feel connected to home and remind those watching from Ireland of all the Irish who couldn't come home for Christmas but still have a love for Ireland (and Guinness!)

Included in the show would be the iconic Guinness Christmas TV advertisement – an ad that only airs in Ireland and for many, signifies the start of the Christmas season. It is a piece of cultural content so powerful that even the opening bars of the soundtrack can mentally transport people back to a normal, Irish Christmas with their friends and family.

At the end of the Guinness TV advertisement there was a special surprise for each of our Irish abroad via a video message from their loved ones back home who they wouldn't get to physically be with this Christmas.

We proposed the concept to the Gogglebox production company who said *'people come to us all the time with ideas for Gogglebox and they are usually way off the mark, this is the best, most culturally relevant concept we've ever had presented to us'*.

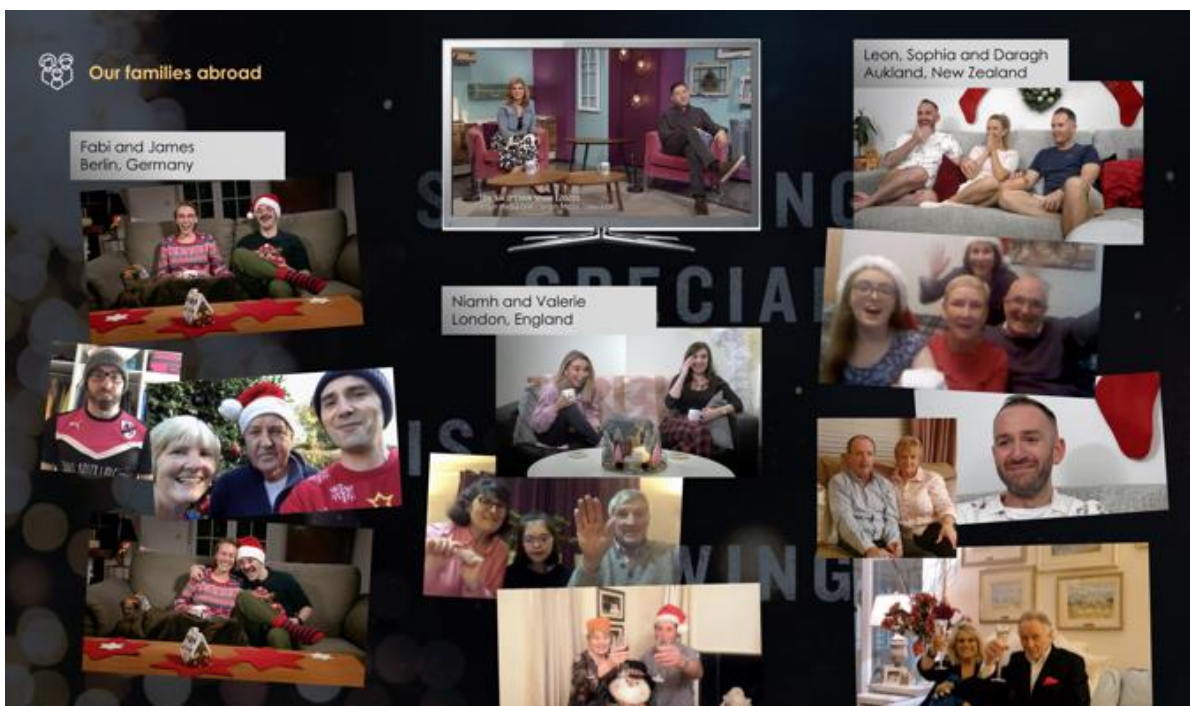
We then presented this to Guinness who, even in a year of reduced budgets said yes, believing in the magic this media partnership would deliver.

The Plan

In collaboration with Virgin Media Solutions and the show's production company, Kite Entertainment, we set out to do something that had never been done before, to connect four separate Gogglebox production teams across the world, to deliver one show.

