

## The Brand Story over Time

Given the brand's context, the category in which it resides, and the challenges mentioned earlier by the business, growth meant hanging a question mark on long-held norms. Nothing was sacred, and the brand had one mandate, we had to make people care by strikingly fitting into consumers' minds.

### **Operating in a sea of sameness**

123.i.e's brand tracker research in 2019 had shown that consumers were switching off insurance brands, with overall category awareness down 5%. The sector was driven by offer based communications, with no distinctiveness between competitors.

All insurance brands were beginning look and feel the same. Anecdotally, we began to refer to it as Tipperary - much blue with a smattering of yellow. We needed to swim upstream in a sea of sameness to cut through. Media and creativity combined had the task of delivering salience and giving a platform for our brand story.

### **Brand refresh**

With consumers shopping around less, we needed to stand out more to gain their attention and be in their core consideration set. 123.ie believed the time was right to refresh their brand and its creative look and feel, to deliver more outstanding distinctiveness for the brand.

Upon careful examination of the palette of distinctive assets, competitors commonly used colour and shape and music assets. However, story components and celebrities could give a route to deliver uniqueness and fame for the brand.

We upended our entire brand repository. We secured John Michael Higgins, famed American actor, along with a new look and feel, all to encourage consumers to 'give better a try.'

### **A return to a core audience with a better profile**

We spent 2019 targeting younger drivers, and there was more need than ever in 2020 and 2021 to balance and return to what we knew. The ideal policyholder skews older than our 2019 behaviour, so we to profile how best to communicate our new brand identity.

## **Finding the balance between brand and demand**

We looked long and hard at our overall media mix to determine how best to manage our investment. The team examined empirical evidence in detail to assess how to manage our mix of investments that would stand up to scrutiny in the boardroom.

We asked three main questions:

- Why should brands balance their brand and demand split?
- What's the most optimal brand and demand split for 123.ie – an insurance brand?
- Are there any relevant brands in Ireland and abroad that prove this?

Mindshare collated research from Thinkbox, the IPA, Binet & Field, and ADFX to show the importance of investing in both brand and demand. To deliver distinctiveness, we needed to tap into the people's emotions, delivering advertising that stirred them and encouraged them to take action.

The IPA effectiveness database from 2006-to 2018 determined that an 80:20 brand versus demand was the optimal split for the insurance category.

For 123.ie, we understood the day-to-day pressures of the insurance business meant this was a long-term target and one we needed to build up to over many years incrementally. However, the brand set a clear line in the sand in making the transition to more brand building based advertising that also could support the brand in the short term. Delivering distinctiveness in brand and quotes in demand underpinned our approach.

We looked at examples of brands that had delivered success using this approach. Each had produced significant growth in awareness, consideration, brand association and revenue by investing in media and creative strategies to provide a greater standout. Budget Direct, Allstate, and Allybank, among others, gave us a global view of the direction to follow.

At home, brands like AIB and Woodie's showcase beloved local examples of delivering a symbiosis of creative execution and media buying. Both local and global verified this approach and demonstrated a delivery against the core business numbers in the short term.

## **The media story over time**

In short, 123.ie can distil its media story to one singular, purposeful statement. We mirrored the category in TV orientation; we muscled with sponsorship relevance and triumphed through distinctive creativity.

Everything at Mindshare starts with the audience. Using a variety of industry-leading and proprietary tools, we looked in-depth at the best media to deliver a high impact brand refresh that would provide distinctiveness for the brand and quote demand. The audience outlined their consumption, attention, and the ability to drive purchase behaviour with an AV strategy.

The category is TV dominated in its concentration. Close to 4/5th of all tracked activity goes into TV. With a smaller budget, a growing sense of inertia and up against formidable competitors, we had to be single-minded about where to take the battleground.

It was clear that an AV approach (TV + VoD) was central to delivering this. It meant being more selective, reducing other media channels, to provide an AV first strategy.

### **Increased investment**

AV investment increased by 25% YoY from 2019 - to 2020 across TVR based campaigns and sponsorship, a first for 123.ie. The increased investment delivered 22 weeks on air versus 17 the previous year. We needed to ensure AV had sufficient weight behind it to provide distinctiveness for the brand and drive website traffic/quote volume.

### **More significant bursts**

We needed our TV bursts to deliver more presence at the launch period. Our weekly TVRs increased 53% per week vs 2019. The weighting of our activity now rivalled and often exceeded the top 3 brands in the category

### **Top and tail**

Delivering distinctiveness meant a different approach to buying media that would provide salience and cut through the noise. We implemented a top and tail strategy for launch – running three ads per break – 30" and 10". We ran a combination of 20" and 10" after the initial launch burst. The brand did this purposely to ensure we communicated the new brand proposition and the savings message to customers.

## **Sponsorships**

We spent countless hours weekly researching and evaluating sponsorship options across our paths. The right property needed to:

1. Delivered a large audience, airing at prime time
2. Ran for a least three months – we needed longevity to deliver a frequency of message, not a short sharp 4-week burst that would have reached our profile, but a lower frequency of airtime.
3. It gave us the creative license to create stings appealing to the target audience.

Gogglebox was perfect for the aspirational profiled consumer, and it proved the solution for us. We partnered with Virgin Media to sponsor Season 6 of the Series in the Autumn/Winter of 2020.

## **Evolving into 2021**

As the brand reposition had landed, we adjusted our approach to delivering more cut-through across the calendar year, focusing less on heavy bursts of AV that the platform needed in 2020 to a more always-on approach in 2021.

- Weeks on air: increased from 22 to 34
- TVR's per week: decreased from 44% (average per week)
- Increased investment: 21% increase in AV spend in 2021 – across TVR and sponsorship activity

We doubled down on sponsorships – seeing this platform as an essential component to delivering brand frequency and aligning ourselves to a primetime property.

We set out to make 123.ie brand strikingly stand out in consumers' minds in a low-interest category while increasing website traffic and quotes. We increased brand awareness while communicating details of various products all within one campaign. We also created clarity and comprehension around the brand's positioning to stand out in a cluttered market that contained established brands with bigger media budgets than those held available to 123.ie. The campaign results show the power of a solid media and creative, strategic approach based on human insight, backed up by excellent media placement and creative execution to deliver a standout activity over two consecutive years. And all through the enduring and omnipotent medium of TV.