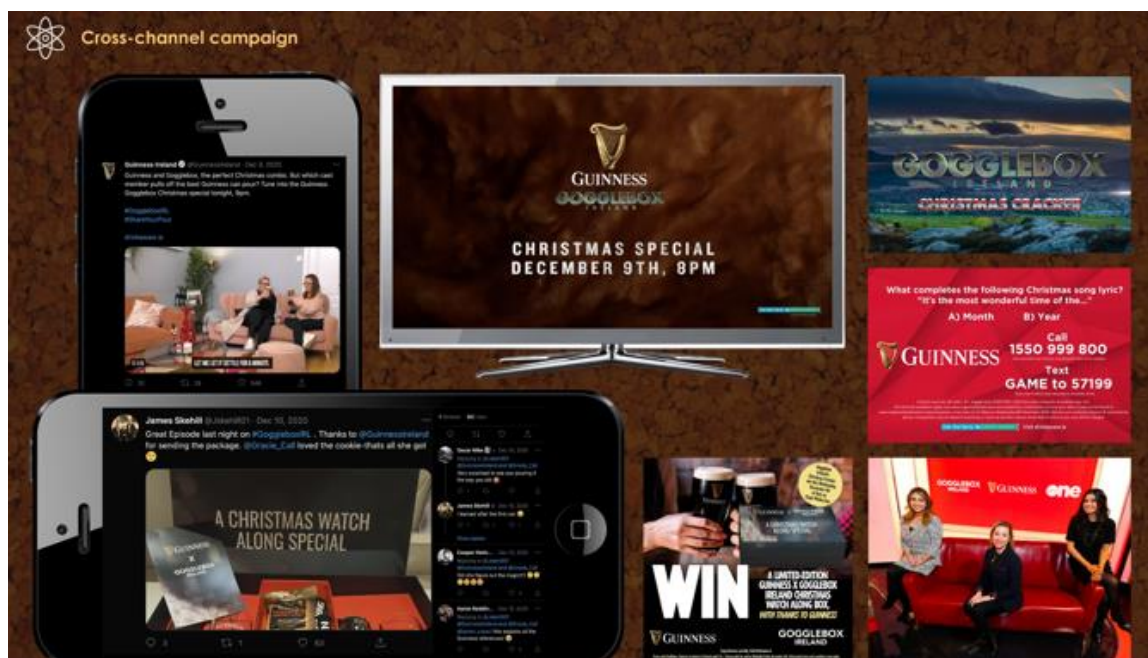
We recruited 3 'units' abroad – an Irish man married to a German woman in Berlin, two Irish nurses working on a Covid ward in London and a couple and their best friend living in New Zealand.

We asked them for their Irish families' contact details in order to send them a hamper, but in secret, contacted the families to ask for their surprise video messages.



We also developed a multi-touchpoint campaign to drive awareness prior to the episode:

- Agreed appropriate levels of Guinness product placement, including local families drinking pints and cut-aways in between scenes to the Guinness Storehouse.
- Ran co-branded multi-channel TV promos to announce the show.
- Ran a TV competition to drive awareness of the episode by giving away Virgin Media entertainment kits to enhance viewing experience.
- Worked with Guinness' PR agency to send coveted 'watch along' boxes of Guinness goodies to influencers.
- Created additional content with the local Gogglebox families of them pouring pints of Guinness to create funny and engaging social media teasers.



This all culminated in The 'Gogglebox Ireland Christmas Cracker – brought to you by Guinness' at 9pm on Wednesday 9th December. The show was nostalgic, funny and emotional and the Guinness branding and placement was seamless and relevant.

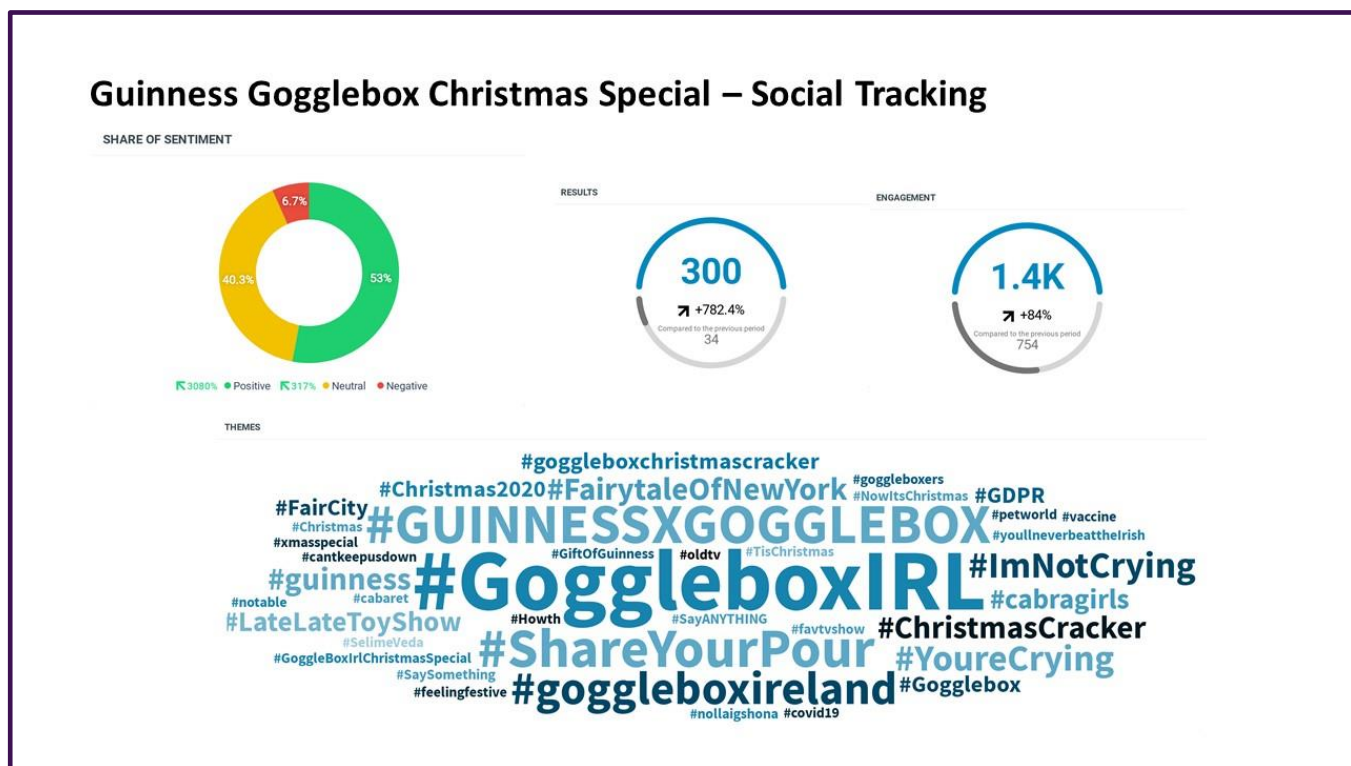
The Results

Over the Christmas period, Guinness sales outperformed the take-home market, outstanding for a leading brand that people had not previously associated positively with at home consumption.

In the 2 weeks following the show, Guinness' share jumped from 13% to 16%, which was a 5% point share increase on the equivalent 2019 period.

The campaign's reach and reaction demonstrated its scale and resonance with people:

- Our entire campaign was seen by 2/5 of the Irish population, with 347,000 watching the show itself (beating the live slot average by 32%)
- The show trended on Twitter with social media mentions jumping +784% and engagement levels increasing +84% (vs. previous week when we were live with ATL advertising).
- Product placement was seamless, and the high level of Guinness mentions demonstrates the clear connection people made between the show and brand. #guinnessxgoggleboxIRL was a top term mentioned on Twitter. A Gogglebox family summed up the strength of reaction to the Guinness ad: 'ads like this make me love being Irish'.



Did we reignite the magic of Christmas? The volume and content of social media reactions suggests so. Countless comments said the show made them cry. It is so hard for brands to get that sort of emotional reaction from consumers and demonstrates how much the show resonated with people.

Client Involvement

Critical to the success of the campaign, the client's buy in and support was critical. In a year with reduced spends, we were asking Diageo to invest a large percentage of their Guinness budget in one idea. Not only that we were asking them to take more budget and brief their social and PR agencies to amplify our campaign further, to maximise it's chance of success.

However, Diageo is a company full of brave marketeers who believe in the power of ideas and they could see the potential magic of this innovation, to do something special in a remarkable year.

'Christmas was always going to be a little different in 2020 but those shared moments with friends and family were still just as important. Christmas is all about coming together to create shared memories and connect with our loved ones, even if it's only virtually, which is why we were delighted to create Gogglebox Ireland's first ever Christmas Cracker with Virgin Media. At Guinness, we believe that we can make even the simplest moments feel special and the Gogglebox Ireland Christmas Cracker did just that'
Anna Sablovscia, Senior Brand Manager, Diageo.

'Christmas 2020 was like no other. Tens of thousands of Irish émigré trapped over seas, and our beloved pubs, the heart and soul of so many Irish Christmas re-unions with friends and families over a pint of Guinness were closed. The innovative partnership developed by PHD and Virgin allowed us to leverage the power of TV and deliver that special Christmas feeling in a Christmas of crisis. The Gogglebox Christmas campaign was a very strong and exciting activation and we were delighted to see the level of engagement on social media, a sign that we really got the tone of this partnership just right'
Tiernan O'Moirain, Head of Media, Diageo

**** PLEASE WATCH THE SHORT CASE VIDEO INCLUDED WITH THIS ENTRY TO BRING OUR CAMPAIGN TO LIFE****